

Read the story and answer the questions in English as fully as you can.

1. In which form and from whose perspective is the story written? *The story is written from the perspective of an I-person who is telling his story to someone. It seems to be the I-person's reply to the accusation of the other person that he was mad. The I-person poses rhetorical questions and seems to argue with the listener, addressing him directly as "you".* **2 pt**
2. Why did the I-person kill the old man? *He does not know exactly, he had no rational reason to do it, except that he was disturbed by the old man's eye.* **2 pt**
3. How did he do it? *He dragged him out of bed at night onto the floor and pulled the bed over him so that the old man suffocated.* **2 pt**
4. What is meant by "the sharpening of senses" of the I-person? What caused it? How did it influence his deeds? Give 3 examples of how "the sharpening of senses" influenced the deeds of the I-person. *The sharpening of senses is hearing and seeing things that cannot normally be seen or heard. It was caused by a not further specified "disease".* 1) *It made him decide to kill the old man – to get rid of his "evil" eye.* 2) *It made him hear the heartbeat of the old man when the latter waited in terror for things to happen in the dark. It was the louder and louder beating of the heart that made the I-person worry that the neighbours might hear it, so that he decided to go ahead and kill the old man.* 3) *And finally the beating of the heart of the dead old man was the reason that the I-person confessed the murder to the police officers.* **3 pt**
5. What is the I-person's definition of madness? *To him madness is the opposite of wisdom. He says that "madmen know nothing", are not able to plan and work systematically and patiently on a project.* **2 pt**
6. What is your opinion: is he mad or not? Motivate your answer. *The I-person is mad because he cannot tell the difference between the reality (or what is reasonable) and what his senses experience. He is also possessed by a single idea of killing the old mad and hiding the deed, without any moral considerations.* **2 pt**

The story is an example of Gothic fiction. The elements often found in Gothic fiction include: terror (both psychological and physical), mystery, ghosts, maniacs, haunted houses, Gothic architecture, castles, darkness, death, decay, doubles, madness, secrets, hereditary curses.

7. Which of the above elements can you find in the Poe's story? Explain their importance to the story. *Terror, maniacs, darkness, death, madness.* **5 pt**