

Elementary



A2+

R A I N B O W S

The Gold Bug

Edgar Allan Poe



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Edgar Allan Poe

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The Gold Bug

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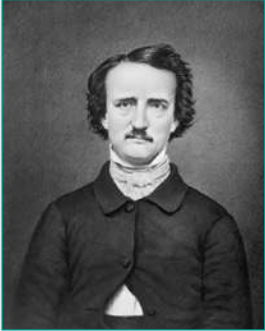
TABLE OF CONTENTS

• Edgar Allan Poe	4
Chapter 1 – Sullivan’s Island	7
• Extension: <i>Sacred animals</i>	17
Chapter 2 – The Expedition	20
• Extension: <i>Old and new pirates</i>	30
Chapter 3 – The Treasure	33
• Extension: <i>Magic experiments</i>	42
Chapter 4 – The Secret Writing	45
• Extension: <i>Slavery</i>	54
Chapter 5 – The Solution	57
• Extension: <i>Treasure hunters at the cinema</i>	66
• SUMMING-UP ACTIVITIES	68
• GLOSSARY	73



The Author

Edgar Allan Poe



Life. Edgar Allan Poe was born on 19th January 1809, in Boston, Massachusetts, USA. His parents – Elizabeth and David – were both actors. When Edgar was only two years old, his father left the family and, some months later, his mother died of tuberculosis¹. Edgar went to live with the Allans who lived in Richmond, West Virginia and he took their surname.

In 1815, the Allans went to live in England with Edgar for five years and when they returned to the United States in 1820, Edgar went to private schools in Richmond. In 1826, he went to the University of Virginia and was a good student.

In 1827, he published his first book of poems and in 1832, he went to Baltimore where he lived with his aunt, Maria Poe Clemm. They lived at 3, Amity street, a house which was later transformed into a museum. It was in that period that Edgar, who was a poet, decided to write short stories and he won the \$50 prize² offered by a Baltimore newspaper for the best short story.

In 1836, he married his cousin, Virginia Clemm, but she had tuberculosis, like Edgar's mother and was always ill.

1. *tuberculosis: a serious infection of the lungs*
2. *prize: money given to a person who wins a competition*
3. *fame: the state of being known by lots of people*
4. *rented: paid money to someone so that he could use a house*



The Pit and the Pendulum (Illustration by Jamés Prunier, 1998)

In 1840, he published his most important stories in a collection called *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*. In 1843, he wrote **The Gold Bug**, which sold 300,000 copies and brought Poe some fame³, but not much money. In 1845, Edgar's most famous poem, *The Raven*, was published and he too finally became famous.

The year 1846 was tragic. The newspaper he was working for closed down and Virginia became very ill. Poe rented⁴ a small house at Fordham and lived there with his wife. However, a year later, in 1847, Virginia died and Edgar was very sad and started drinking alcohol and taking drugs. In 1849, he returned to Richmond and on October 3rd he was found unconscious⁵, while travelling north. He died on 7th October 1849 at 40 years of age; the reasons for his death remain a mystery. He was buried in the cemetery of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Baltimore.

Works. Poe was a poet, a journalist, a writer of long tales and short stories. Here are some of them:

- **Poems:** *Tamerlane, Lenore, The Raven, a Valentine, An Enigma, To My mother.*
- **Long Tales:** *The Murders in the Rue Morgue, The Gold Bug, The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym.*
- **Short stories:** *Ms Found in a Bottle, The Fall of the House of Usher, The Mask of the Red Death, The Pit and the Pendulum, The Black Cat, The Tell-Tale Heart.*

5. unconscious: in a state like sleep because of an injury or illness, and not able to use your senses

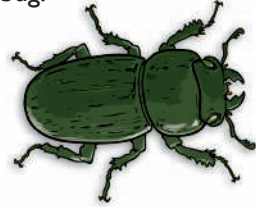




BEFORE READING

1 Match the words with the parts of the bug.

- a. back
- b. leg
- c. antennae
- d. scale
- e. mouth



2 Match these words from Chapter 1 to their definitions.

- | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| a. bay | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. A thick, low plant. |
| b. hut | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. A picture made using a pencil or a pen. |
| c. bush | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. A large strong box used for storing things. |
| d. chest | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. A part of the sea. |
| e. scythe | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. A tool used for cutting long grass. |
| f. spade | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Having white skin. |
| g. drawing | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. A tool used for digging. |
| h. pale | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. A small and simple house. |

3 Look at the pictures on page 9 and answer the following questions.

- a. What is Legrand doing?
- b. What is he wearing?
- c. Where is he sitting on?
- d. What do you think the chest contains?
- e. What is there on the chair?
- f. Describe the room.
- g. Look at the bug on p. 9 and the one in Activity 1 on this page. How are they different?
- h. Where is the bug on p. 9 kept?

Charleston
in 1838

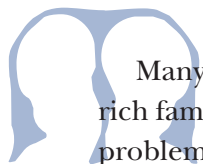


The Gold Bug

Sullivan's Island

BEFORE READING

Chapter 1



Many years ago I met Mr. William Legrand. He came from a rich family but one day he became poor because of some financial problems.

He lived in New Orleans but after his misfortunes¹, he moved to Sullivan's Island, in South Carolina. The island is quite strange. It is about five kilometers long, it is separated from the land by a little bay with shallow² water, its beaches are sandy and there is little vegetation on the island.

In a very far corner of the island, Mr. Legrand built a small hut where he lived alone and it was there that I met him one day and we soon became friends. There were lots of books in his hut, but he rarely read them. He spent his time walking and fishing with an old black man, called Jupiter, who was a kind of servant to Mr. Legrand. Jupiter helped 'Massa Will' (this is how he called him) to find insects, which Legrand collected with great interest and enthusiasm.

One chilly³ day in October, I left Charleston, the town where I lived, which is about fifteen kilometers from the island, and went through the bushes to my friend's hut. When I arrived there, I saw that nobody was in, so I took the key from a secret place, unlocked⁴ the door and went in. I sat in an armchair⁵ by the fire to warm myself up⁶. Soon after dark, Legrand and Jupiter arrived. William was excited and told me about something special.

"My dear friend! Today I have found a bug which I have never seen before! It's something new, of a brilliant gold color and with two black spots⁷ near one extremity of the back and another longer one at the other."

Jupiter was listening to us and suddenly said,

"No, no, master! It is gold! Its body, its head.... it is all gold!"

1. *misfortune: bad luck.*
2. *shallow: not deep.*
3. *chilly: cold.*
4. *unlocked: opened a door using a key*

5. *armchair:*



6. *warm up: become warmer.*
7. *spot: small round mark.*

The Gold Bug



“... and sat on a chest in a corner of the room.”

“Well!” I said, “show me this unusual gold bug!” I was very curious to see it.

“I’m sorry but I can’t show it to you today! While I was coming back home, I met a friend and lent⁸ him the beetle⁹. Please, stay for the night and tomorrow I will send Jupiter to get it,” William said.

Then, he sat down at a small table where there was a pen and some ink¹⁰ and he opened a drawer¹¹ to look for some paper.

“I can give you an idea of its shape¹² if I draw it,” he said.

He couldn’t find anything in the drawer, so he took a dirty, old piece of paper that he had in his pocket and started drawing on it. While he was doing it, I went to sit by the fire, as I was a little cold.

“Here you are!” William said after a few minutes. “Have a look at this unusual bug!”

8. *lent* (lend-lent-lent): gave something to somebody for a period of time

9. *beetle*: bug.

10. *ink*: liquid for writing.

11. *drawer*:



12. *shape*: the form of something.



“... so Legrand took the bug from a glass box ...”
(Illustrations by Jame's Prunier, 1998)

But our conversation was interrupted by Legrand's dog, which came into the room and rushed¹³ up to me, asking for my attention. After this, I looked at the paper and was very surprised.

“This is a strange bug... I've never seen anything like it before! It's like a skull¹⁴! You aren't very good at drawing, my friend. I must wait until I see the bug to have a clear idea of it!”

William wasn't very happy and said,

“Well, I'm not that bad at drawing!” and he took the piece of paper from my hands. He looked at his drawing and in an instant his face became red, then pale and then red again. He took a candle from the table to check the paper again and sat on a chest in a corner of the room. He was very surprised but he said nothing and put the paper away in a drawer of the writing desk.

Legrand didn't give me any explanation about the drawing and his surprise about it and when I said I had to leave, he didn't ask me to stay for the night, so I left the hut.

13. *rushed*: moved with great speed.

14. *skull*:



The Gold Bug

About a month later, Jupiter visited me. He was very worried and sad.

“Well, Jupiter. What’s the matter? How is your master?” I asked him.

“I’m very worried about Massa Will! He is not well... he is very sick¹⁵!” he answered.

“I’m sorry to hear that, Jupiter. What’s the problem with your master?” I asked him.

“I don’t know. He doesn’t complain¹⁶ about anything, but he is very sick,” he repeated.

The old man told me that William didn’t say anything about what he felt, that he was very pale and worried and that he spent a lot of time writing strange symbols and numbers on a small board¹⁷.

“The other day I was worried because he didn’t come back home till very late at night. I don’t know where he spent the day. I’m sure it is the bug’s fault¹⁸. That damned¹⁹ gold bug!” he said.

“What? What do you mean, Jup?” I asked him.

“I think that damned bug has bitten²⁰ Massa Will somewhere in his head!” he answered.

“The bug?” I asked. I couldn’t understand what Jupiter was saying.

“Yes, the bug! The bug!” he continued and I noticed that he was very worried. “The bug... with all those long legs and with that mouth! It bites everything around it! It’s a devilish²¹ bug!”

“So you think that the gold bug has bitten your master and that the bite has made him sick?” I asked.

“I don’t know,” Jupiter answered. “I just know that he keeps on talking about gold! Maybe it is because the bug bit him! He always talks about gold, even in his dreams!”

“Well Jupiter, perhaps you are right... But tell me, why have you come to my house today? Have you got a message for me from Mr. Legrand?” I asked him.

15. *sick*: ill.

16. *complain*: to say that you are unhappy or not satisfied about something.

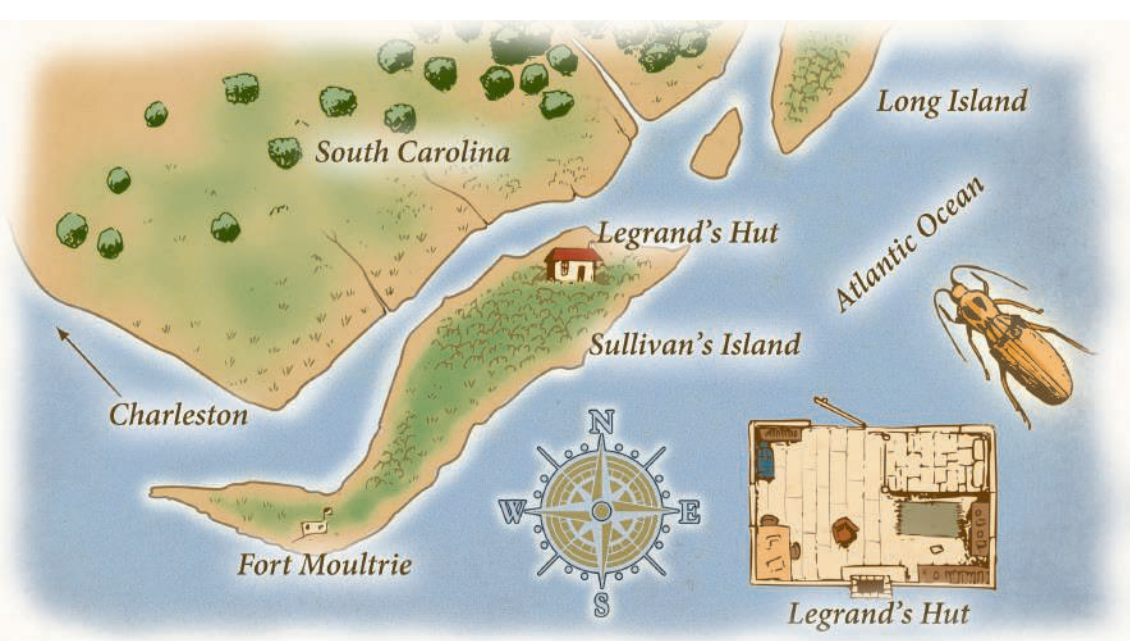
17. *board*: a thin piece of hard material.

18. *fault*: responsibility.

19. *damned*: very bad.

20. *bitten* (*bite-bit-bitten*): used teeth to make a hole or mark in someone’s skin.

21. *devilish*: like a devil, evil.



“Yes.” he answered and gave me a note from William, which said:

*“My dear,
 Why haven’t you visited me for a long time? I haven’t been well for several days and poor old Jupiter is worried. I have something to tell you, so, if you can, please come to my place²² with Jup.
 Come please, I wish to see you tonight. Believe me, it is very important!”
 Yours,*

William Legrand

I was surprised at William’s note and I wanted to know what was happening to my friend. So, without a moment of hesitation, I decided to go to Legrand’s hut with Jupiter.

When we got to Jupiter’s boat, I saw a scythe and three spades in it.

“Whose are these things, Jup? What are they doing here?” I asked him.

“Massa Will has told me to buy them in town. I spent a lot of money on them and I don’t know what they are for! It’s that damned bug’s fault!” he said.

22. place: (here) home.

The Gold Bug

I got into the boat and we left. A light wind pushed us towards the bay of Sullivan's Island. We walked for about three kilometers and we arrived at William's hut.

Legrand was waiting for us and he was happy to see me. He was very pale and his eyes looked like the eyes of a ghost. I asked him about his health, but he didn't want to talk about it. I asked him if he had the bug.

"Oh, yes," he answered, "I had it back the next morning. Do you know that Jupiter was right about it?" he added.

"What do you mean?" I asked and I was worried about his words.

"He was right because he said the bug is made of *real gold!*" he answered and he was serious about what he was saying.

"This bug will make my fortune," he continued, "I will have my family's possessions back thanks to this beetle! I will show it to you, my friend. Jupiter, give me the bug!"

But Jupiter didn't want to touch it, so Legrand took the bug from a glass box and showed it to me.

It was a beautiful scarabeus, probably unknown²³ to naturalists and of great importance to science. There were two round black spots near one extremity of the back and a long one near the other. Its wings were hard and golden and it was heavy.

"I wanted to meet you, my friend," he said, "because I need your opinion about the bug and..."

"My dear William," I said interrupting him, "I think that you aren't well. You should go to bed and stay there for a few days. I can stay with you until you feel better."

"You are wrong!" he said. "I am well and I am leaving with Jupiter for an expedition²⁴ into the hills. We need the help of a friend like you! Please come with us, but if you don't, we will try by ourselves!"

I knew I couldn't let him go without me, so I decided to leave with them.

"I'm coming with you Legrand, but you must promise that when this is over, you will return home and forget about that bug!" I said.

23. unknown: not identified.

24. expedition: an organized journey.

Sullivan's Island

“Yes, I promise,” he said, “but now, let’s go! We have no time to lose. We’ll be back by sunrise²⁵.”

It was four o’clock in the afternoon when we started our expedition – Legrand, Jupiter, the dog, myself and... the gold bug!

25. *sunrise: when the sun appears in the sky in the morning.*



WORKING ON THE TEXT

1 Complete the chart below.

Mr. Legrand's first name	
The old black servant's name	
The name of the island where Legrand lives	
The name of the town where the narrator lives	
The month in which the narrator goes to visit Mr. Legrand	
The object Mr. Legrand takes to check his drawing again	
What the narrator finds on the boat	
The time they start their expedition	

2A **KET** Are these sentences true (T), false (F) or not mentioned (NM)?

- | | T | F | NM |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Legrand went to live with his family in a big house on Sullivan's Island. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. An old black man, called Jupiter was Legrand's servant. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Jupiter doesn't like animals. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Legrand found a strange object on the beach. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Legrand has got a cat. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Jupiter is worried about Legrand. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. The narrator decided to visit William Legrand. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Legrand, the narrator, Jupiter, the dog and the gold bug left for an expedition at sunrise. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2B Now correct the false sentences.

WORKING ON VOCABULARY

3 Find the odd word out and write it in the space provided.

- a. wealthy, poor, healthy, rich.
- b. sunny, chilly, warm, cold.

- c. rush, think, run, walk.
- d. leg, mouth, back, scythe.
- e. gold, island, sand, sea.
- f. serious, pale, annoyed, worried.

4 Match the following adjectives with their opposites.

- | | | |
|-----------|--------------------------|------------|
| a. poor | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. short |
| b. long | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. healthy |
| c. short | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. tall |
| d. old | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. wrong |
| e. chilly | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. clean |
| f. dirty | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. rich |
| g. ill | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. young |
| h. right | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. warm |

WORKING ON GRAMMAR

5 Quantifiers. Circle the right option.

- a. Come at 8 o'clock. I'll have *little* / *a little* time then.
- b. Foreign languages are difficult and *few* / *a few* people learn them perfectly.
- c. I've brought you *few* / *a few* flowers.
- d. Can you give me *a little* / *little* help, please?
- e. There's *a little* / *little* food in the fridge. Let's go to the supermarket.
- f. There are *few* / *a few* people that I like more than Pamela.
- g. We've got *a little* / *little* money left so we can go out and eat a pizza.
- h. I'm bored because I've got *little* / *a little* to do.

WORKING ON SKILLS

Listening



Listen to the CD and fill in the blank spaces.

"The island is a very singular It consists of little more than and sand, and is about five kilometers It is separated from the mainland by a scarcely perceptible There isn't much vegetation and there aren't any tall Legrand has built himself a hut. He had many with him but rarely read them. His amusements were shooting and or walking along the looking for shells and"

Writing

- 7 What are William Legrand and Jupiter like? Use your imagination and write two short paragraphs to describe their physical appearance and their personality.

Speaking

- 8 Imagine you are the narrator. With your partner, use the prompts below to act out a dialogue with Jupiter.

You (Ask how he is)

Jupiter (Say you feel sad and worried for Mr. Legrand)

You (Ask what happened)

Jupiter (Talk about the strange behavior of Mr. Legrand)

You (Ask him if he has a message from Mr. Legrand)

Jupiter (Say you have got a note from him and give it to him)

You (Read it aloud and tell him you want to go to Legrand's house) ...

Jupiter (Say you are happy about it and that you can leave at once)



SACRED ANIMALS

The scarab beetle in Ancient Egypt

The scarab beetle is a common beetle. The ancient Egyptians thought that the young scarab beetle came out naturally from an underground hole¹, because the female puts her egg underground. So they worshipped² it as the scarab beetle Khepera. It means “he comes out” because they saw it as a symbol of the life cycle.

Khepera is a form of the sun-god Ra. Khepera has got a human body with a beetle on his head, or sometimes with the beetle as his head.

Ancient Egyptians used scarab beetles to make lots of amulets³, including winged⁴ scarabs. The colors were rich and beautiful. Blue symbolized the Nile River. Red symbolized Ra.



Khepera.

The cow

Many religions from India and Nepal consider cattle⁵ sacred. The cow is considered a sacred animal in India and you can't kill it. It is treated as a god in the shape of an animal. In Hinduism⁷ it is a symbol of wealth, strength and abundance.



1. *hole: (here) an underground space.*
2. *worshipped: showed respect for a god.*
3. *amulet: a piece of jewelry that some people wear because they think it protects them from bad luck, illness, etc.*
4. *winged: with wings.*
5. *cattle: cows and bulls that are kept for their milk and meat.*
6. *Hinduism: an ancient religion with Indian origins.*

The elephant

In Thailand, people believe that a white elephant may contain the soul of a dead person, perhaps a Buddha. If you have a white elephant, you must take it to the king, you can't sell it. When it dies, people mourn⁷ for it as if it was a human being.

In India, the popular Hindu god Ganesha has the head of an elephant and the body of a human. Ganesha is the God that helps you to take away the obstacles in your life and is the god of wisdom⁸.



A white elephant.



A statue of Ganesha – the elephant-headed Hindu god with the head of an elephant.

The dog

Dogs have an important symbolic meaning in Hinduism. In Nepal and some parts of India, people worship dogs, because Hindu people believe that the dog is a messenger⁹ of Yama, the god of death, and dogs guard the doors of Heaven.



7. *mourn*: to feel great sadness, especially because of someone's death.
8. *wisdom*: the ability to give good advice

9. *messenger*: someone who takes a message from one person to another.