

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## A Dream Within a Dream

By Edgar Allen Poe  
1849

*Edgar Allen Poe (1809-1849) was an American author, poet, and literary critic whose works are still widely read today. His lyric poem "A Dream Within a Dream" was written in the 1820s, but it was not published until shortly before his death. In this poem, the narrator contemplates his life and his past. As you read, take notes on what the speaker questions.*

- [1] Take this kiss upon the brow!  
And, in parting from you now,  
Thus much let me avow<sup>1</sup> —  
You are not wrong, who deem<sup>2</sup>
- [5] That my days have been a dream;  
Yet if hope has flown away  
In a night, or in a day,  
In a vision, or in none,  
Is it therefore the less *gone*?
- [10] *All* that we see or seem  
Is but a dream within a dream.



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- I stand amid the roar  
Of a surf-tormented shore,  
And I hold within my hand
- [15] Grains of the golden sand —  
How few! yet how they creep  
Through my fingers to the deep,  
While I weep — while I weep!  
O God! can I not grasp
- [20] Them with a tighter clasp?  
O God! can I not save  
*One* from the pitiless wave?  
Is *all* that we see or seem  
But a dream within a dream?

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1. **Avow (verb):** to assert or confess openly  
2. **Deem (verb):** to judge or consider in a specific way