

Exercise walk-through

4.4

The function of setting in a narrative

AP English Literature and Composition

The Function of Setting in a Narrative

Mood is the reader's feeling; atmosphere is the quality the text creates around events.

Both are produced by selection – which details of a place the text mentions, and which it does not.

Setting, value systems, and narrative distance

conflict among characters

often arises from tensions generated by their different **value systems**

character and setting

the environment a character inhabits provides information about that character

a setting may

establish the **mood and atmosphere** as well as the place

narrative distance

how far the narrating voice stands from the experiencing self

why it matters

the **most powerful and least-used** tool in this course – a narrator recounting childhood forty years on knows what the child did not

coherence

occurs at several levels – within a sentence, between sentences, across the essay

When a narrator and their younger self are both present, the *gap* between them is usually the text's subject. Name the distance and the reading follows.

Setting does four jobs

CONTEXT — it tells you what is normal here, so a departure can register

MIRROR — it carries the feeling the character will not state

CONSTRAINT — it limits what this character is able to do

ANTAGONIST — it is the thing being struggled against

The bottom row does **plot** work. A setting that constrains or opposes is not scenery, and saying so is a claim rather than a description

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 State what a setting may help establish and the force of “may help”. [2]

2.2 Distinguish mood from atmosphere. [2]

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 State what a setting may help establish and the force of “may help”. [2]

2.1

- the mood and atmosphere of a narrative; “may help” makes it a contribution rather than a determination

2.2 Distinguish mood from atmosphere. [2]

2.2

- atmosphere is what the described place feels like; mood is what the reader is brought to feel

Exercise 2.3 (a)

2.3 Mood comes from selection.

(a) Explain what this means.

[2]

Exercise 2.3 (a)

2.3 Mood comes from selection.

(a) Explain what this means.

[2]

(a)

- a place has many features and the narrator names only a few, so the choice of which is the evidence

Exercise 2.3 (b)

2.3 Mood comes from selection.

(b) State what an assertion of mood must add.

[1]

Exercise 2.3 (b)

2.3 Mood comes from selection.

(b) State what an assertion of mood must add.

[1]

(b)

- the details doing the work and why those rather than others

Exercises 3.1-3.2

3.1 “May help establish” indicates a

[1]

☐

A determination

B contribution

C contradiction

D definition

3.2 Which three features of a room a narrator names is

[1]

☐

A the evidence for mood

B irrelevant

C decided by genre

D decided by length

Exercises 3.1-3.2

3.1 “May help establish” indicates a

[1]

☐

- A determination
- B contribution
- C contradiction
- D definition

3.1 B

- a contribution

3.2 Which three features of a room a narrator names is

[1]

☐

- A the evidence for mood
- B irrelevant
- C decided by genre
- D decided by length

3.2 A

- the evidence for mood

Exercise 3.3 (a)

3.3 A narrator describes a wedding in terms of heat, noise and crowding.

(a) State the mood produced.

[1]

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3.3 A narrator describes a wedding in terms of heat, noise and crowding.

(a) State the mood produced.

[1]

(a)

- oppression or discomfort rather than celebration

Exercise 3.3 (b)

3.3 A narrator describes a wedding in terms of heat, noise and crowding.

(b) Explain how the selection produces it.

[2]

Exercise 3.3 (b)

3.3 A narrator describes a wedding in terms of heat, noise and crowding.

(b) Explain how the selection produces it.

[2]

(b)

- a wedding offers many describable features, and choosing three unpleasant ones tells the reader how to feel about the occasion