# Character Analysis

Name: _____

Date: _____

Fill in the table with information about the characters in A *Madman's Manuscript*. Give as much information as you can in each box.

| Character | Physical description | Personality description | Relationship to other characters | Role in the story (what are the most important things the character does?) | Narrator's opinion of the character |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  NARRATOR | | | | | |
|  BRIDE | | | | | |
|  THREE HAUGHTY BROTHERS | | | | | |
|  WHITE-HEADED FATHER | | | | | |

# Matching exercise

Name: _____

Date: _____

**1.** Match each phrase from the story with an image. Draw a line to join them.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | *Ho! Ho! It's a grand thing to be mad! to be peeped at like a wild lion through the iron bars – to gnash one's teeth and howl, through the long still night.* | A  |
| 2 | *I knew they were telling each other of the doomed madman; and I slunk away again to mope in solitude.* | B  |
| 3 | *They screamed it into my head till the room rang with it, that in one generation before him the madness slumbered, but that his grandfather had lived for years with his hands fettered to the ground to prevent his tearing himself to pieces.* | C  |
| 4 | *I should have known that the girl would rather have been placed, stiff and cold in a dull leaden coffin, than borne an envied bride to my rich, glittering house.* | D  |
| 5 | *That figure never moves; it never frowns and mouths as others do, that fill this place sometimes; but it is much more dreadful to me, even than the spirits that tempted me many years ago.* | E  |
| 6 | *Now I could have killed her without a struggle; but the house was alarmed.* | F  |
| 7 | *The proud brothers dropped a tear over the insensible corpse of her whose sufferings they had regarded in her lifetime with muscles of iron.* | G  |
| 8 | *His face grew purple; his eyes were starting from his head, and with protruded tongue, he seemed to mock me.* | H  |
| 9 | *I was borne upon the arms of demons who swept along upon the wind, and bore down bank and hedge before them, and spun me round and round with a rustle and a speed that made my head swim.* | I  |

# Glossary

Name: _____

Date: _____

**Monarch**: (n) king or queen

**Gnash**: (v) grind your teeth together

**Twine**: (v) wind around something

**Marrow**: (n) the substance on the inside of bones

**Pestilence**: (n) a fatal epidemic disease

**Dusky**: (adj) dark in colour

**Fetter**: (v) restrain with chains or manacles

**Dexterity**: (n) skill

**Court**: (v) pursue someone for marriage

**Profuse**: (adj) very plentiful

**Deference**: (n) submission and respect

**Gay**: (adj) brightly coloured or light-hearted

**Borne**: (v) carried

**Wretched**: (adj) in a very unhappy or unfortunate state

**Resolve**: (v) decide

**Jest**: (n) joke

**Stropping**: (v) sharpening

**Listless**: (adj) lacking energy or enthusiasm

**Placid**: (adj) calm and peaceful

**Cowed**: (adj) intimidated

**Quail**: (v) show fear or apprehension

**Bereft**: (adj) lacking

**Gaudy**: (adj) extravagant or over-the-top

**Resound**: (v) fill or echo throughout a place

**Insensible**: (adj) unable to use your mental faculties; unconscious

**Mirth**: (n) amusement

**Dissipation**: (n) overindulgence in sensual pleasures

**Reproach**: (v) express disapproval

## BEFORE YOU READ

How do you think ideas about mental illness have changed since Dickens's day? Why might a writer of ghost stories choose a narrator who is locked away?

Have you ever read or watched a story told by someone who might not be telling the truth? How do you decide how far to trust a narrator?



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# Quiz

Name: _____

Date: _____

Please choose the best option for each of the following questions.

**1.** Why is the narrator no longer scared of the term "madman"?

(a) Because he has now recovered from his mental problems

(b) Because of the fear commanded by the mad

(c) Because it is simply a word, nothing more

(d) He was never scared of the term

**2.** Why does the narrator claim to have known that he would become mad?

(a) He deliberately nurtured madness within himself

(b) Madness runs in his family

(c) He had a terrible experience that would drive anyone to madness

**3.** What did the narrator do when the madness came over him?

(a) He kept it secret and continued to live a normal life

(b) He immediately turned himself over to the authorities

(c) He strapped himself to his bed and told his servant not to let him out

**4.** How many brothers did the narrator's new wife have?

(a) 3

(b) 1

(c) She had no siblings

(d) She had no brothers, but 3 sisters

**5.** Why wasn't the bride happy with the marriage?

(a) She realised that her new husband was a madman

(b) She was in love with a dark-eyed boy

(c) She disagreed with the institution of marriage

**6.** How does the narrator know the girl was beautiful, despite his failure to remember forms or faces?

(a) Her wasted form appears in his cell on bright moonlit nights

(b) He keeps her photograph on his bedside

(c) She comes to visit him every weekend

**7.** What makes the narrator determined to kill his wife?

(a) He develops a wild hatred for her

(b) He wants to see what it will feel like

(c) He doesn't want her to give birth to a child destined to pass madness down to further generations

(d) Her haughty brothers and white-haired father cause him grave offence

**8.** What methods of murder does the narrator initially consider? Choose all that apply.

[a] Poison

[b] Beheading

[c] Drowning

[d] Fire

[e] Starvation



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# Quiz

Name: _____

Date: _____

**9.** What freezes the narrator in his tracks?

(a) His wife's eyes fixed on his

(b) The realisation of the ghastly deed he's about to commit

(c) His wife leaps up and pins him to the bed

**10.** Why doesn't the narrator kill his wife immediately?

(a) He decides to continue to torment her first

(b) Her fixed gaze causes him to have a change of heart

(c) Her shrieks alert the rest of the house to the commotion

**11.** What does the cleverest doctor tell the narrator?

(a) That his wife is mad

(b) That he knows that he tried to murder his wife

(c) That his wife will soon die

**12.** What happens to the narrator when he remembers how he finally let the world see his madness?

(a) He emits a terrible cackle

(b) He feels an urge to end his life

(c) The strength of a giant comes over him

**13.** Who came to see the narrator with an urgent visit on the night that his madness came out?

(a) His dead wife's proudest brother

(b) His dead wife's white-headed father

(c) A young messenger boy

(d) His dead wife's beloved dark-eyed boy

**14.** What does the narrator's visitor say to him?

(a) That his recent behaviour has insulted his wife's memory

(b) He asks him for money

(c) He comforts him about the death of his wife

(d) He cannot find the words to speak

**15.** What happens to the narrator's visitor when the narrator finally turns his gaze on him?

(a) He is filled with a senseless fury

(b) He begins to weep openly

(c) He draws back and grows fearful

(d) He smiles and becomes more gentle

**16.** Where is the narrator when he wakes up?

(a) In a hospital bed

(b) In a gray cell

(c) Alone in the woods

## If you read it in the iClassics app

Answer these extra questions about what you discover as you read:

**1.** What creature rears up out of the flames on page 2?

**2.** What can you see in the wide and terrified eyes of the narrator's wife?

**3.** What flits across the page as the narrator flees the room to escape his assailants?

**4.** What happens to the pale form of the narrator's wife when you tap it?



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# Think like a detective

Name: _____

Date: _____

Answer in full sentences. Support your ideas with evidence from the text.

**1.** The narrator says "It's a grand thing to be mad!" yet we hear his story from a locked cell. How much do you trust him? Find two details that show he knows what he did, and two that show he cannot see it clearly.

**2.** The narrator fears madness because of his grandfather. How does that fear shape his life, his marriage and his view of other people? Use the story to explain.

**3.** The bride "would rather have been placed, stiff and cold in a dull leaden coffin" than become a bride. What does the story suggest about marriage for money and family pride? Whose voice is missing from the story?



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# Writing

Name: _____

Date: _____

Imagine you are a doctor at the madhouse where the narrator is locked up. Complete the table describing your patient's physical and mental state, and suggest what treatment you think would be suitable for him.

| Section | Doctor's notes |
|---|---|
| **PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS** (what unusual physical actions does the patient do?) | |
| **MENTAL DELUSIONS** (how does the patient describe himself and his condition? Does he see or hear things that are not there?) | |
| **SUGGESTED TREATMENT** (what is needed to keep the patient safe from himself and others, and, if possible, to ease his symptoms?) | |





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