Exercise walk-through

3.1
What textual details reveal about a character

AP English Literature and Composition

What Textual Details Reveal About a Character

Austen's first draft of *Pride and Prejudice* was called *First Impressions*: a long work has room for a character to judge quickly, get it wrong, and change.

- A **description creates expectations**; how a character **meets or fails** them is meaningful.
- The **narrator's perspective** shapes how we read a character's, and a character's perspective **may shift**.
- A comparison ("she is like…") reveals the **speaker's** perspective as much as the character's.

What Textual Details Reveal About a Character, continued

Readers can infer **motive** from a character's actions or inactions. That last word is the one worth keeping.

> What a character declines to do is evidence, and it is usually more revealing than what they do.

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Explain how description creates expectations. [2]

2.2 State what a comparison of one character to another reveals. [2]

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Explain how description creates expectations. [2]

2.1

- description creates expectations for behavior, and meeting or failing them affects the reader's interpretation

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2.2 State what a comparison of one character to another reveals. [2]

2.2

- the speaker's perspective on the compared character and possibly something innate about the compared character

Exercise 2.3 (a)

2.3 A character's perspective may shift.

(a) State why this matters in a long text. [2]

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2.3 A character's perspective may shift.

(a) State why this matters in a long text. [2]

(a)

- the same character at two points supplies two pieces of evidence, which is how change is demonstrated rather than asserted

Exercise 2.3 (b)

2.3 A character's perspective may shift.

(b) State what a reader can infer from action or inaction. [1]

Exercise 2.3 (b)

2.3 A character's perspective may shift.

(b) State what a reader can infer from action or inaction. [1]

(b)

- that character's motives

Exercises 3.1·3.2

3.1 How a character meets or fails expectations affects [1]

- **A** a reader's interpretation
- **B** the page count
- **C** the genre
- **D** the publication date

3.2 Understanding of a character's perspective may depend on [1]

- **A** the narrator's perspective
- **B** the reader's age
- **C** the book's length
- **D** the title

Exercises 3.1·3.2

3.1 How a character meets or fails expectations affects [1]

- [ ] **A** a reader's interpretation
- [ ] **B** the page count
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3.1 A

- the reader's interpretation

3.2 Understanding of a character's perspective may depend on [1]

- [ ] **A** the narrator's perspective
- [ ] **B** the reader's age
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3.2 A

- the narrator's perspective

Exercise 3.3 (a)

3.3 One character calls another “a hawk”.

(a) State the two things this may reveal. [1]

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3.3 One character calls another “a hawk”.

(a) State the two things this may reveal. [1]

(a)

- the speaker’s view of the other, and possibly something true of the other

Exercise 3.3 (b)

3.3 One character calls another “a hawk”.

(b) Explain how a reader keeps them apart. [2]

Exercise 3.3 (b)

3.3 One character calls another “a hawk”.

(b) Explain how a reader keeps them apart. [2]

(b)

- test the description against the character’s own actions elsewhere; where they agree it is evidence about the character, where they diverge it is evidence about the speaker