

Before reading

1 What kind of paintings do you like?

- Paintings with beautiful, bright colors.
- Portraits of interesting looking people.
- Landscapes.
- Modern paintings.
- Renaissance paintings.
- Impressionist paintings.
- Paintings that are lifelike.
- Other.

2 Parts of the human body: outside
Fill in the chart with the words below.

thigh thumb calf navel cheeks knee shin
neck elbow wrist lips chin shoulder ankle
sole palm heel forearm

head	
trunk	
legs	
feet	
hands	fingers
arms	
between arms/trunk	
between foot/leg	
between head/trunk	neck
between hand/arm	

FOCE 3 Read the text below and think of the word which best fits each space. Use only one word in each space. There is an example at the beginning (0).

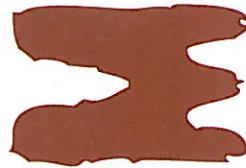
My valet Pedro and I (0) **were** traveling through the Apennine Mountains (1) Italy. I was badly hurt and (2) a high fever. We finally saw a very strange and gloomy castle that (3) been recently abandoned. (4) was the kind of castle you can read about (5) certain old novels about ghosts. Pedro knew (6) I couldn't remain outside in my condition, (7) he decided to break into the castle. (8) he had broken in, he took me to a small room in a turret of the castle. This room had many (9) old paintings, tapestries and arms. There were also many spirited modern paintings. I looked closely at (10) all. They fascinated me greatly, perhaps (11) I was delirious from the fever. I also found a book that told the story of (12) of the paintings in the room. Pedro lit the candles of a large candelabrum and I began to contemplate each piece of art in this bizarre room. I lay in my bed reading and looking at the paintings for a long time. Then, (13) Pedro was asleep, I moved the candelabrum so I could read (14) easily.



Now listen to the first part of the chapter and check your answer.

THE OVAL PORTRAIT

Chapter One



My valet ¹ Pedro and I were traveling through the Apennine Mountains in Italy. I was badly hurt and had a high fever. ² We finally saw a very strange and gloomy ³ castle that had been recently abandoned. It was the kind of castle that you can read about in certain old novels about ghosts. Pedro knew that I couldn't remain outside in my condition, so he decided to break into ⁴ the castle.

1. **valet** : servant.
2. **fever** : when your temperature is high because you are ill.
3. **gloomy** : dark, depressing.
4. **to break into** : to enter with force.

Chapter One

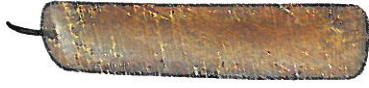
When he had broken in, he took me to a small room in a turret of the castle. This room had many very old paintings, tapestries ¹ and arms. ² There were also many spirited ³ modern paintings. I looked closely at them all. They fascinated me greatly, perhaps because I was delirious from the fever. I also found a book that told the story of each of the paintings in the room.


Pedro lit the candles of a large candelabrum and I began to contemplate each piece of art in this bizarre room. I lay ⁴ in my bed reading and looking at the paintings for a long, long time. Then, since Pedro was asleep, I moved the candelabrum so I could read more easily.

END

The light of the candles made it easier to read, but it also illuminated a strange little painting in a dark niche. ⁵ It was the portrait ⁶ of a lovely adolescent girl. I do not know why, but I closed my eyes for a moment and thought about it.

Then I opened my eyes to look at it again. Then I wondered ⁷ why I was so charmed ⁸ by this painting. Its frame ⁹ was oval and



1. **tapestries** : pieces of cloth with designs or pictures on it.
2. **arms** : swords, guns, knives, pistols, etc.
3. **spirited** : lively, vivacious, entertaining, fun.
4. **lay** (lie, lay, lain) : I was resting horizontally.
5. **niche** [ni:] : hollow area in wall for a statue or painting.
6. **portrait** : a picture of a person, usually of the face.
7. **I wondered** : I asked myself.
8. **charmed** : controlled as if by magic.
9. **frame** : 

THE OVAL PORTRAIT

gold. The painting itself was done very well. It showed the head and shoulders of the girl. The girl herself was extremely beautiful.

The painting had even startled me ¹ because for a moment it looked like a living person. Still ² none of these three things could explain the secret of its mysterious effect on me. Then I discovered the reason: the expression on her face was almost perfectly *lifelike*. ³ And this *lifelikeness* had confused me, startled me and filled me with horror.

I immediately looked in the book for the story of this oval portrait, and read the following story.



1. **startled me** : given me an unexpected shock or surprise.
2. **still** : in spite of that.
3. **lifelike** : like life, in other words, the painting looked extremely real.

Go back to the text

FC E 1 Choose the right answer A, B, C or D.

- What did the castle remind the narrator of?
 - Ancient warriors.
 - Books about paintings.
 - Biographies of famous Renaissance artists.
 - Castles you read about in books about ghosts.
- Why might the narrator have paid so much attention to the art in the room?
 - Because all the paintings seemed so real.
 - Because there was nothing else to look at.
 - Because he was delirious from the fever.
 - Because Pedro fell asleep and left him alone.
- Why did the narrator move the candelabrum?
 - So that it would not burn the tapestries.
 - So he could see the small painting of the girl better.
 - So its light would not wake up Pedro.
 - So he could read better.
- What did the narrator do when he first saw the painting of the young girl?
 - He closed his eyes and thought about it.
 - He wondered why it charmed him so much.
 - He read the story of the painting in the book he had found.
 - He wondered how the painter had made it so lifelike.
- What was the secret of the painting's effect on the narrator?
 - It was an incredibly well executed work of art.
 - The beauty of the girl in the painting.
 - The lifelikeness of the design.
 - The lifelikeness of the expression of the girl.

So and because

Look at the two sentences below:

Pedro knew I couldn't remain outside so he broke into the castle.

The paintings fascinated me because I was delirious.

Remember:

The conjunction *so* presents the *consequence* or *result* of a situation.

The conjunction *because* presents the *reason* of a situation.

2 Complete the following sentences with the appropriate sentences in the box, using *so* or *because*.

Example:

- He had a high fever **because** he was hurt.
- Pedro was very tired
- He moved the lamp himself
- He couldn't read
- He read the story about the girl in the portrait
- He wanted to discover more about the girl in the portrait

- the portrait had startled and charmed him.
- he lay down and went to sleep.
- he moved the lamp.
- he ~~was~~ hurt.
- he read about her in the book.
- his servant Pedro was asleep.

Before reading

1 Look at the picture of the girl on page 53, and at the picture of her husband, the artist, on page 61. Describe these two people to your partner, and then say what kind of relationship you think they have. Then report briefly to the class what you and your partner said about these two people.

2 How do you think the story will end?

- The young wife will kill her husband because he only thinks about his art.
- The young wife will soon die, but she will die happily because she knows that her husband will always be able to see her face and think about her.
- The artist will fall in love with the portrait, his creation, and then kill the real, living woman, his wife.
- Other...

Artistic words

3 Look at the dictionary extracts below. Then answer the two questions and fill in the blanks in the picture on the opposite page using these words.

brush [brʌʃ] *noun* : an instrument made of a stick and rigid hairs of various kinds that is used for cleaning, painting, etc.: *a hairbrush, a toothbrush, a paintbrush, etc.*

canvas [kænvəs] *noun* : 1 A strong, rigid kind of cloth 2 A piece of this cloth used for oil painting.

easel [i:zl] *noun* : a wooden frame used for holding up a painting (often while it is being painted) or a blackboard.

frame [freɪm] *noun* : 1 The solid structure of a building, automobile, bicycle, piece of furniture etc. 2 The hard, protecting edge of something such as a window or picture: *a window frame, a picture frame.*

paint [peɪnt] *noun* : a colored liquid substance you put on a surface to add color, decorate or protect.

paint *verb* : 1 to put paint on a surface 2 to make a picture with paint.

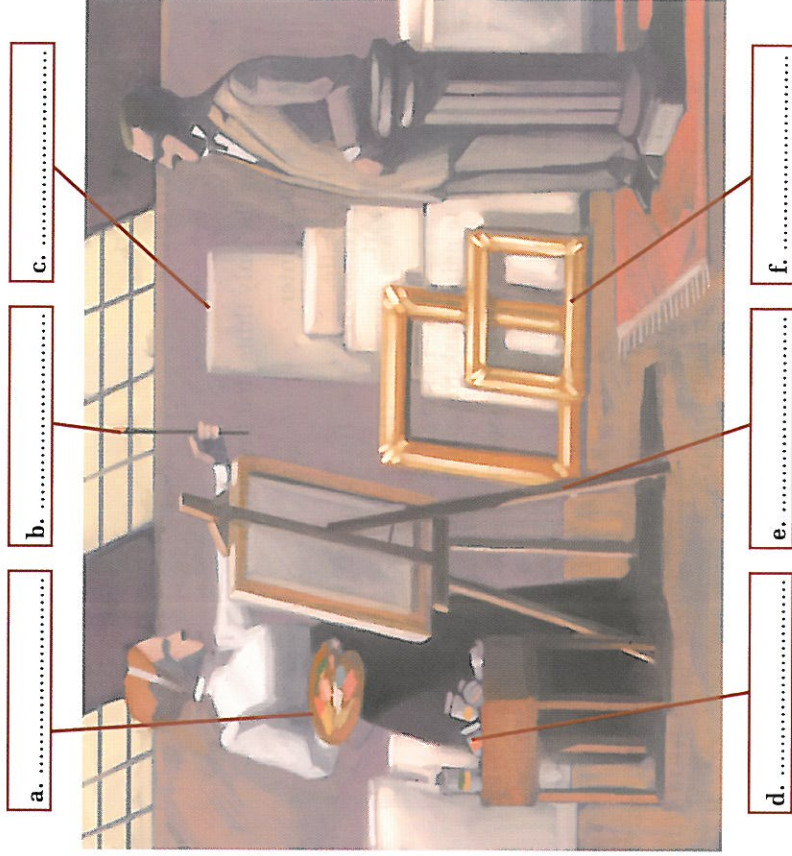
paints *noun* : a complete set of all different colors of paint in tubes, bottles, etc.

palette [pælit] *noun* : a thin board usually with a hole for the thumb, picture or make a sculpture etc.

which the artist holds while painting and on which the artist mixes color.

portrait [pɔ:treɪt] *noun* : a painting, drawing or photograph of a person, often of the face.

pose [pəʊz] *verb* : to remain in a certain position, often so an artist can paint your picture or make a sculpture etc.



a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

f.

g. What is the woman doing?

.....

h. What is the man doing?

.....

FOE 4

Listen to the first part of Chapter Two and choose the best answer A, B or C.

1. What was the girl in the portrait like?

- A Very passionate and austere.
 B Very sad and beautiful.
 C Very joyous and beautiful.

2. Who was the painter's other "wife"?

- A His sister.
 B His Art.
 C His castle.

3. What was the only thing that the girl hated?

- A The painter.
 B His castle.
 C His Art.

4. What did the painter ask the girl to do?

- A To be humble and obedient.
 B To pose for him.
 C To not hate her rival.

5. What was the room in the turret of the castle like?

- A It was cold and unhealthy.
 B It was full of light, which came from the ceiling.
 C It was large and full of strange, spirited paintings.



THE STORY OF THE GIRL IN THE PORTRAIT

Chapter Two



The girl in the portrait was extremely beautiful and extremely joyous. But it was an evil hour when she married the painter. He was passionate, austere and studious; and he already had a "wife": his Art.

The girl in the portrait was as happy as a fawn, ¹ and she loved and cherished ² all things; she only hated the Art which was her rival. She was only afraid of the palette, easel and brushes that took her husband away.

It was therefore a terrible thing for her when her husband asked her to pose for a painting. But she was very humble and obedient, and she agreed to pose.

1. happy as a fawn : joyful, lively and vivacious.
 2. cherished : loved and considered important.

THE OVAL PORTRAIT

She posed for this portrait in a cold, unhealthy ¹ room of a turret of the castle. The only light in the room came from a small window in the ceiling.

END

The artist worked with energy and only thought of his work. He became obsessed with capturing every shade ² and color of life on his young wife's face.

Since the room where she was sitting was cold and damp, ³ she got ⁴ more and more ill. Still, her husband did not notice. All he noticed was his painting. He was a wild and moody man, and he was often lost in his own private dream world. Everybody else saw that his wife was getting weaker and weaker. Still, she continued smiling and never complained because she saw that he took such great interest in this painting; he worked day and night to paint the woman who loved him and who was becoming more and more ill for this love.

Some of the people who saw him working said, "This painting is truly marvelous. It is proof of both his power as a painter and of his love for his wife."

When the painter was finishing the portrait, nobody was allowed in the turret because the painter had become so passionate about his work; he rarely took his eyes from the canvas to look at his wife's face.

1. **unhealthy** [ˌʌnhe(θ)lθi] : not healthy; something that is unhealthy will make you ill.
2. **shade** : here, small differences in the same basic colour.
3. **damp** : humid.
4. **got** : (here) became.



THE OVAL PORTRAIT

In fact, he had become so obsessed with his work that he did not notice that as he put red and pink on the canvas, ¹ red and pink left his young wife's cheeks.

Finally he only needed to add a little bit of color for the mouth and a little bit of color for the eyes. The living color of his wife's face shone again for a moment and then went out ² like a lamp.

The painter added the last brushstroke ³ and for one moment was entranced ⁴ in front of his painting. He then became pale and began to tremble. He then cried loudly, "This is indeed ⁵ *Life* itself!" Then he looked suddenly at his wife: — *She was dead!*



1. **canvas** : the strong, tight piece of cloth on which a painter paints (see page 56).
2. **went out** : stopped burning or shining (usually of a light or flame).
3. **brushstroke** : the application of paint with one movement (stroke) of the brush.
4. **was entranced** : was filled with great wonder and emotion, as if by magic.
5. **indeed** : certainly, truly, really.

Go back to the text

1 Answer the following questions.

- a. Why was the girl afraid of the artist's paintbrushes, paints, easels, canvases and palettes?
.....
- b. What was the artist like?
.....
- c. What became the artist's obsession?
.....
- d. Why did the girl become ill?
.....
- e. What did everybody else see that the artist himself did not see?
.....
- f. Why didn't the girl complain?
.....
- g. What happened as the artist added the last brushstroke to the painting?
.....
- h. Why did the painter become pale and tremble when he finished his painting?
.....

T: GRADE 7

2 Speaking – travel

This story presents two things about Italy that have always attracted tourists: art and mystery. In the late 1700s and early 1800s Gothic horror became an extremely popular kind of book. These books were often set in old castles in Italy. Many tourists then wanted to visit the places they had read about.

In pairs, discuss what you think attracts tourists to these places:

- New York City – Hollywood, California – Paris – Tokyo – The Bahamas
- Then decide which of these places you would prefer to visit and why. Present your ideas to the class.

He worked day and night to paint the woman who loved him

Look at these sentences:

He painted the woman who loved him.

That is the book which tells the story of the painting.

These are the paintings that fascinated Edgar Allan Poe.

He is the man that told me about Italy.

That is the hotel where we stayed last summer.

They all contain defining relative clauses. A defining relative clause is essential to the sentence; without it the sentence is not complete.

Notice that we use:

- *who* for people
- *which* for animals and things
- *that* for people, animals and things
- *where* for places

In spoken English *that* is generally used instead of *which*.

3 Answer the questions about the story using a relative clause and the elements below. If a sentence can be made with both *that* and *who*, or *that* and *which* write two different sentences.

man/break into/castle

~~castle/Pedro and his master/spend the night~~

artist/paint/a strange portrait of his wife

board/painter/use to mix colors

book/tell the story/of the paintings

place/artist painted the strange portrait

girl/die slowly/in the turret

mountains/form/the backbone of central Italy

a man/often traveled in Italy

~~writer/write/"The Oval Portrait"~~

Example: *What is that building?*

It's the castle where Pedro and his master spent the night.

Example: *Who was Edgar Allan Poe?*

He was the writer who wrote "The Oval Portrait".

He was the writer that wrote "The Oval Portrait".

- Who is that man with the beard?
- What did the narrator read?
- Who was Pedro?
- Who is that in the painting?
- What are the Apennines?
- What is a palette?
- Who is the narrator?
- What is that turret?

FCE 4

Pretend you are the girl in the portrait. It is just a day or two before you die. Write a letter to your friend in which you tell her about your horrible situation.

Say:

- Who you married
- What he is like
- What your marriage is like
- What he asked you to do
- How your husband acts now
- Why you are afraid

You can begin like this.

My dearest Constance,

I don't know if you have heard or not, but I married a short time ago.

The man I married is a

.....

.....

.....

.....

Your loving friend,

Phoebe

Who said what?

5 Below are what the characters in the story said, or what they must have said, but Edgar Allan Poe did not record for us. Write what the characters said in the speech bubbles, and then number the pictures in the order they happened in the story.

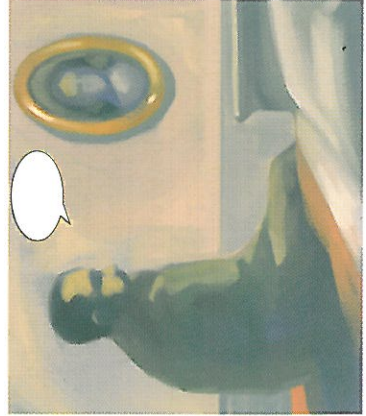
1. Yes, if that is what you really want.
2. Why am I so fascinated by that portrait?
3. Because my husband is always away painting.
4. I must paint your portrait. Will you pose for me?
5. This is indeed Life itself!
6. Why are you so sad?
7. It is proof of both his power as a painter and of his love for his wife.
8. I am going to break into the castle because if you spend the night outside, you will die.



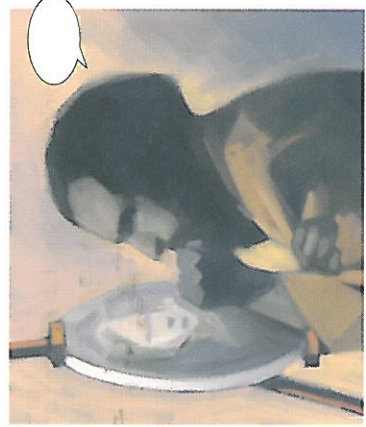
a.



b.



c.



d.



e.



f.

What's your opinion?

6 Which of the following sentences do you think best sums up the story?

- Art is a jealous mistress.
- Love hurts.
- Each man kills the thing he loves.
- Love is blind.
- Artists love only their art.
- Love is all.
- It is better to have loved and lost than to have never loved at all.
- Art is eternal, but love is not.

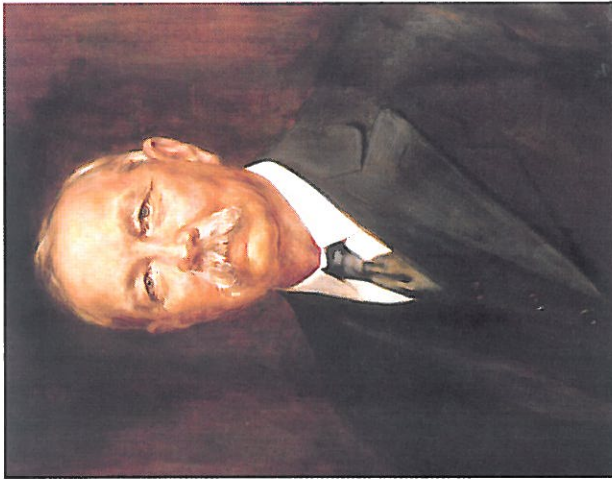
Compare your answers with your partner and justify your choice.

A Short History of the “Whodunit”

The detective story, also called a “whodunit” (which is a contraction of “Who has done it?” i.e., Who has done this crime?) is one of the most popular forms in all types of literature and is still very popular today. Its inventor was Edgar Allan Poe (see page 12), who also created the first important fictional detective, C. Auguste Dupin.

The eccentric Dupin was then the inspiration for perhaps the most famous and eccentric literary detective, and perhaps also literary character of any kind, ¹ in the world, Sherlock Holmes.

Sherlock Holmes, the creation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930), first appeared in a story called *A Study in Scarlet* (1887). Sherlock Holmes was a very distinctive character: he wore a strange looking



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.
The National Portrait Gallery, London.

1. **kind** noun : type (**kind** as an adjective means *gentle, nice, friendly*).

hat called a deerstalker and a cape; ¹ he also smoked a pipe and played the violin. Like Dupin he lived a solitary life and only came in contact with the outside world when he had to solve a crime.

One of the next great descendants of Poe’s

C. Auguste Dupin was Hercule Poirot, the creation of Dame Agatha Christie (1890-1976), who is perhaps the most popular whodunit writer in the world. The dapper ² Hercule Poirot is also an eccentric. He is famous for his elegant looks, his slicked-down hair ³ and thin moustache and for using “little gray cells” (brain cells) to solve crimes.

Of course there are many, many other famous literary detectives in what is known as the British School of detective writing. Still, most of these detectives had something in common: most of them were amateur ⁴ detectives and they solved crimes for the intellectual



Dame Agatha Christie.

1. **cape** : a short coat without sleeves.
2. **dapper** : extremely elegant.
3. **slicked-down hair** : hair held down and made smooth with hair gel or cream.
4. **amateur** : not professional.

challenge; ¹ in addition these detective stories were generally about the rich upper classes ² of society and told in a refined kind of English.

In the 1920s in the United States a new kind of fictional detective was born: he was a professional detective, or private-eye, and the crimes he solved were committed in the dirty world of the big American city. These private-eyes did not speak a refined, upper-class English but a tough English full of street slang. ³ One of the most famous is Philip Marlowe, the creation of Raymond Chandler (1888-1959). Philip Marlowe is an honest, tough ⁴ man with no illusions living in a totally dishonest and corrupt world. He is famous for his unshaven ⁵ face, the ever-present Camel cigarette in his mouth and his trench coat.

Another famous American fictional detective-lawyer ⁶ was Perry Mason, created by Erle Stanley Gardner (1889-1970), who was himself a trial lawyer for more than 20 years. Perry Mason is perhaps the most famous lawyer in the world. He is a clean-looking professional man wearing a shirt and tie, who does his job well and always tries to help people.

But detective stories never stay the same. For example, detective stories based on real police procedures have become very popular and even science fiction (a genre Edgar Allan Poe also helped create) has been mixed with detective fiction. Monsieur Dupin's descendants will surely arrive into the 21st century.

1. **challenge** : a test of your ability to do something.
2. **upper classes** : the rich and/or the aristocracy.
3. **slang** : the informal language of a particular group, i.e., street slang, school slang.
4. **tough** [tʌf] : strong, courageous.
5. **unshaven** : his face was unshaven because he did not shave often.
6. **lawyer** [ləːjə] : a person who has studied to work with legal matters: an advocate, a barrister.

1 Say whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F) and then correct the false ones.

- | | T | F |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Edgar Allan Poe created Sherlock Holmes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Sherlock Holmes is perhaps the most famous literary creation in the world. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. The detectives in many of the classic British detective stories were not professionals. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. The English in the classic British detective stories is much more formal and contains less slang than the classic American private-eye stories. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Perry Mason created the great fictional lawyer Erle Stanley Gardner. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Detective stories keep changing all the time and they are still very popular. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

INTERNET PROJECT

Connect to the Internet and go to www.blackcat-cideb.com or www.cideb.it. Insert the title or part of the title of the book into our search engine. Open the page for *American Horror*. Click on the Internet project link. Go down the page until you find the title of this book and click on the relevant link for this project.

With your partner find pictures of an Italian castle which could have been the setting for 'The Oval Portrait', or a castle which you would like to visit.

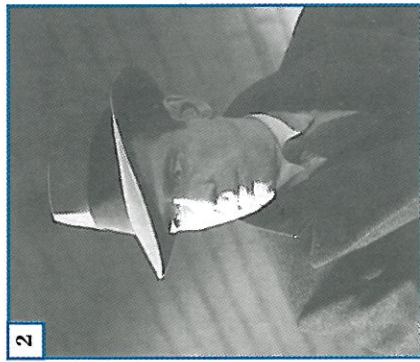
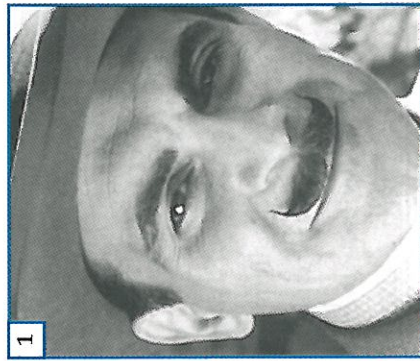
Say:

- Where it is
- Who built it
- Why you think it is interesting

THE TELL-TALE HEART

3 Match the names of the famous literary detectives below with their pictures. Use the text to help you.

Philip Marlowe Perry Mason
Hercule Poirot Sherlock Holmes



1. **tell-tale** : a tell-tale is a person who tells other people about the bad things you have done; (here) tell-tale is an adjective.