



Biography of Edgar Allan Poe

Edgar Allan Poe was born in Boston on January 19, 1809. After losing his parents at a very young age—his father left the family and his mother died in 1811—he was taken in by the Allan family in Richmond, Virginia, though he was never officially adopted. He studied in England for a few years before returning to the United States. Tensions soon arose between Poe and his adoptive father, John Allan, partly because of Allan's business problems and Poe's debts, which he accumulated while studying at the University of Virginia.

In the late 1820s, after a short time in the military and the publication of his first poems, Poe focused on writing. His first big success came in 1833 when he won a prize for his short story **"Manuscript Found in a Bottle."** In 1836, he married his cousin, Virginia Clemm, who was only 13 years old. Their marriage was difficult, marked by financial problems and illness.

Living in Philadelphia and later in New York, Poe became a key figure in literary journalism, working for magazines like *Southern Literary Messenger* and *Graham's Magazine*. His work often ruffled feathers among his contemporaries, as he was known for being a harsh critic, earning the ire of fellow writers like Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and James Russell Lowell. He published many short stories, reviews, and essays, gaining attention for his sharp style and his love for the strange and the macabre. His most famous works include **"The Murders in the Rue Morgue"** (1841), the first modern detective story, and **"The Raven"** (1845), a poem that brought him lasting fame.

Despite his literary success, Poe's personal life was full of difficulties. His wife, Virginia, died of tuberculosis in 1847, which deepened his depression and struggles with alcohol. Poe, in despair, even attempted suicide at one point. After Virginia's death, Poe rekindled his romance with childhood sweetheart Sarah Elmira Royster. Although she offered him comfort and a brief glimpse of happiness, their relationship was short-lived due to Poe's ongoing struggles and controversial reputation. He had complicated relationships with several women, including the poet Sarah Helen Whitman, but his troubled reputation and personal issues kept him from finding peace.

On October 3, 1849, Poe was found in a confused state in Baltimore. He was taken to a hospital but never fully recovered and died on October 7 under mysterious circumstances. He was buried in Baltimore, and his genius as a writer was only fully recognized years after his death.

In France, the poet Charles Baudelaire played a key role in promoting Poe's work, translating his stories and presenting him as a model for the decadent movement and the idea of "Art for Art's sake." Poe remains an iconic figure in literature, admired for his dark tales, melancholic poems, and his influence on detective stories and the horror genre.

Questions on Edgar Allan Poe's Life

(Circle the correct answer)

1. **Where was Edgar Allan Poe born?**
 - a) New York
 - b) Boston
 - c) Philadelphia
 2. **What happened to Poe's parents when he was very young?**
 - a) They moved to England
 - b) They both passed away
 - c) They sent him to live with his grandparents
 3. **Who took care of Poe after his parents died?**
 - a) The Allan family
 - b) The Royster family
 - c) The Poe family
 4. **Where did Poe study for a few years as a child?**
 - a) France
 - b) England
 - c) Canada
 5. **What caused tension between Poe and his adoptive father, John Allan?**
 - a) John Allan wanted Poe to join the army
 - b) Poe was always getting into trouble at school
 - c) Poe's debts and John Allan's business problems
 6. **What was the title of Poe's first successful short story?**
 - a) "The Raven"
 - b) "The Black Cat"
 - c) "Manuscript Found in a Bottle"
 7. **Poe was 27 when he married Virginia Clemm, how old was she?**
 - a) 13 years old
 - b) 16 years old
 - c) 19 years old
 8. **Which of these stories is considered the first modern detective story?**
 - a) "The Murders in the Rue Morgue"
 - b) "The Tell-Tale Heart"
 - c) "The Gold-Bug"
 9. **How did Poe's wife, Virginia, die?**
 - a) From tuberculosis
 - b) In a car accident
 - c) From cancer
 10. **Who helped make Poe's work famous in France?**
 - a) Victor Hugo
 - b) Charles Baudelaire
 - c) Émile Zola
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Correct Answers

1. b) Boston
2. b) They both passed away
3. a) The Allan family
4. b) England
5. c) Poe's debts and John Allan's business problems
6. c) "Manuscript Found in a Bottle"
7. a) 13 years old
8. a) "The Murders in the Rue Morgue"
9. a) From tuberculosis
10. b) Charles Baudelaire



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