Sample Rationale

POE-try

Assignment: Choose an Edgar Allan Poe short story and identify the theme and the literary devices used to accomplish the message. Create an original poem that uses the same theme and devices, but does not follow the plot line of the short story. ***For example, if you are using “The Tell-Tale Heart” – don’t write a poem about a guy who is obsessed with an eye and kills his neighbor.***

Rationale: A rationale justifies a course of action in a writing assignment. Your objective is to first create your task, then rationalize your process and product. This should be between 250-300 words.

Sample Rationale for POE-try assignment: 299 Words

Edgar Allan Poe is an important Romantic writer who focused on the nature of man. One of his main themes in his short stories is obsession. In Poe’s short story, “The Tell-Tale Heart,” he emphasizes the power of obsession in order to communicate that man’s judgement can be clouded when we are too focused on one element. The short tale tells the story of a man who becomes consumed by an old man’s cloudy eye. He determines that he must rid himself of the eye, and in turn, the old man. He ultimately commits murder, but his guilt is overwhelming and ultimately, he confesses his crime to the police. Poe utilizes imagery to describe the room where he observes his unsuspecting neighbor. He is unafraid as he goes into the room, “black as pitch with the thick darkness” (1). He also uses repetition to emphasize how overwhelming guilt can be. As his guilt mounts, he hears, what he thinks is the beating of the deceased heart and it grows, “louder! louder! louder! *louder*!” (3). I chose to focus on the theme of obsession in my own poem. It tells the tale of a young girl who becomes obsessed with her weight and image on social media. As a result of her obsession, she becomes blind to the fact that she is killing herself by trying to be perfect. I utilize the same devices in my poem as Poe does in his short story. Imagery is used to describe her dark room where she purges all of the food she indulges in and repetition is shown in her repeated negative phrases she uses to describe her body as she looks in the mirror. Ultimately, my poem is an effective representation of Poe’s theme and stylistic choices in “The Tell-Tale Heart.”