

4.5 The relationship between character and setting

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to read **character from environment** 环境.

You must be able to:

- state the CED's claim about environment and character
- explain the difference between a chosen and an imposed environment
- explain what a character's response to a place reveals
- avoid treating setting as decoration

1 Worked examples

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

■ The claim

The environment a character inhabits provides information about that character. The setting is evidence about the person in it.

■ Chosen and imposed

A room a character has arranged tells you about their taste and priorities; a room they cannot leave tells you about their constraints. The same detail means different things depending on which it is.

■ Response

How a character behaves in a place —at home, uneasy, defiant —is a second layer of evidence beyond the place itself.

■ Not decoration

If setting provides information about character, then a description skipped in reading is evidence discarded. The passages students skim are often the ones carrying the character.

2 Practice

2.1 State the CED’s claim about environment and character. [2]

2.2 Distinguish a chosen environment from an imposed one. [2]

2.3 Setting is not decoration.

(a) State what a skipped description costs a reader. [2]

(b) State the second layer of evidence beyond the place itself. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 The environment a character inhabits provides [1]

- **A** information about that character
- **B** the page count
- **C** the genre
- **D** the author’s opinion

3.2 A room a character cannot leave tells the reader about their [1]

- **A** constraints
- **B** taste
- **C** age
- **D** occupation

3.3 A character has filled a bare room with borrowed books.

(a) State what this reveals. [1]

(b) Explain how the chosen-versus-imposed distinction applies.

[2]

4 Go further

- work through the **4.5 The relationship between character and setting** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Short Fiction II** section of the AP English Literature handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 the environment a character inhabits provides information about that character.

2.2 a chosen environment shows taste and priorities; an imposed one shows constraints.

2.3 (a) evidence about the character, often carried in exactly the passages readers skim.
(b) how the character behaves in the place.

3.1 A. information about the character.

3.2 A. constraints.

3.3 (a) a priority the character acts on despite limited means. (b) the room is imposed and shows constraint, while the books are chosen and show what the character does with that constraint.