

Exercise walk-through

The function of contrasts within a text ■ 6.6

eXercise

You must be able to

- state what contrasts often represent at this level
- name the three things they introduce
- state the CED's conclusion about complexity
- distinguish ambiguity from vagueness

Method — What they represent

Contrasts often represent contradictions or inconsistencies that introduce nuance, ambiguity, or contradiction into a text.

Method — Three introductions

Nuance — a finer distinction; **ambiguity** — more than one available reading;
contradiction — two things that cannot both be so.

Method — The conclusion

As a result, contrasts make texts more complex. The CED states complexity as an outcome, so a contrast is worth analysing precisely because of what it complicates.

Method — Ambiguity and vagueness

Ambiguity is two definite readings; vagueness is no definite reading. A text is ambiguous when it supports both possibilities and vague when it supports neither.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State what contrasts often represent at this level.

Solution 2.1

Method: What they represent

Worked steps

contradictions or inconsistencies **B1** that introduce nuance, ambiguity or contradiction **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 3 marks

Define nuance, ambiguity and contradiction.

Solution 2.2

Worked steps

nuance is a finer distinction **B1**; ambiguity is more than one available reading **B1**; contradiction is two things that cannot both be so **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

Ambiguity is not vagueness.

- (a) State the difference.
- (b) State the CED's conclusion about contrasts.

Solution 2.3

Worked steps

(a) ambiguity offers two definite readings **B1**; vagueness offers none **B1**. (b) contrasts make texts more complex **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

The CED says contrasts make texts more

A complex

B simple

C brief

D popular

Solution 3.1

Method: The conclusion

A complex



B simple

C brief

D popular

Worked steps

A. more complex.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

A text that supports two definite readings is

A ambiguous

B vague

C contradictory

D incoherent

Solution 3.2

Method: Ambiguity and vagueness

A ambiguous



B vague

C contradictory

D incoherent

Worked steps

A. ambiguous.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

A novel's ending supports two incompatible readings, both textually grounded.

(a) State which term applies.

(b) Explain why this is a strength rather than a flaw.

Solution 3.3

Method: Ambiguity and vagueness

Worked steps

(a) ambiguity **B1**. (b) both readings are supported by the text **B1**, so the novel is holding a genuine tension rather than failing to say anything **B1**.