

Exercise walk-through

The function of setting in a narrative ■ 4.4

eXercise

You must be able to

- state what a setting may help establish
- distinguish mood from atmosphere in practice
- explain how a detail produces mood
- avoid asserting mood without evidence

Method — The claim

A setting may help establish the mood and atmosphere of a narrative. “May help” — a contribution, not a determination.

Method — Mood and atmosphere

Atmosphere is what the described place feels like; mood is what the reader is brought to feel. A cheerful character in a decaying house produces atmosphere and mood that pull apart, which is often the point.

Method — How details work

Mood comes from selection. A room has a hundred features; the narrator names three. Which three were chosen is the evidence.

Method — Not assertion

“The setting creates a sense of dread” proves nothing until the answer names the details doing it and says why those details rather than others.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State what a setting may help establish and the force of “may help”.

Solution 2.1

Method: The claim

Worked steps

the mood and atmosphere of a narrative **B1**; “may help” makes it a contribution rather than a determination **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Distinguish mood from atmosphere.

Solution 2.2

Worked steps

atmosphere is what the described place feels like **B1**; mood is what the reader is brought to feel **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

Mood comes from selection.

- (a) Explain what this means.
- (b) State what an assertion of mood must add.

Solution 2.3

Method: How details work

Worked steps

(a) a place has many features and the narrator names only a few **B1**, so the choice of which is the evidence **B2 B1** *max: award here*. (b) the details doing the work and why those rather than others **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

“May help establish” indicates a

A determination

B contribution

C contradiction

D definition

Solution 3.1

Method: The claim

A determination

B contribution 

C contradiction

D definition

Worked steps

B. a contribution.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Which three features of a room a narrator names is

A the evidence for mood

B irrelevant

C decided by genre

D decided by length

Solution 3.2

Method: How details work

A the evidence for mood



B irrelevant

C decided by genre

D decided by length

Worked steps

A. the evidence for mood.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

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

- (a) State the mood produced.
- (b) Explain how the selection produces it.

Solution 3.3

Method: How details work

Worked steps

(a) oppression or discomfort rather than celebration **B1**. (b) a wedding offers many describable features **B1**, and choosing three unpleasant ones tells the reader how to feel about the occasion **B1**.