ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN

Dance and Literacy Infused Lesson

Sequence: Most Important Events Dance
Author: Debbie Gilbert

Enduring Understanding
Identifying important events and illustrating the actions through movement can show the plot of a work of literature.

Lesson Description (Use for family communication and displaying student art)
In this reading and dance lesson, students choose the six most important events in a book read by the class. They select which three actions happened in each event and create movements to show each action. Students add repetition to make the dances more interesting and perform the dances in the sequence of the plot.

Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

Target: Identifies important episodes in the plot of a book.
Criteria: Selects and notates three actions from a key event.

Target: Choreographs an Important Event Dance to show what happens in a selected episode.
Criteria: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape.

Target: Collaborates with others.
Criteria: Communicates ideas to others; makes compromises; incorporates input/feedback.

Target: Responds to the Important Event Dance.
Criteria: Chooses one key action from the event; in writing, describes the action and the movement that shows what happened in that action.

Vocabulary

Arts Infused: Action
Event
Expression
Sequence

Literacy:
Plot
Title

Arts:
Choreographer
General Space
Locomotor
Non-locomotor
Movement
Repetition
Performer
Self-space
Shape

Materials

Museum Artworks or Performance
Seattle, WA
Pacific Northwest Ballet
UW World Series of Dance

Tacoma, WA
Broadway Center for the Performing Arts

Materials
Lesson criteria chart; Selected book (copies for each student or for each student group, if needed); Drum; Reading Dances music CD; Music for Creative Dance, Volumes I, III, V; Music player; Computer and projector (optional); Dance word sign: repetition; Student Worksheets; Choreography Refinement Task Chart; Chart paper and markers; Pencils; Important Event Choreographer’s Worksheet; Important Event Choreographer’s Response Worksheet; Classroom Assessment Worksheet

Learning Standards

WA Arts Learning Standards in Dance
For the full description of each standard, see: http://www.k12.wa.us/Arts/Standards
Creating (Concepts: Shape, Space, Repetition, Locomotor and Non-locomotor Movements, Sequence)
1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
3. Refine and complete artistic work.
4. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
Responding
7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.
8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
Connecting
10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

continued
Common Core State Standards (CCSS): ELA (Reading) For a full description of CCSS ELA Standards by grade level see:
http://www.k12.wa.us/CoreStandards/ELAstandards/
R.CCRA.R.3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
RL.6.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
RL.6.3. Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.
RL.7.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
RL.8.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.8.3. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

College and Career Ready Students in Reading
Demonstrate independence.
Build strong content knowledge.
Respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
Comprehend as well as critique.
Value evidence.
Come to understand other perspectives and cultures.
**Pre-Teach**
Introduce movement safety and the dance concepts of shape and self and general space. Do the BrainDance of Expression. Select a book with an engaging plot. Read and discuss the book with the class.

**Lesson Steps Outline**
**Day One (prior to dancing)**
1. Prepare students for dancing the sequence of the important events of a book. Display criteria chart.

2. Chart the most important events from the plot of selected book.

3. Guide students as they determine the actions that occur in their assigned key event.

   ✓ Criteria-based teacher checklist: Selects and notates three actions from a key event.

4. Direct students to review and title their Important Event.

   ✓ Criteria-based teacher checklist, self-assessment: Selects and notates three actions from a key event.
**Day Two (The dance begins!)**

1. Describe the plan for Day Two: generating ideas and constructing meaning to create our dance.


3. Discuss expectations for safe dancing. Chart student response.

4. Lead students in *BrainDance of Expression* warm-up.  
   Music: “BrainDance of Expression, Fourth Grade” #5 *Reading Dances*.

5. Conduct brief exploration of dance concepts of self and general space and shape.

6. Demonstrate and support students in drafting choreography of actions to show what happens in the important events. Guide rehearsal of three movements with repetition for each important event. Ask students to notate movement choices.  
   Music: “Fiesta”, “Dancing Digits”, “The Bayou Both-step”, or “Mr. E”, from *Music for Creative Dance, Volume III*, or “Road to Neah Bay,” from *Music for Creative Dance, Volume I* or “Pink Dolphins of the Amazon” from *Music for Creative Dance, Volume V* by Eric Chappelle

   ✓ Criteria-based process assessment: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape.

7. Describe and discuss how students can use the 21st Century Skill of collaboration when they work with their groups. Guide rehearsal.

   ✓ Criteria-based teacher checklist and self-assessment: Communicates ideas to others; makes compromises; incorporates input/feedback.

8. Direct the performances of the drafts of the dance, in the order that each important event happens in the book. Review performer and audience behavior.

   ✓ Criteria-based teacher checklist: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape.


   ✓ Criteria-based teacher checklist: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape.
**Day Three**

1. Describe the plan for Day Three: refining, rehearsing, performing, and reflecting.

2. Lead students in *BrainDance of Expression* warm-up.  
   Music: “BrainDance of Expression, Fourth Grade” #5 *Reading Dances*.

   Music: “Fiesta”, “Dancing Digits”, “The Bayou Both-step”, or “Mr. E”, from *Music for Creative Dance, Volume III*, or “Road to Neah Bay,” from *Music for Creative Dance, Volume I* or “Pink Dolphins of the Amazon” from *Music for Creative Dance, Volume V* by Eric Chappelle

   ☑️ Criteria-based teacher checklist, self and peer assessment: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape. Communicates ideas to others; makes compromises; incorporates input/feedback.

4. Direct the performance of the Most Important Event Dances without stopping in between dances.

   ☑️ Criteria-based teacher checklist: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape.

5. Facilitate verbal and written response to the dance.

   ☑️ Criteria-based teacher checklist, group reflection: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape. Chooses one key action from the event; in writing, describes the action and the movement that shows what happened in that action.
LESSON STEPS
This is a three-day lesson.

Day One (prior to dancing)
1. Prepare students for dancing the sequence of the important events of a book. Display criteria chart.

- We'll be using the creative processes of generating ideas, constructing meaning, and reflecting to choreograph a dance that shows the most important events in the plot of our book—the sequence.

- Today, we’ll concentrate on generating ideas. We’ll make a chart of the key events. We’ll use that information to link events to actions to show what happens in the sequence of the book.

- On another day, we’ll create dances to show what happened in the important events.

2. Chart the most important events from the plot of selected book.
   ▣ Discerning the important ideas or information

- Students could choose five or six events.

- You may choose to do this strategy with the whole class, or divide into small groups for brainstorming first and jigsaw the results together.

  - What are the most important things that happen in this story?

3. Guide students as they determine the actions that occur in their assigned key event.
   ▣ Discerning the important ideas or information, group conferring

- Divide students into five or six small groups, one for each important event on the chart. Assign one of the important events to each group and distribute an Important Event Choreographer’s Worksheet to each student.

- If you choose the small groups in advance, you won’t lose momentum as you transition into this strategy.

  - You are going to generate ideas for your dances by determining the actions that happen in your key event.

  - Talk about what happens during the important event. Choose three actions based on the words you read in the story. Build your dance from those actions. You can refer to the book for ideas.

  - We’ll notate our three actions on our chart (or worksheet). We’ll only fill in the first column with our actions. Use action words (verbs)! We’ll fill in the second column describing the dance movements on another day.

- Students notate actions on Important Event Choreographer’s Worksheets.

☑ Criteria-based teacher checklist: Selects and notates three actions from a key event.
4. Direct students to review and title their Important Event.

- Turn and talk with your group. Choose a title for your important event. It will show what you know about your key event. A good title will synthesize what happens in your important event. It will let your audience know what to expect in your dance.

- When you all agree on a title, write your title on your Important Event Choreographer’s Worksheets.

- Check your work. Do you have the three most important actions in your event? Do you have a title? Does everyone in your group agree on the actions and the title?

☑ Criteria-based teacher checklist, self-assessment: Selects and notates three actions from a key event.
Day Two (The dance begins!)
1. Describe the plan for Day Two: generating ideas and constructing meaning to create our dance.

- Today, we will be using the creative process of generating ideas and making choices to choreograph or create dances that show what happens in our important events. We’ll combine our dances to show the plot or sequence of the book.

   - Mini-lesson, connecting with prior knowledge

   - What is repetition? How do the dancers use repetition?
   - Try a movement like a stretch. Now repeat it four times.
   - What’s another movement? How many times should we repeat it?
   - We’ll use repetition in the BrainDance and in the dances we will create.

3. Discuss expectations for safe dancing. Chart student response.

   - What do you do when you are dancing so that everyone feels respected and safe so that they can be creative?

   - Music: “BrainDance of Expression, Fourth Grade” #5 Reading Dances

   - This BrainDance will warm-up your brain and your body and also give you the chance to generate ideas of ways to express feelings through movement. Being able to show emotions with your movements will help you to be more successful in dancing the plot of a story.

   **Breath**
   - Breathe gently.

   **Tactile**
   - Irritably tap from the top of your head all the way to your toes.

   **Core-Distal**
   - Confidently grow into a large shape and doubtfully shrink into a small shape.

   **Head-Tail**
   - Carefully curl forwards and backwards and from side to side.
Upper Half and Lower Half
- The top half of your body is in motion, while the lower half is frozen. Move with excitement.
- The lower half of your body is in motion, while the upper half is frozen. Move nervously.

Body-Half Right and Left
- Your left side is frozen and only the right side dances. Be frustrated.
- Now the right side is frozen and the left half dances. Move strongly.

Eye-Tracking
- Keep your eyes on your right thumb. Quietly move it from one side to the other and up and down.
- Sadly watch your left thumb moving side to side and up and down.

Cross-Lateral
- Show how terrific you feel as you reach across up high, up high, down low, down low.

Spin/Vestibular
- Apprehensively turn and be fantastic when you freeze in a shape. Repeat several times.

Breath
- Breathe gently.

5. Conduct brief exploration of dance concepts of self and general space and shape.

Mini-lesson

Music: Drum

- When you dance while staying in one spot, dancers call that self-space. Movements in self-space are called non-locomotor movements.
- When you dance while traveling through the empty space in the room, dancers call that general space. Movements in general space are called locomotor movements.
- Notice when I make a shape, I am using my whole body – my arms, legs, head, and spine. My body is frozen; nothing is moving, except that I can breathe and blink.
- I’ll play the drum and call out either self or general space for you to move in. When the drum stops, freeze in a shape.
- You are generating ideas you could choose to use in your dance.
6. Demonstrate and support students in drafting choreography of actions to show what happens in the important events. Guide rehearsal of three movements with repetition for each important event. Ask students to notate movement choices.

Interpreting, group conferring

Music: “Fiesta”, “Dancing Digits”, “The Bayou Both-step”, or “Mr. E”, from *Music for Creative Dance, Volume III*, or “Road to Neah Bay,” from *Music for Creative Dance, Volume I* or “Pink Dolphins of the Amazon” from *Music for Creative Dance, Volume V* by Eric Chappelle

Students work in small groups, each group dancing one of the five to six most important events.

Choose one piece of music to use for all the small group dances.

- Now that we’re warmed up, we are going to generate ideas to transform the actions we selected into movement.

- As an example, I’ll pick three actions from a less important event. I’ll choose one movement to show each action. I’ll use what I have already learned about dance to give me ideas. I’ll use self-space and general space. I’ll start and end in a shape. I’ll use repetition, so I’ll do each movement several times.

- Your job is to choose three movements, one for each action of the important event.

- Think about what you know about dance. Think about the words in the text from which you can infer movements. Your movements will show the emotions and actions of the characters. You could use both self and general space.

- Keep the movements simple so that everyone can do them.

- Decide how many times you want to repeat each movement. Start and end in a shape. Hold your shape for about three seconds at the beginning and three seconds at the end.

- Then, practice together.

- Since we will continue to refine our dances in the next lesson, notate your movement choices on your Important Event Choreographer’s Worksheet. Describing dances in words is a good strategy for self-reflection. Be specific, so that someone who wasn’t in the room when you created your dance would know just what to do by reading your description. It will help you remember your choices when we dance again.

Criteria-based process assessment: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape.
7. Describe and discuss how students can use the 21st Century Skill of collaboration when they work with their groups. Guide rehearsal.

- As you are working as a group, you are using a 21st Century Skill — collaboration!
- What does an effective collaboration look like?

☐ Elicit responses from students.

- Let’s incorporate some of the strategies you have suggested as you rehearse and refine your dances. Notice how you are communicating, compromising, and incorporating feedback when you are collaborating.

☐ Criteria-based teacher checklist and self-assessment: Communicates ideas to others; makes compromises; incorporates input/feedback.

8. Direct the performances of the drafts of the dance, in the order that each important event happens in the book. Review performer and audience behavior.

☐ Sharing

☐ When assessing the dance criteria in this lesson, any students who are not meeting criteria will be very clear to you, so you may want to use a reverse checklist, putting a “0” where students have not met criteria, rather than trying to noteate every single one who has met criteria. You can go back later and give those who have met criteria a “1.” This information will let you know who needs more practice, to guide your future instruction. You will have a final opportunity to assess the dance criteria on day three.

- You will be performing the drafts of your dance in the order that your important events occur in the book – the sequence. By looking at all the dances in order, you will see the big picture of the plot from our book.
- Be expressive. Let your movements show the emotions and actions of the characters.
- Remind me, what do we expect from the audience? What do we expect from the performers?

☐ Criteria-based teacher checklist: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape.


☐ Responding

- Let’s reflect, by describing our dances and thinking about how they show the most important points in the plot of the book.
- Performers, describe how your movements showed what happened in your important event.
- Audience, what did you see? Be specific in describing the movements. What parts of their bodies did the dancers use? What dance concepts did they use? What movements did they repeat?
- What strategies did you use to collaborate with your group as you created your dance?
- *We’ll have another day to refine and rehearse our dances and put them all together in performance.*

Several additional opportunities for students to rehearse and refine the dances before the final performance will build mastery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria-based teacher checklist, self and peer assessment: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Day Three

1. Describe the plan for Day Three: refining, rehearsing, performing, and reflecting.

   - Today, we will be using the creative process of reflection. We’ll refine and rehearse our dances, perform them in order, and talk about how the dances show what we know about the most important events in the book.

2. Lead students in BrainDance of Expression warm-up.
   Music: “BrainDance of Expression, Fourth Grade” #5 Reading Dances

   - Interpreting, group conferring
   Music: “Fiesta”, “Dancing Digits”, “The Bayou Both-step”, or “Mr. E”, from Music for Creative Dance, Volume III, or “Road to Neah Bay,” from Music for Creative Dance, Volume I or “Pink Dolphins of the Amazon” from Music for Creative Dance, Volume V by Eric Chappelle

   - As you refine and organize your movement choices, you are constructing meaning.

   - At the same time, notice how you are using the 21st Century Skill of collaboration.

   - Here is your task for this rehearsal. Keep referring to this chart and it will guide you through the process of refining your dance.

      **Choreography Refinement Task Chart**

      - Review the movements you created.
      - How do your movements show what happens in the three actions of your important event?
      - How did the action words in the story inform your choices? Are there any changes you should make so the meaning is more clear?
      - Do you have a beginning and an ending shape? Do you hold your shapes for three seconds?
      - Will you use self and general space?
      - Decide how many times you will repeat each movement.
      - Practice, practice, practice.

   - Criteria-based teacher checklist, self and peer assessment: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape. Communicates ideas to others; makes compromises; incorporates input/feedback.

4. Direct the performance of the Most Important Event Dances without stopping in between dances.
   - Sharing

      - In order for everyone to experience the plot of our book from beginning to end, we’ll dance each important event from the beginning to the end, without taking a break between each one.

   - Criteria-based teacher checklist: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape.
5. Facilitate verbal and written response to the dance.

- Responding, turn and talk, assessing

- Distribute Important Event Choreographer’s Response Worksheets, and completed Important Event Choreographer’s Worksheets for reference.

  - *Let’s reflect on our dance experiences. Turn and talk with a partner. How did the dances show the important events in the plot of the book?*
  
  - *What did you discover from your conversation with your partner?*
  
  - *Now, think about your own dance. Describe or draw a picture of your beginning shape. Describe one of the movements from your dance. Describe how that movement shows what happened in the important event. Describe or draw your ending shape. You can use your Important Event Choreographer’s Worksheets to help you.*

Criteria-based teacher checklist, group reflection: Creates movements that show the important actions of the event, repeats the movements, and performs a beginning and an ending shape. Chooses one key action from the event; in writing, describes the action and the movement that shows what happened in that action.

Extension:
Show videos of dancers demonstrating repetition. Lead discussion.

- Sharing professional work

Video examples:
  1) The Gumboot Dance from *Umoja*, a South African musical: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3x9EOYtQzk4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3x9EOYtQzk4)
  2) La Culebra by the Ballet Folclórico de la Universidad de Guadalajara: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQjEU_XcrZQ&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQjEU_XcrZQ&feature=related)

- *Dancers use repetition to make their choreography more interesting. Let’s generate ideas by looking at these dancers. The first example is dancers from South Africa doing the Gumboot Dance. The second example is dancers from Mexico doing a dance called La Culebra. How did the dancers use repetition? Is it similar or different from how we used repetition in our dances?*
**Sequence: Most Important Events Dance**  
**Important Event Choreographer’s Worksheet**

Name: ___________________________  
Date: _________

Title of your important event: ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the three important things that happened (the actions) in your event?</th>
<th>What movements will you do to show the things that happened (the actions)?</th>
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Important Event Choreographer’s Response Worksheet

Name: ___________________________________________ Date: ______

Title of your important event: ___________________________________________

Does my dance have a starting shape?  yes  or  no

What is it?

_____________________________________________________________________

Does my dance show what happened in our important event?

yes  or  no

What is one thing that happened (an action) from your important event?

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Describe the movement you did to show that action.

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Does my dance use repetition?  yes  or  no

Give one example of repetition:

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Does my dance have an ending shape?  yes  or  no

What is it?

_____________________________________________________________________
• Review the movements you created.

• How do your movements show what happens in the three actions of your important event?

• How did the action words in the story inform your choices? Are there any changes you should make so the meaning is more clear?

• Do you have a beginning and an ending shape? Do you hold your shapes for three seconds?

• Will you use self and/or general space?

• Decide how many times you will repeat each movement.

• Practice, practice, practice.
Teachers may choose to use or adapt the following self-assessment tool.

**STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplines</th>
<th>LITERACY</th>
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<td>Selects and notates three actions from a key event.</td>
<td>Creates movements that show the important actions of the event.</td>
<td>Repeats the movements.</td>
<td>Performs a beginning and an ending shape.</td>
<td>Communicates ideas to others; makes compromises; incorporates input/feedback.</td>
<td>Describes one action.</td>
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### CLASS ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

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**What was effective in the lesson? Why?**

**What do I want to consider for the next time I teach this lesson?**

**What were the strongest connections between dance and literacy?**

Teacher: ___________________ Date: ___________________
Dear Family:

Today your child participated in an Arts and Literacy lesson. We talked about determining the most important events in the plot or sequence of a book.

- We generated ideas by choosing the six most important events in our book.
- We selected which actions occurred in an important event from the book.
- We did the BrainDance of Expression to warm-up our brains and our bodies.
- We created movements that showed the actions in our important event.
- We used the 21st Century Skill of collaboration as we worked with our groups.
- We used repetition to make our dance sequences more interesting.
- We put all of our dances together in order to show the plot of our book.
- We reflected upon our process by analyzing the choices we made for our dances.

At home, you could read a book together and decide which events are the most important. Ask your child to show you how to use repetition to dance an action from the book.

**Enduring Understanding**

Identifying important events and illustrating the actions through movement can show the plot of a work of literature.
The Phantom Tollbooth

Six Important Events

1. Milo finds a package.

2. Lost in the doldrums, he meets Tock.

3. They visit Dictionopolis.

4. They visit Digitopolis.

5. They rescue the Princesses (Rhyme and Reason).

6. Milo goes back home.
The Phantom Tollbooth
Six Important Events

1. Milo finds a package.
   • He discovers the package.
   • He opens the package.
   • He takes out a miniature tollbooth, a map of the Lands Beyond, and a note, "for Milo, who has plenty of time".

2. Lost in the doldrums, he meets Tock.
   • He drives through the Doldrums where thinking and laughing are not allowed.
   • He gets lost.
   • Tock (a dog with an alarm clock body) helps him out of the Doldrums and joins him on his journey.

3. They visit Dictionopolis.
   • They visit the word marketplace, where all the world's words and letters are bought and sold.
   • They learn about the Princesses Rhyme and Reason who have been banished to the Castle in the Air.
   • At a banquet where they eat their words, the King gives them his permission to rescue the princesses.

4. They visit Digitopolis.
   • They go to a mine where numbers are saved and jewels are thrown away.
   • They eat subtraction stew, which makes you hungrier.
   • They convince the Mathemagician to let them rescue the princesses.

5. They rescue the Princesses (Rhyme and Reason).
   • Tock flies them away from the Castle (time flies).
   • Demons chase them, but the armies of wisdom save them.
   • They take the princesses home and all celebrate the return of Rhyme and Reason.

6. Milo goes back home.
   • He drives through the tollbooth and arrives in his own bedroom.
   • He is sad and wants the tollbooth to return.
   • He looks around and finds his world is now beautiful and interesting.
**Sequence: Most Important Events Dance Student Worksheet**

**Important Event Choreographer’s Worksheet**

Name: ___________________________ Date: ________

Title of your important event: Finding the Package

<table>
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<tr>
<th>What are the three important actions or actions in your event?</th>
<th>What movements will you do to show the actions?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. He discovers the package.</td>
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<td>2. He opens the package.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. He takes out a miniature tollbooth, a map of the Lands Beyond, and a note, &quot;for Milo, who has plenty of time&quot;.</td>
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</table>
The Raven by Edgar Allen Poe

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
“'Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
“'Tis some visitor entreatings entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreatings entrance at my chamber door;—
This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
“Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened wide the door;—
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, “Lenore?”
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, “Lenore!”—
Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
“Surely,” said I, “surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore—
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore;—
'Tis the wind and nothing more!”

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.
Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
“Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,” I said, “art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore—
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night’s Plutonian shore!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door—
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as “Nevermore.”

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing farther then he uttered—not a feather then he fluttered—
Till I scarcely more than muttered “Other friends have flown before—
On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before.”
Then the bird said “Nevermore.”

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
“Doubtless,” said I, “what it utters is its only stock and store
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of ‘Never—nevermore’.”

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking “Nevermore.”

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom’s core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion’s velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o’er,
But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o’er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.
“Wretch,” I cried, “thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore;
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”
“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore—
Is there—is there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore.”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

“Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!” I shrieked, upstarting—
“Get thee back into the tempest and the Night’s Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quilt the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!”
Quoth the Raven “Nevermore.”

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon’s that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o’er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!