

Exercise walk-through

7.1

Characters who change or remain unchanged

AP English Literature and Composition

Where a change comes from, and how fast it arrives

Original practice passage — the ferry vote

At the council table, Nora laid the ferry petition beside the clock. The chair called her “our practical girl”, as he had before she began collecting signatures. “The bridge is the sensible choice,” he said. Nora looked through the window at the landing where her mother still waited each morning. For the first time, she heard “practical” as a request to be silent. “Practical for whom?” she asked.

Read before analysing. This passage is authored for teaching, not an AP exam extract.

Where a change comes from, and how fast it arrives, in detail

Two independent questions about any change in a character

GRADUAL

SUDDEN

from a **CONFLICT
OF VALUES**

a value is slowly displaced
by a competing one

*the reader watches the
balance tip*

an **EPIPHANY**: a sudden
change in understanding

*check whether action
follows the realisation*

from **CHANGED
CIRCUMSTANCES**

new circumstances erode
an old position

*the reader watches
adaptation*

a shock in circumstances
may prompt sudden change

*watch whether the change
survives the shock*

Trace evidence for the change and its possible source.
Distinguish changed understanding from changed action.

An **epiphany**

changes understanding; check separately whether action follows.

Characters Who Change or Remain Unchanged

Continue the same passage

The chair covered the petition with his agenda. Outside, Nora unfolded it again; the paper shook like a small sail. Three years passed before the ferry returned. Nora kept the chair's agenda, its edges soft from handling.

Attempt before the next slide

Identify the moment of changed understanding, an action that follows and a limit on what the outcome proves. Use the actual words.

Characters Who Change or Remain Unchanged, continued

- 1 **Realisation** “For the first time marks Nora hearing “practical as pressure to remain silent.
- 2 **Action** “Practical for whom? challenges the chair; she also unfolds the petition outside.
- 3 **Resistance** The chair covers the petition. His gesture does not establish that she has persuaded him.
- 4 **Limit** The ferry returns three years later, but the account does not identify the cause of that outcome.

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Define an epiphany in the CED's terms.

[2]

2.2 State where a change in character often emerges from.

[2]

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Define an epiphany in the CED's terms.

[2]

2.1

- a sudden change resulting from a moment of realization that allows a character to see things in a new light, often related to a central conflict

2.2 State where a change in character often emerges from.

[2]

2.2

- a conflict of values represented in the narrative; or changes in the character's circumstances

Exercise 2.3 (a)

2.3 An epiphany can affect the plot.

(a) State how.

[2]

Exercise 2.3 (a)

2.3 An epiphany can affect the plot.

(a) State how.

[2]

(a)

- by causing the character to act on the sudden realization

Exercise 2.3 (b)

2.3 An epiphany can affect the plot.

(b) State why the epiphany is common in short fiction.

[1]

Exercise 2.3 (b)

2.3 An epiphany can affect the plot.

(b) State why the epiphany is common in short fiction.

[1]

(b)

- short fiction lacks room for a gradual change

Exercises 3.1-3.2

3.1 An epiphany is often directly related to

[1]

☐

A a central conflict of the narrative

B the title

C the setting only

D the author's life

3.2 The plot is affected when the character

[1]

☐

A acts on the realization

B forgets it

C repeats it

D describes it

Exercises 3.1-3.2

3.1 An epiphany is often directly related to

[1]

☐

- A** a central conflict of the narrative
- B** the title
- C** the setting only
- D** the author's life

3.1 A

- a central conflict

3.2 The plot is affected when the character

[1]

☐

- A** acts on the realization
- B** forgets it
- C** repeats it
- D** describes it

3.2 A

- acting on it

Exercise 3.3 (a)

3.3 A character understands something in the last paragraph and does nothing.

(a) State whether the plot is affected.

[1]

Exercise 3.3 (a)

3.3 A character understands something in the last paragraph and does nothing.

(a) State whether the plot is affected.

[1]

(a)

- not by the CED's mechanism, since no action follows

Exercise 3.3 (b)

3.3 A character understands something in the last paragraph and does nothing.

(b) Explain what the story gains from the inaction.

[2]

Exercise 3.3 (b)

3.3 A character understands something in the last paragraph and does nothing.

(b) Explain what the story gains from the inaction.

[2]

(b)

- the reader holds the realisation the character will not act on, which makes the ending a judgment on the character rather than a resolution