

1 Reading a character from the page

– Part 1

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Vocabulary

Write each word three times.

English

Write it 3 times (English)

Description

Perspective

Recall

- You have judged someone from how they speak before you knew them.
- You know a description can be unfair to the person described.
- You have changed your view of a character halfway through a story.

New ideas

Read these first. Each idea has a short worked example. Then do the Practice below.

■ 1 Three channels

Description , dialogue and behaviour reveal characters. A strong reading uses more than one, because the three can disagree and the disagreement is evidence.

Worked example. A character who speaks kindly and acts cruelly has told you more than either channel alone.

■ 2 Who is describing

Descriptions come from a narrator, from other characters, or from the character themselves. A rival's description is evidence about the rival as much as about its subject.

Worked example. When one character calls another 'a hawk', you learn the speaker's view and possibly something true.

■ 3 Perspective

Perspective is how a character understands their circumstances, formed by background, personality, biases and relationships. It is both shaped and revealed by those relationships.

Worked example. A character raised in poverty reads a generous gift as an obligation, which tells you about the character and the gift.

Watch out: Never take a character's description of another as neutral information. Test it against what that other character actually does elsewhere in the text.

Practice

2.1 Name the three channels that reveal characters. [3]

2.2 A character speaks kindly and acts cruelly. State what the contradiction gives a reader. [2]

2.3 Name three sources a description may come from. [2]

2.4 Explain why a rival's description is evidence about two people. [2]

2.5 Define perspective and name two things that inform it. [2]
