

SCENARIO

While exploring downtown Richmond with your History class during a field trip, you arrive at St. John's Church, the historic landmark where Patrick Henry gave his famous "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!" speech. After wandering away from the rest of the group, you notice a loose floor board in the corner of the church that seems out of place. When you remove the loose floor board, you realize there is an old wooden box with the letters **ERS** engraved on the lid. Upon opening the box, you discover that it contains a number of old photographs and letters about literary icon Edgar Allan Poe! You cannot believe your eyes! This is just what you need to secure your internship this summer at the Virginia Historical Society.

In a letter to the Virginia Historical Society, analyze the documents from the box as you answer the questions below. You must also conduct additional research using two outside sources. Explain the reasons for your conclusions, and justify those conclusions by explicitly referring to the specific documents. Your answers will be judged not only on the accuracy of the information you provide, but also on how clearly the ideas are presented, how effectively the ideas are organized, and how thoroughly the information is covered.

While your personal values and experiences are important, you should base your response on the evidence provided in the documents, as well as your own two researched items. You must cite your sources using MLA format.

After you write your letter, **arrange the events of Poe's life in sequence** using [Dipity](#). Ensure that your timeline is based on the documents you've reviewed. Compare your timeline with a [timeline of Poe's life](#) from the Poe Museum, and answer the following question as the conclusion paragraph in your letter: *How did the events in Poe's life influence his writing?*

1

Who knew Poe with the initials ERS? Why would this box be hidden in St. John's church? What significance does it hold specifically for Poe? What else can you learn about the city of Richmond from the sources in the box? What specific information in the documentation led you to this conclusion?

2

Who were Maria and Virginia Clemm? What is Poe's relationship with these two women? What can you infer about Poe's relationship with his foster father? Be sure to cite the information in the documentation, as well as any other factors you considered, that led you to this conclusion.

3

What do you learn about Poe's career and the other writers with whom he interacted? What role did Rufus Griswold play in his life and death? What specific information in the documentation and any other factors you considered led you to this conclusion?

4

What do these letters and other sources tell you about his personality? How is his personality reflected in his work? What specific information in the documentation led you to this conclusion?