

1.4 The function of a sequence of events

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to explain what a **sequence** 序列 does.

You must be able to:

- state what plot and exposition focus attention on
- name the four things they focus attention on
- distinguish 'what happens' from 'what the sequence does'
- answer a function question in the CED's terms

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Focusing attention

Plot and the exposition that accompanies it focus readers' attention on the parts of the narrative that matter most to its development.

■ Four things

Characters, their relationships and their roles in the narrative, as well as setting and the relationship between characters and setting.

■ Function

A function question asks what the sequence **does** to a reader's attention, not what occurs in it. Summarising the events answers a different question.

■ The form of an answer

"By placing X before Y, the text makes the reader see..." —the sequence is the evidence and the effect on attention is the claim.

2 Practice

2.1 State what plot and exposition do for readers.

[2]

2.2 Name four things they focus attention on. [2]

2.3 A function question is not a summary question.

(a) State the difference. [2]

(b) Give the form a function answer takes. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Plot and exposition focus attention on parts that matter most to the narrative's [1]

- **A** development
- **B** length
- **C** publication
- **D** genre

3.2 A function answer's claim is about [1]

- **A** what happens
- **B** the effect on a reader's attention
- **C** the author's life
- **D** the number of pages

3.3 A story reveals a character's crime only after showing his kindness.

(a) State what the order does. [1]

(b) Explain why reversing it would change the effect. [2]

4 Go further

- work through the **1.4 The function of a sequence of events** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Short Fiction I** section of the AP English Literature handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 they focus readers' attention on the parts of the narrative that matter most to its development.

2.2 characters; their relationships; their roles; setting and the relationship between characters and setting.

2.3 (a) a summary reports what occurs; a function answer states what the sequence does to a reader's attention. (b) "by placing X before Y, the text makes the reader see..."

3.1 A. development.

3.2 B. the effect on attention.

3.3 (a) it makes the reader judge the crime against an established impression. (b) the crime would then colour the kindness rather than the reverse, so the reader's sympathy would form differently.