**Study Questions:**

**The narrator:**

"The Cask of Amontillado" uses a first-person narrator, and, sometimes, first-person narrators can be unreliable.

* How reliable or unreliable does the narrator seem to you? Please provide examples for your answer
* Are there any ways that the narrator might be manipulating the truth?
* How would you describe the narrator's attitude toward himself and his actions?

**The narrator’s personality:**

Although the narrator seems to assume that his actions are justified, he certainly can be interpreted as a villain.

* What characteristics of the narrator make him an effective villain?
* Can you think of any other villains from stories, books, television shows, movies, or "real life" that share some of the narrator's villainous characteristics?
* Is there anything about the narrator that you find attractive or likeable? Or at least makes his actions in the short story relatable?

**Fortunato:**

The narrator never specifies why he hates Fortunato. Instead, he states only that Fortunato caused "a thousand injuries" to the narrator and eventually "ventured upon insult."

* What is your general impression of Fortunato?
* Do any of Fortunato's words and actions support the narrator's belief that Fortunato is worthy of hatred?
* Do any of Fortunato's words and actions refute the narrator's belief that Fortunato is worthy of hatred?

**Setting:**

Every story must exist in a certain time and place, the "setting."

* How does the setting of "The Cask of Amontillado" change as the story progresses?
* Why do you think Poe chose to bring together the dreariness of the catacombs and the festival atmosphere of the carnival in this story?
* What elements of the setting in this story would you consider typical of a horror story? What elements seem unusual?

**Tone:**

"The Cask of Amontillado" is a chilling story, but Poe also uses humorous elements as the narrator recounts his experience with Fortunato.

* Can you identify elements in the story that might be regarded as humorous? (perhapse we are dealing with rather dark humour?)
* What do these elements add to the story?
* Can you think of any other stories, books, or movies that blend horror and humour in a similar way?

**Theme:**

"Theme" can be defined as "a comment about the human condition that a writer makes through his or her work," and a theme or themes are often what make a work of literature relevant to all of our lives.

* Can you identify one or more themes in "The Cask of Amontillado"? In other words, can you identify any general comments about life and the human condition that Poe is suggesting through the specifics of this story?
* Can you think of any other stories, books, or movies that convey a similar theme?
* How can we relate this story to some of the other texts, we have read in this theme, ‘Evil’?