

4.7 The function of contrasts within a text

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to explain what a **contrast emphasises** 对比强调什么.

You must be able to:

- state what the differences highlighted by a contrast do
- state what contrasts often represent
- explain why a contrast is an argument
- move from noticing a contrast to explaining it

1 Worked examples

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

■ What differences do

The differences highlighted by a contrast emphasise the particular traits, aspects, or characteristics important for comparison of the things being contrasted. A contrast selects which differences matter.

■ What they represent

Contrasts often represent conflicts in values related to character, narrator, or speaker perspectives on ideas represented by a text. The contrast is usually about values, not appearances.

■ An argument

Two things differ in many ways. Setting them against each other proposes that one difference is the important one—which is a claim the text is making.

■ From noticing to explaining

"The two brothers are contrasted" is a starting point. The analysis is: which difference is being emphasised, and what conflict of values does it represent?

2 Practice

2.1 State what the differences highlighted by a contrast do. [2]

2.2 State what contrasts often represent. [2]

2.3 A contrast is an argument.

(a) Explain why. [2]

(b) State the two questions an analysis must answer. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 A contrast emphasises the traits important for [1]

- **A** comparison of the things contrasted
- **B** counting pages
- **C** dating the text
- **D** naming the author

3.2 Contrasts often represent conflicts in [1]

- **A** values
- **B** spelling
- **C** typography
- **D** length

3.3 A story sets a generous character against a careful one.

(a) State what difference is emphasised. [1]

(b) Explain the conflict of values it represents.

[2]

4 Go further

- work through the **4.7 The function of contrasts within a text** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Short Fiction II** section of the AP English Literature handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 they emphasise the particular traits, aspects or characteristics important for comparison of the things being contrasted.

2.2 conflicts in values related to character, narrator or speaker perspectives on ideas in the text.

2.3 (a) two things differ in many ways, so setting them against each other proposes that one difference is the important one. (b) which difference is emphasised, and what conflict of values it represents.

3.1 A. comparison of the contrasted things.

3.2 A. values.

3.3 (a) how each treats what they have. (b) generosity values the claim of others on one's resources, while care values security and the obligation to provide for the future.