

Name:

Date:

Anticipation Activity
"The Cask of Amontillado"

Part A Directions: Write down the first word that comes to your mind as you read each word below.

Example:

Field

Baseball

1. Carnival

2. Respect

3. Drink

4. Insult

5. Court Jester

6. Vault

7. Punishment

8. Masonry

9. Brotherhood

10. Bones

Part B Directions: Write a prediction about what you think this story will be about.

PREVIEW

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Name:

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Vocabulary "The Cask of Amontillado"

| Vocabulary Word | Part of speech | Definition in my own words |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| venture | verb | |
| impunity | noun | |
| immolation | noun | |
| connoisseur | noun | |
| imposture | noun | |
| accost | verb | |
| abscond | verb | |
| flambeaux | noun | |
| gait | noun | |
| gesticulation | noun | |
| grotesque | adjective | |
| aperture | noun | |

Answer Key: Vocabulary "The Cask of Amontillado"

| Vocabulary Word | Part of speech | Definition in my own words |
|-----------------|----------------|--|
| venture | verb | dare to do something dangerous |
| impunity | noun | exemption from punishment or consequences |
| immolation | noun | The act of being killed as a sacrifice |
| connoisseur | noun | a person who is an expert in something, usually an art |
| imposture | noun | The act of pretending to be someone else to deceive people |
| accost | verb | attack someone verbally and aggressively |
| abscond | verb | To leave in a hurry |
| flambeaux | noun | a flaming torch |
| gait | noun | A person's manner of walking |
| gesticulation | noun | A dramatic hand or body gesture |
| grotesque | adjective | Describes repulsively ugly or distorted |
| aperture | noun | an opening, hole, or gap |

Name:

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“The Cask of Amontillado” Edgar Allan Poe
Reading Questions

Background: This story takes place in Italy during The Carnival of Venice (Carnevale di Venezia). Carnival is an annual festival known for its big parades, masquerade balls, entertainment, music, and parties. People wear costumes or masks, throw confetti in the air, and celebrate in the streets. Mischief and pranks are common during Carnival. You could compare it to Mardi Gras which is celebrated in the United States. It was a very famous holiday in Italy during the eighteenth century. Carnival is now a global sensation that is celebrated in over 50 countries around the world. Every city has its own unique traditions and way of celebrating. It is one last party before Ash Wednesday and the restrictions of Christian Lent begin. *"a Carnevale ogni scherzo vale!"* (anything goes at Carnevale!)

1. Why does Montresor want to get revenge?
2. What does Montresor mean when he says he wants to not only punish Fortunato, but punish with impunity?
3. What does Montresor mean when he says, “It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong”?
4. How does Montresor keep Fortunato unsuspecting of his plans?
5. What is Fortunato’s weakness?
6. Why did Fortunato so willingly go down to the catacombs with Montresor?
7. What is Fortunato wearing? Why might this be foreshadowing?
8. Why did all Montresor's servants go home for the evening?
9. Why is it ironic that Montresor keeps referring to Fortunato as “my friend”?
10. What ways does Montresor make sure Fortunato stays calm as they walk through the vault?
11. What can readers conclude from the dialogue between Montresor and Fortunato regarding family and brotherhood?

12. Montresor imitates Fortunato's cries for help. "I replied to the yells of him who clamored. I re-echoed - I aided - I surpassed them in volume and in strength." Why would Montresor do this?

13. How does Edgar Allan Poe build suspense in the story?

14. Why does Fortunato laugh and tell Montresor that they will joke about this later?

15. How does the setting contribute to the overall mood of the story?

16. What are Fortunato's last words to Montresor? Why are they significant?

17. Why should readers not be surprised that Montresor didn't let Fortunato go?

18. What does Montresor hear as he thrusts his torch into the aperture?

19. What is the last line of the story? What do you think it means?

20. What is ironic about Fortunato's name?

21. How long has Fortunato been dead?

22. What is one the theme of this story?

23. A sociopath is a term used to describe someone who has antisocial personality disorder (ASPD). People with ASPD don't respect social norms or laws, they lie for personal gain, and they do not feel guilt or remorse. Would you consider Montresor a sociopath? Explain why or why not.

24. To whom is Montresor telling his story do you think? Why?

Answer Key
“The Cask of Amontillado” Edgar Allan Poe
Reading Questions

Background: This story takes place in Italy during The Carnival of Venice (Carnevale di Venezia). Carnival is an annual festival known for its big parades, masquerade balls, entertainment, music, and parties. People wear costumes or masks, throw confetti in the air, and celebrate in the streets. Mischief and pranks are common during Carnival. You could compare it to Mardi Gras which is celebrated in the United States. It was a very famous holiday in Italy during the eighteenth century. Carnival is now a global sensation that is celebrated in over 50 countries around the world. Every city has its own unique traditions and way of celebrating. It is one last party before Ash Wednesday and the restrictions of Christian Lent begin. *"a Carnevale ogni scherzo vale!"* (anything goes at Carnevale!)

1. Why does Montresor want to get revenge?

Fortunato has insulted him.

2. What does Montresor mean when he says he wants to not only punish Fortunato, but punish with impunity?

He means he wants get revenge without being punished for the act.

3. What does Montresor mean when he says, “It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong”?

He means that Fortunato must know that it is Montresor that is committing the act of retaliation otherwise there is no point in the revenge.

4. How does Montresor keep Fortunato unsuspecting of his plans?

He is friendly to his face and smiles like nothing is wrong (although he is smiling at the thought of killing him).

5. What is Fortunato’s weakness?

Fortunato is proud and pretentious, particularly when it comes to fine wine.

6. Why did Fortunato so willingly go down to the catacombs with Montresor?

His arrogance and credulousness. Fortunato wanted to prove he knows wine. Montresor said he was going to ask Luchresi for an opinion on the Amontillado, so Fortunato insisted he check it out instead because he was more of a wine connoisseur than Luchresi.

7. What is Fortunato wearing? Why might this be foreshadowing?

He is dressed in motley (a court jester costume). A court jester is known as a fool or clown. Perhaps Montresor is going to make a fool of him.

8. Why did all Montresor's servants go home for the evening?

Montresor told his servants that he would not be back until morning, and gave them explicit orders not to leave. He manipulated them because he knew as soon as he said he would not be home all night, they would leave work and go have fun.

9. Why is it ironic that Montresor keeps referring to Fortunato as “my friend”?

It is verbal irony, as Montresor is simply manipulating Fortunato and pretending they are friends so that Fortunato doesn’t believe he is in any danger.

10. What ways does Montresor make sure Fortunato stays calm as they walk through the vault?

Montresor keeps Fortunato drunk and continuously drinking. He makes Fortunato feel like this whole venture is his own idea. He also pays him compliments, such as he is so admired and respected, he wouldn't know what to do if something bad would happen to him. Montresor tells Fortunato several times that they should turn around and go back, the nitre is not good for their health. Montresor tells Fortunato they can turn back at any time which makes Fortunato probably feel safe.

11. What can readers conclude from the dialogue between Montresor and Fortunato regarding family and brotherhood?

Fortunato is completely unaware that he has offended Montresor. He can't recall Montresor's family's arms because he does not care. He also further insults Montresor by saying he could never be a mason... then Montresor pulls out a trowel.

12. Montresor imitates Fortunato's cries for help. "I replied to the yells of him who clamored. I re-echoed - I aided - I surpassed them in volume and in strength." Why would Montresor do this?

He wants to show Fortunato that no one can hear him... he is doomed.

13. How does Edgar Allan Poe build suspense in the story?

In first person point of view, Poe begins the story with the narrator Montresor saying he is going to get revenge. Montresor does not tell readers his exact plan though, so we hear about it as he describes how it actually occurred. As he walks through the catacombs with his unsuspecting victim, it builds anticipation and suspense as readers wonder *what is he going to do and when is he going to do it?* Then once he chains Fortunato up, Poe still slowly describes the crime, tier by tier as Montresor seals Fortunato in the tomb.

14. Why does Fortunato laugh and tell Montresor that they will joke about this later?

Fortunato pretends to laugh and pretends to be in on the joke which he hopes is just *that*: a very complex practical joke. Fortunato hopes that Montresor will let him go if Fortunato agrees to laugh about the whole thing and hold no grudges. Fortunato wants Montresor to understand that his point has been made.

15. How does the setting contribute to the overall mood of the story?

The mood is ominous, suspenseful, claustrophobic, impending, looming, and sinister. The setting takes place in the vaults, down in the catacombs, surrounded by dead bodies, with a foulness of the air, the walls are lined with human remains, and it's dark and deserted. The setting of being far away from everyone else in a place where dead bodies are makes the mood creepy and terrifying. It's especially sinister because everyone else in the city is celebrating Carnival and having fun; no one knows they are down there.

16. What are Fortunato's last words to Montresor? Why are they significant?

"For the love of God, Montresor!" Fortunato at last breaks down and, realizing the deathly consequences of the situation, resorts to a prayer for earthly salvation. He shows his vulnerability and that he does not want to die.

17. Why should readers not be surprised that Montresor didn't let Fortunato go?

In the beginning of the story, Montresor made it clear that he would only commit a crime if there were to be no consequences, and for that to be true in this situation, he could never let Fortunato go.

18. What does Montresor hear as he thrusts his torch into the aperture?

All he hears is the jingling of the bells from Fortunato's costume.

19. What is the last line of the story? What do you think it means?

"In pace requiescat!" It actually means "rest in peace." It's another example of verbal irony and shows how unsympathetic Montresor feels toward Fortunato.

20. What is ironic about Fortunato's name?

His name comes from the word "fortune," meaning good luck and success, yet in this story, his situation is quite UNFORTUNATE; he finds himself in serious trouble.

21. How long has Fortunato been dead?

50 years, half a century.

22. What is one theme of this story?

Answers will vary.

- Be careful who you trust.
- People will go to extremes to get revenge.
- Pride can be dangerous (it's both the reason why Montresor seeks revenge —over hurt pride—and it's the reason Fortunato goes down in the vault —because of his pride for knowing vintage wine)
- Alcohol hinders rational thinking and inhibits natural instinct which can leave you unprotected.
- Be careful how you treat others.

23. A sociopath is a term used to describe someone who has antisocial personality disorder (ASPD). People with ASPD don't respect social norms or laws, they lie for personal gain, and they do not feel guilt or remorse. Would you consider Montresor a sociopath? Explain why or why not.

Answers will vary. "My heart grew sick" may imply remorse. Up for interpretation.

25. To whom is Montresor telling his story do you think? Why?

Answers will vary. Could be a priest? A confession? The police? A friend?

Name:

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**“The Cask of Amontillado” Edgar Allan Poe
Quick Summary 5 W’s**

Who:

PREVIEW

What:

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Where:

PREVIEW

When:

NOT FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Why:

PREVIEW

How would you rate this story on a scale of 1-5? Explain in a paragraph below.

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Name:

Date:

**“The Cask of Amontillado” Edgar Allan Poe
Quick Summary 5 W’s**

Who: *Who is the story about?*

Montresor and Fortunato go down into the vaults. Montresor is a sinister, intelligent character who is seeking revenge. Fortunato is a pompous, drunk who thinks everyone adores him.

What: *What is the story about?*

Montresor wants to kill Fortunato. They were once friends, but Montresor is upset with Fortunato. Montresor gets Fortunato drunk, and takes him down into the vaults to kill him.

Where: *Where does it take place?*

The story takes place in Venice, Italy. The two old friends spend the majority of the time in the catacombs.

When: *When does it take place?*

It takes place during Carnival festival. It takes place at night while everyone is partying and out having fun.

Why: *Why does it take place?*

Montresor kills Fortunato by sealing him in a tomb because Fortunato has insulted him a thousand times. The revenge must be as final as death because Montresor does not want to face consequences.

How would you rate this story on a scale of 1-5? Explain in a paragraph below.

Answers will vary.

Name:

Date:

**“The Cask of Amontillado” by Edgar Allan Poe
Would You Rather...**

Part A: Circle one answer that best fits how you feel.

Would you rather....

Be buried alive

Be insulted

Be told when you're being offensive

Get revenge

Be betrayed by a friend

Have too much pride

Be friends with Montresor

Face consequences of your actions

Take the law into your own hands

Have no friends

Feel guilty forever

Defend yourself

Be killed by someone you know

Know if you're insane

Be burned alive

Be the insulter

Be yourself no matter how offensive you are to others

Forgive those who wrong you

Betray a friend

Have too much ignorance

Be friends with Fortunato

Live with a huge secret

Let karma or other higher beings take control

Have all secret enemies as friends

Deny any wrongdoings

Let it go

Be killed by a stranger

Be unaware if you're insane

Part B: Choose one of the statements from above and write a paragraph explaining why you would choose one option over the other.