

6.4 How plot orders events

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to identify **interrupted chronology** 打断的时间顺序.

You must be able to:

- name the four structures that interrupt chronology
- define flashback and in medias res
- distinguish foreshadowing from the others
- explain what an interruption implies about the telling

1 Worked examples

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

■ Four structures

Flashback, foreshadowing, in medias res, and stream of consciousness.

■ Two definitions

A **flashback** moves back to an earlier moment; **in medias res** begins the narrative in the middle of the action rather than at the start.

■ Foreshadowing

The odd one out: it does not move the narrative in time but plants something whose significance appears later. It interrupts the reader's chronology of understanding rather than the plot's order.

■ What it implies

A story told out of order has a teller who chose the order. Interrupted chronology therefore always raises the question of who is arranging this and why.

2 Practice

2.1 Name the four structures that interrupt chronology.

[2]

2.2 Define flashback and in medias res. [2]

2.3 Foreshadowing is the odd one out.

(a) Explain why. [2]

(b) State what an interruption implies about the telling. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Beginning a narrative in the middle of the action is [1]

- **A** in medias res
- **B** flashback
- **C** foreshadowing
- **D** stream of consciousness

3.2 Interrupted chronology raises the question of [1]

- **A** who is arranging the telling and why
- **B** the page count
- **C** the publisher
- **D** the genre

3.3 A novel opens with a funeral and returns to it two hundred pages later.

(a) Name the structure. [1]

(b) Explain the effect of the arrangement. [2]

4 Go further

- work through the **6.4 How plot orders events** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Longer Fiction or Drama II** section of the AP English Literature handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 flashback; foreshadowing; in medias res; stream of consciousness.

2.2 a flashback moves back to an earlier moment; in medias res begins in the middle of the action.

2.3 (a) it does not move the narrative in time but plants something whose significance appears later. (b) that a teller chose the order.

3.1 A. in medias res.

3.2 A. who is arranging it and why.

3.3 (a) in medias res. (b) the reader knows the outcome from the start, so attention shifts from what happens to how and why it came about.