

Suspense in "The Tell-Tale Heart"

Suspense: Anxiety or apprehension resulting from an uncertain, undecided, or mysterious situation. Writers use the following to create suspense: (1) **Pacing:** advancing or developing something at a particular rate or tempo; (2) **Dangerous action:** self-explanatory; (3) **Foreshadowing:** a literary device in which the author gives clues as to what will happen later.

Directions: Identify suspenseful scenes in "The Tell-Tale Heart" and explain whether the suspense is created by pacing, dangerous action, or foreshadowing.

Example of Suspense	Pacing	Dangerous Action	Foreshadowing
<p>"You think that I am mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely and carefully I went to work!"</p>	<p>_____</p>	<p>_____</p>	<p>I'm giddy with excitement. I can't wait to see how wisely and carefully this madman who claims he's not mad went to work. Bring it on, Edgar!</p>

Suspense in "The Tell-Tale Heart" (Example)

Suspense: Anxiety or apprehension resulting from an uncertain, undecided, or mysterious situation. Writers use the following to create suspense: (1) **Pacing:** advancing or developing something at a particular rate or tempo; (2) **Dangerous action:** self-explanatory; (3) **Foreshadowing:** a literary device in which the author gives clues as to what will happen later.

Directions: Identify suspenseful scenes in "The Tell-Tale Heart" and explain whether the suspense is created by pacing, dangerous action, or foreshadowing.

Example of Suspense	Pacing	Dangerous Action	Foreshadowing
"You think that I am mad. Madmen know nothing. But you should have seen me. You should have seen how wisely and carefully I went to work!"	_____	_____	I'm giddy with excitement. I can't wait to see how wisely and carefully this madman who claims he's not mad went to work. Bring it on, Edgar!
"Then I stuck in my head. I moved it slowly, very slowly, so that I might not interfere with the old man's sleep. And then, when my head was well in the room, I undid the lantern just so much that a single thin ray of light fell upon the vulture eye. And this I did for seven long nights -- but I found the eye always closed; and so it was impossible to do the work."	The madman's patience is impressive and maddening, Kill the old man already. Heck, I'm starting to hate the old vulture myself.	_____	_____
"But even yet I kept still. I hardly breathed. I held the lantern motionless. I attempted to keep the ray of light upon the eye. But the beating of the heart increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every second. The old man's terror must have been extreme! The beating grew louder, I say, louder every moment!"	Oh, the narrator is really making me wait and I don't like it. Poe uses a scarcity of words, yet a delay in action to heighten suspense.	_____	_____
"I brought chairs there, and told them to rest. I placed my own seat upon the very place under which lay the body of the victim."	_____	The hardest part about the murder is getting away with it. Setting the officers over the dead body is bold, daring, dangerous, stupid, and suspenseful.	_____
"On the eighth night, I was more than usually careful in opening the door. I had my head in and was about to open the lantern, when my finger slid on a piece of metal and made a noise. The old man sat up in bed, crying out "Who's there?"	Eight nights? That's pacing. The meticulousness of the plan certainly makes the narrator guilty of 1 st degree murder. That is, it's not a spur of the moment decision.	_____	_____

