Edgar Allan Poe

Anglická konverzace · prezentace 24. 11. 2026 · limit 5–7 min · text má 818 slov ≈ 6–6¾ min v klidném tempu. Mobil a tablet během prezentace NE, papírové kartičky ano (str. 3).

Text projevu

1 · Edgar Allan Poe ≈ 20 s

Good morning, everyone. Today I'm going to talk about Edgar Allan Poe. He was an American writer and poet, and he lived from 1809 to 1849. Most people know him because of his horror stories, but his own life was also very sad.

2 · What I will talk about ≈ 25 s

First, I will talk about his childhood. Then I will talk about his life as a writer and about his most famous works. After that, I will tell you about his wife Virginia and about his death, which is still a mystery. And at the end, I will say why he is still important today.

3 · Childhood and youth ≈ 46 s

Poe was born in Boston in 1809. His parents were travelling actors. His father left the family, and in 1811 his mother died of tuberculosis. Edgar was only two years old.

A rich merchant from Richmond, Virginia, called John Allan, took him into his family. That's why his middle name is Allan. But John Allan never officially adopted him, and they argued a lot.

When Poe was seventeen, he started studying at the University of Virginia. Allan didn't send him enough money, so Poe started gambling, and he lost a lot. After less than a year, he had to leave.

4 · Life as a writer ≈ 43 s

After that, Poe joined the army, and he used a fake name, Edgar A. Perry. In the same year, he published his first book of poems. Only fifty copies were printed, and his name wasn't even on it. It only said 'by a Bostonian'.

Poe wanted to live only from writing, which was very unusual at that time. He worked for magazines as an editor and a critic. His reviews were very harsh, so people called him 'the Tomahawk Man'. But the magazines paid very little, so he was poor all his life.

5 · His most famous stories ≈ 49 s

Around 1840, Poe wrote his most famous short stories.

In 'The Fall of the House of Usher', a man visits his old friend, who lives in a dark old house. At the end, the house breaks in two and falls into a lake.

In 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue', a detective called Dupin solves a murder just by logical thinking. People often say it was the first modern detective story.

And in 'The Tell-Tale Heart', a man kills an old man and hides the body under the floor. But then he hears the dead man's heart beating, louder and louder, and he tells the police everything.

6 · The Raven ≈ 37 s

In 1845, Poe published his most famous poem, 'The Raven'.

In the poem, a man is sitting alone at night. He is very sad because the woman he loved, Lenore, has died. Then a raven flies into his room. The man asks the raven questions, for example if he will ever see Lenore again. But the raven always answers with only one word: 'Nevermore'.

The poem made Poe famous all over America. But he got only about nine dollars for it.

7 · His wife Virginia ≈ 43 s

In 1836, Poe married his cousin Virginia. She was only thirteen and he was twenty-seven. Even at that time, people thought it was strange. But they really loved each other.

In 1842, Virginia started coughing up blood while she was singing. She had tuberculosis, like Poe's mother. She died five years later, when she was only twenty-four.

Poe once wrote that the death of a beautiful woman is 'the most poetical topic in the world'. You can see this in his poems, for example in 'Annabel Lee', which was probably written about Virginia.

8 · His mysterious death ≈ 48 s

Poe's death is still a mystery.

On the third of October 1849, someone found him in a tavern in Baltimore. He was confused, he couldn't explain what had happened, and he was wearing someone else's clothes. He died in hospital four days later. He was only forty.

Nobody knows exactly why he died. Some people think it was alcohol, others think it was an illness. There is also a theory about election fraud. It was an election day, and gangs sometimes kidnapped people, changed their clothes and made them vote many times.

His medical records were lost, so we will probably never know.

9 · Why he is still important ≈ 41 s

Now, why is Poe still important today?

First, he wrote the first modern detective story. Even Arthur Conan Doyle, who wrote Sherlock Holmes, said: 'Where was the detective story until Poe breathed the breath of life into it?'

Second, he had a big influence on horror stories, and many horror writers learned from him.

And third, he is still part of pop culture. For example, the American football team Baltimore Ravens is named after his poem, and the most famous prize for crime novels is called the Edgar Award.

10 · Thank you ≈ 25 s

To sum up, Poe had a very sad life. He lost the people he loved, he never had money, and even his death is a mystery. But people still read his stories and poems today, almost two hundred years later.

That's all from me. Thank you for your attention. Do you have any questions?

Kartičky do ruky

Vystřihni podle čárkování. Na každé kartičce jen hesla, celé věty máš v hlavě.

1 Edgar Allan Poe

– American writer and poet, 1809–1849
– known for horror stories
– his life was sad too

2 What I will talk about

– 1 childhood
– 2 writer + famous works
– 3 wife Virginia
– 4 his death = mystery
– 5 why still important

3 Childhood and youth

– Boston 1809, parents = actors
– father left, mother † 1811 (TB), Edgar 2
– John Allan, Richmond → middle name, never adopted
– university at 17, gambling, debts
– left after < 1 year

4 Life as a writer

– army, fake name Edgar A. Perry
– 1st book: 50 copies, 'by a Bostonian'
– live only from writing = unusual
– editor + critic → 'Tomahawk Man'
– little money → poor all his life

5 His most famous stories

– Usher: old dark house → breaks, falls into lake
– Rue Morgue: Dupin, logic → 1st detective story
– Tell-Tale Heart: body under floor, heart beating, confesses

6 The Raven

– 1845, most famous poem
– man alone at night, Lenore dead
– raven flies in, he asks questions
– answer always 'Nevermore'
– famous all over America, only ~ $9

7 His wife Virginia

– 1836 married cousin Virginia (13 / 27), strange even then
– 1842 coughing blood while singing → TB (like his mother)
– 1847 † at 24
– 'most poetical topic in the world'
– Annabel Lee = probably about Virginia

8 His mysterious death

– 3 Oct 1849: Baltimore tavern, confused, someone else's clothes
– 7 Oct † in hospital, age 40
– alcohol / illness / election fraud
– gangs: kidnap, change clothes, vote many times
– records lost → never know

9 Why he is still important

– 1) first modern detective story
– Doyle: 'Where was the detective story until Poe breathed the breath of life into it?'
– 2) big influence on horror
– 3) pop culture: Baltimore Ravens, Edgar Award

10 Thank you

– sad life: lost people he loved, no money, death = mystery
– still read ~200 years later
– Thank you. Questions?

Výslovnost

Poe	/poʊ/	pou
Allan	/ˈælən/	elən
Edgar	/ˈedgər/	edgr
macabre	/məˈkɑːbrə/	mə-KÁ-brə
Usher	/ˈʌʃər/	AŠr
Rue Morgue	/ruː mɔːrg/	rů MÓRG
Dupin	/djuːˈpæn/	ďů-PEN
Tell-Tale Heart	/ˈtel teɪl hɑːrt/	TEL-tejl HÁRT
Raven	/ˈreɪvən/	REJ-vən
Lenore	/ləˈnɔːr/	lə-NÓR
Richmond	/ˈrɪtʃmənd/	RIČ-mənd
Baltimore	/ˈbɔːltɪmɔːr/	BÓL-ti-mór
Virginia	/vərˈdʒɪnjə/	vr-DŽIN-jə
tuberculosis	/tjuːˌbɜːrkjəˈloʊsɪs/	ťů-bér-kjə-LOU-sis
tomahawk	/ˈtɒməhɔːk/	TO-mə-hók
fraud	/frɔːd/	fród
poetical	/poʊˈetɪkl/	pou-E-tikl
Conan Doyle	/ˈkoʊnən ˈdɔɪl/	KOU-nən DOJL

Kdyby se pan Amrhein zeptal

Which of his works do you like best, and why?

Pick one you've actually read, e.g. The Tell-Tale Heart: it's short and scary, and you're inside the head of the killer.

Why did he write so much about death?

Death was all around him: his mother, his foster mother, his brother and his wife all died young, most of them of tuberculosis.

What is a Gothic story?

A dark story with old houses, madness, death and a strange, scary atmosphere.

Why did you choose Poe?

Your own answer, e.g. 'I like dark stories, and his life sounded like one of them.'