

Exercise walk-through

The function of an image or imagery ■ 7.9

eXercise

You must be able to

- define a motif in the CED's terms
- distinguish a motif from a single image
- distinguish a motif from a symbol
- trace a motif through a text

Method — Definition

A motif is a unified pattern of recurring objects or images used to emphasise a significant idea in large parts of or throughout a text.

Method — Motif and image

A single image is one instance; a motif is a **unified pattern** of them. “Unified” is doing work: three unrelated recurrences are not a motif.

Method — Motif and symbol

A symbol is one thing standing for an idea; a motif is a pattern of things emphasising one. A symbol can be part of a motif, but a motif needs recurrence and a symbol does not.

Method — Tracing

List every occurrence, then ask what they share and what idea the sharing emphasises. If no shared idea emerges, the recurrence was coincidence rather than a motif.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

Define a motif in the CED's terms.

Solution 2.1

Worked steps

a unified pattern of recurring objects or images **B1** used to emphasise a significant idea in large parts of or throughout a text **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Distinguish a motif from a symbol.

Solution 2.2

Method: Motif and symbol

Worked steps

a symbol is one thing standing for an idea **B1**; a motif is a pattern of things emphasising one **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

“Unified” is doing work.

- (a) Explain what it excludes.
- (b) State the method for tracing a motif.

Solution 2.3

Method: Motif and image

Worked steps

(a) recurrences with nothing in common **B1**, which are coincidence rather than a pattern **B1**. (b) list every occurrence and ask what they share and what idea the sharing emphasises **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

A motif emphasises a significant idea in large parts of or

A throughout a text

B one sentence

C the title only

D other texts

Solution 3.1

Method: Definition

A throughout a text



B one sentence

C the title only

D other texts

Worked steps

A. throughout a text.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

A symbol differs from a motif in that it does not require

A recurrence

B meaning

C an object

D a text

Solution 3.2

Method: Motif and symbol

A recurrence



B meaning

C an object

D a text

Worked steps

A. recurrence.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

An object appears three times in a novel with no common context.

- (a) State whether this is a motif.
- (b) Explain the reasoning.

Solution 3.3

Method: Motif and image

Worked steps

(a) probably not **B1**. (b) the CED requires a unified pattern **B1**, and recurrences with no shared context emphasise no single idea **B1**.