

LESSON PLAN - POLISH (3rd stage of education)

Topic: Top Secret - a review of the genre features of a novella on the example of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Gold-Bug*

Participants: secondary school or vocational school students, the lesson can also be conducted with other groups of young people over 14 years of age.

Duration: 45 minutes

Lesson objectives:

- The student is familiar with Edgar Allan Poe's novella *The Gold-Bug*
- understands the inspirational role of the novella in Jan Kowalewski's life
- identifies the genre features of the novella and indicates them in the text
- defines the concept of cryptology
- recognises the motif of cryptology in literature

Reference to the core curriculum:

Basic programme:

Literary and cultural education

3) distinguishes between epic, lyrical, dramatic and syncretic genres, including: genres learnt in primary school and epic poetry, ode, ancient tragedy, psalm, chronicle, satire, idyll, ballad, romantic drama, poetic novel, as well as varieties of novel and drama, and lists their basic genre characteristics;

10) recognises the ways of creating: the world of the story (plot, characters, action, themes, motifs), narration, lyrical situation in a work; interprets and evaluates them;

11) understands the concept of literary motif and topos, recognises basic motifs and topos and notes the vitality of biblical and ancient motifs in literary works; identifies their role in creating universal meanings;

Extended programme:

Discussion of selected epic works of the Romantic period: Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, *Stara Baśń [The Old Tale]*, Victor Hugo, *The Miserables*, Edgar Allan Poe, selected short story, Henryk Rzewuski, *Pamiętki Soplisy [Souvenirs of Soplisa]* (fragments);

Materials:

- Cyphers Game - is an IPN gaming project that takes a closer look at the history of the Polish-Bolshevik War. It is available for free on Steam and is compatible with VR goggles, Windows PC and mobile devices supported by iOS and Android.

It was developed as an FPP (first person perspective) game, consisting of three missions.

They describe the course of the Polish-Bolshevik War and the influence of Polish cryptology on its victorious outcome. Each player can break the Bolshevik ciphers and destroy a Soviet armoured train. Players take on the roles of authentic soldiers of the 1920 Polish-Bolshevik War, operate complex communication devices from 100 years ago and save Europe from

communist enslavement.

<https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/dla-mediow/materialy-do-pobrania/162352,Gra-szyfrow-najnowszy-projekt-gamingowy-Institutu-Pamieci-Narodowej.html>

- Edgar Allan Poe's novella *The Gold-Bug* - available on the Wolne Lektury Portal

<https://wolnelektury.pl/media/book/pdf/poe-zloty-zuk-zloty-zuk.pdf>

- biographical note on Edgar Allan Poe - Appendix no. 3

COURSE OF THE LESSON

No.	Course of the lesson	Time in minutes	Materials
1.	<p>The students had a homework assignment to play “Cyphers Game” and to read the novella by E.A. Poe <i>The Gold-Bug</i>. We talk about the game, its educational qualities, students’ opinions about this educational game. It is worth highlighting the influence of cryptologists in defeating the Bolshevik invasion. We ask whether students have noticed a connection between “Cyphers Game” and Poe’s novella. If students have not noticed the connection so far, we inform them that Jan Kowalewski, who broke the Soviet cipher and translated many Soviet dispatches during the Polish-Bolshevik War, which contributed to the victory of the Poles, achieved his first success thanks to the application of knowledge from the novella by E. A. Poe <i>The Gold-Bug</i>. Kowalewski used the same decoding method that one of the characters in Poe’s story used to find the pirates’ treasure. If time and technology allow, the game can be played with students in the classroom - preferably a short piece of the game available online showing how Jan Kowalewski used a simple comb to decipher messages. https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/dla-mediow/materialy-do-pobrania/162352,Gra-szyfrow-najnowszy-projekt-gamingowy-Institutu-Pamieci-Narodowej.html</p> <p>You could also start the class by decoding a riddle, e.g. encrypting a message to the students in Morse code. You can use this platform https://morsedecoder.com/pl/. You can also point to other people inspired by ideas drawn from books, such as Heinrich Schliemann, who found the ruins of ancient Troy on the basis of the <i>Iliad</i>. This theme also appears in the lesson plan for the form period.</p>	13 min.	- Cyphers Game - encrypted messages - <i>The Gold-Bug</i> novella
2.	We explain the concept of cryptology and look for other	5 min.	

	books which feature the theme of cryptology. You can pick up on the popularity of this theme in detective novels, but also the popularity of Escape Rooms.		
3.	Students read the biography of Edgar Alan Poe and create a biographical note in their notebooks using available sources.	5 min.	(Appendix no. 1)
4.	<p>We discuss the ways in which the world presented in a novella is created (plot, characters, action, themes), as well as how the narrative is conducted. We ask students for their interpretations and opinions. Do students notice any symbolic elements in the text? What genre features of the novella are evident in <i>The Gold-Bug</i>? We emphasise the role of the climax and look for the event that could be it. It should be noted that the reader finds out very late how the mystery is unravelled, and once this happens - the novella moves very quickly towards the end, which is one of the most important distinguishing features of the novella.</p> <p>Students write the conclusions in their notebooks in the form of a note which is also a summary of the lesson.</p>	20 min.	
5.	Lesson summary: Students list one thought that will stay with them after this class.	2 min.	

Appendix no. 1

Edgar Allan Poe

Poe Edgar Allan, b. 19 January 1809, Boston, d. 7 October 1849, Baltimore, American writer and literary critic; Romantic. He was born on 19 January 1809 in Boston. Orphaned at the age of two (which no doubt had an impact on his psyche) and raised by the family of a merchant J. Allan (hence his middle name), he served in the army for several years and briefly studied at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville and the United States Military Academy at West Point. In 1835, he married his less-than-13-year-old cousin, who soon died of tuberculosis. His later biography was also marked by problems with alcohol, a failed suicide attempt and, finally, his death in mysterious circumstances on 7 October 1849 in Baltimore.

He began his literary career with poetry; he wrote lyric poetry of gloomy confessions and reflections, imbued with dark images of suffering and unrequited love, introduced fantastic elements, combined the poetics of symbolic visions with an elaborate rhythmic and sound instrumentation; of Edgar Allan Poe's numerous poems, *The Raven* (1845) and *Ulalume* (1847) are among the most famous. His poetry was a precursor to Symbolism, whose representatives (mainly Charles Baudelaire) became Poe's discoverers and imitators. In Poland, it was close to the creators of Young Poland; it was translated e.g. by Bolesław Leśmian, Antoni Lange and Miriam. Some of Poe's most interesting collections of poems include: *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827), *Al Araaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems* (1829), *Poems by Edgar Allan Poe* (1831), *The Raven and Other Poems* (1845); *Selected Poems* (1960, 1995).

As a novelist, especially as a writer of short stories, he pioneered dark romantic gothic prose with pronounced elements of fantasy, horror and the grotesque; they often featured obsessively recurring themes: death, incredible visions and dreams, hypnotic trance and hallucinations, as well as a doppelganger, a riddle and a cipher. Poe was a master of the sombre mood, evoked as much by descriptions of the real world as by the morbid anxiety of the protagonists. Poe compiled his Gothic novellas and short stories in three volumes: *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (1839), *Prose Romances of Edgar Allan Poe* (1843), and *Tales* (1845). The best known of the numerous works in this genre are: *Ligeia* (1837), *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1839) - studies of madness and progressive disintegration, *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1843). In Poland, these novellas have enjoyed unflagging popularity, as evidenced by the continuously published selections, including: *Tales of Love* (1912), *Extraordinary Tales* (1913), *The Arabesque* (vol. 1-2 1922), *The Grotesque* (1924), *Short Stories* (vol. 1-2 1956), *Incredible Tales* (1984, 2002), *The Masque of the Red Death* (1992), *Fantastic Tales* (1996), *Amazing Tales* (1997), *Selected Short Stories* (2002), *Tales of Mystery and Madness* (2006). Edgar Allan Poe was also the creator of detective prose, in which he created the character of a detective who uses deduction in his work, thus laying the foundations of the modern detective novel (he was succeeded in the second half of the 19th century by the English writer A. Conan Doyle, creator of the Sherlock Holmes character); his best short stories include: *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *The Gold-Bug*, *The Mystery of Marie Roget*, and *The Purloined Letter*.

Poe also contributed to the development of American literary criticism; he was an insightful literary theorist, advocating the evaluation of a work's formal qualities rather than its moral or philosophical context (e.g. the essay *The Philosophy of Composition* (1846), reviews of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poetry and Nathaniel Hawthorne's prose). He was also involved in editing magazines, mainly literary ones, and at certain times earned a considerable

income from this, including “Southern Literary Messenger”, “Sunday Times”, “Broadway Journal”, mercilessly destroying the reputations of his contemporary writers.

Timeline:

19 January 1809 - he was born in Boston

1836 - he married his 13-year-old cousin Virginia Clemm

1839 - short stories: *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *William Wilson*

1841 - short story: *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*

1842 - short stories: *The Masque of the Red Death*, *The Mystery of Marie Roget*, *The Pit and the Pendulum*

1843 - novella: *The Gold-Bug*

1845 - poem: *The Raven*

1846 - essay: *Philosophy of Composition*

1847 - Virginia Clemm’s death, the poem *Ulalume*

7 October 1849 - he died in Baltimore

Source: <https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/Poe-Edgar-Allan;3959025.html>