

First Year Exam in English Literature

Correction

Part I: On 'Annabel Lee' by Edgar Allan Poe (14 Pts.)

Answer the following questions based on the text of the poem. Keep your answers concise.

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may
know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other
thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more
than love—
I and my Annabel Lee—
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of
Heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee; So that her
highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in Heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in Heaven above
Nor the demons down under the sea
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

For the moon never beams, without bringing me
dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my
bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea—
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

1. Identify the **form** and the **thematic form** of “Annabel Lee”. (2 Pts.)

Form: The poem is **strophic** (0,5 Pt), consisting of **six** stanzas. (0,5 Pt)

Thematic form: The poem is a rhyming **ballad/ elegy** (0,5 Pt) that explores themes of **grief and Obsession, the transcendence of love over death.** (0,5 Pt)

2. Identify the **setting** and explain how it is described in the poem. (1,5 Pts.)

Time: **many and many a year ago** (0,5 Pt)

Place: **kingdom by the sea** (0,5 Pt)

Description: **Fairy-tale Atmosphere/ dreamy/ romantic/ beautiful** (0,5 Pt)

3. Find two examples of **figures of speech** and explain them. (2 Pts.)

1. Personification

Example: (0,5 Pt) **"The wind came out of the cloud by night, / Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee."**

Explanation: (0,5 Pt) The wind is treated as a sentient, murderous agent. This attributes human intent to a natural force to show that the universe was "conspiring" against their love.

2. Hyperbole

Example: (0,5 Pt) **"With a love that the wingèd seraphs of Heaven / Coveted her and me."**

Explanation: (0,5 Pt) The speaker claims that their love was so great it caused jealousy among the highest angels. This exaggeration emphasizes the supernatural intensity and "purity" of their bond.

Or: **Metaphor**

Example: **"And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes / Of the beautiful Annabel Lee."**

Explanation: The stars are directly equated to her eyes. This suggests that the deceased has become an omnipresent part of nature, showing the speaker's refusal to accept her physical absence.

4. Identify all the **characters** mentioned in this poem. (2,5 Pts.)

1. The Speaker (0,5 Pt)

2. Annabel Lee (0,5 Pt)

3. The "Highborn Kinsmen" (0,5 Pt)

4. The Seraphs (Angels) (0,5 Pt)

5. The Demons (0,5 Pt)

5. Why does the speaker use the words 'highborn kinsmen' and 'bore her away' instead of simply saying her family buried her? How does this phrasing change the **tone** of the speaker? (2 Pts.)

1. "Highborn kinsmen" (0,5 Pt)

The Meaning: By using "highborn," the speaker points out that her family is of a **higher social class** (noble/rich). By calling them "kinsmen" instead of "family," he makes them sound cold and distant.

2. "Bore her away" (0,5 Pt)

The Meaning: Instead of "buried," this phrase makes it sound like she was **taken by force**. It implies a **conflict** between the speaker and Annabel Lee's family.

- The phrasing changes **the tone** of the speaker from one of pure mourning to one of **anger** and bitterness. (1 Pt)

6. According to the speaker, what **caused the death** of Annabel Lee, and what does this justification suggest about their love? (2 Pts.)

1. The Cause: The speaker blames the jealousy of the **angels** (seraphs) (0,5 Pt). He believes they sent a **"chilling wind"** (0,5 Pt) to kill Annabel Lee because they envied the couple's happiness.

2. What it suggests: This suggests that their love was **supernatural** and so **powerful** that it rivaled the divine. (1 Pt)

7. In your opinion, does 'Annabel Lee' reflect any aspect of the poet's **personal life**? In what way? (2 Pts.)

Yes, (0,5 Pt) the poem reflects Poe's real-life grief over the death of his **young wife, Virginia Clemm**. (0,5 Pt)

Explanation: Poe married Virginia when she was **only 13** (a "child"), like how the speaker and Annabel Lee were children when they loved. Virginia died young from **a disease** (tuberculosis). In the poem, Poe uses the "chilling wind" as a metaphor for the illness that took his wife away. (1 Pt)

Part II: A Comparative Analysis (6 Pts.)

Compare the poems in short paragraphs using specific examples from the texts.

1. How does Poe describe the stars in “Annabel Lee” in comparison to their description in “Funeral Blues”? Explain the contradiction in how each speaker **welcomes** or **rejects** the natural world after the death of their beloved. **(3 Pts.)**

1. The Description of the Stars:

In “Annabel Lee”: Poe describes the stars as **“bright eyes”**. He sees them as a **beautiful**, living reminder of her presence. **(1 Pt)**

In “Funeral Blues”: Auden wants to **“put out”** the stars. To him, they are **useless and unwanted** now that his lover is dead. **(1 Pt)**

2. Welcome vs. Reject

Poe (Welcomes Nature): He **welcomes** the natural world, because he is a **Romantic** who believes the stars and moon are a bridge to Annabel’s soul. **(0,5 Pt)**

Auden (Rejects Nature): He **rejects** the natural world, because he is a **Modernist** who wants to destroy the universe because it **no longer has meaning** (absurd) and serve no purpose in a world without his lover. **(0,5 Pt)**

2. Compare how Wordsworth and Poe describe their beloved women in the final lines of “A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal” and “Annabel Lee”. How does this description reflect a change in the **state of mind** of the and the tone of speakers at the end? **(3 Pts.)**

1. The Description

Wordsworth: He describes his beloved (Lucy) as a **part of nature**, but as **physical object** like a “rock” or “tree” (**a part of the earth**). **(1 Pt)**

Poe: He describes his beloved as his **“life and my bride,”**. So, he also sees her as a **part of nature**, but as a **living spirit** found in the beauty of the moon and stars. **(1 Pt)**

2. Change in State of Mind and Tone

Wordsworth: His tone is **calm**, since he **accepts** the cold reality that death is a return to nature. **(0,5 Pt)**

Poe: His tone is **peaceful and romantic**, as he shifts to emphasizing the **strength of their love** that can never be severed. **(0,5 Pt)**