“THE TELL-TALE HEART” WRITING WORKSHOP

Convince me that the narrator really is an insane murderer. Use this worksheet to trace the actions of the narrator that indicate he is an insane murderer by using quotes from the text. The wording of the quotes will not always exactly say, “And this is why the narrator is an insane murderer.” The idea is to trace the actions of the narrator and how different parts of the story relate back to the idea that the narrator is an insane murderer even though he claims he is not.

INTRODUCTION: “The disease had sharpened my senses – not destroyed – not dulled them” (46). The narrator in “The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allan Poe states that the disease sharpened his senses, but is it really true? After all, he is a madman. He claims he loves the old man, and yet the old man’s body was cut up and carefully stored beneath the floor. It is obvious that the narrator had all the traits of an insane murderer; he is ____________________, ____________________, and _____________________.

1. Example of the narrator’s insanity from the text: _____________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________________
   How does this quote show the narrator’s insanity? ______________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________ page(s) __________

2. Example of the narrator’s insanity from the text: _____________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________________
   How does this quote show the narrator’s insanity? ______________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________ page(s) __________

3. Example of the narrator’s insanity from the text: _____________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________________
   How does this quote show the narrator’s insanity? ______________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________ page(s) __________

Are you convinced the narrator is an insane murderer? Would I be convinced by looking at the quotes you chose and how you explained them? If yes, fabulous! If not, what changes could you make to form a stronger argument? Maybe different textual examples? Maybe stronger explanations?