

6.6 The function of contrasts within a text

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 13 marks

Objective

Build the skills to explain **contrast and complexity** 复杂性.

You must be able to:

- state what contrasts often represent at this level
- name the three things they introduce
- state the CED's conclusion about complexity
- distinguish ambiguity from vagueness

1 Worked examples

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

■ What they represent

Contrasts often represent contradictions or inconsistencies that introduce nuance, ambiguity, or contradiction into a text.

■ Three introductions

Nuance —a finer distinction; **ambiguity** —more than one available reading; **contradiction** —two things that cannot both be so.

■ The conclusion

As a result, contrasts make texts more complex. The CED states complexity as an outcome, so a contrast is worth analysing precisely because of what it complicates.

■ Ambiguity and vagueness

Ambiguity is two definite readings; vagueness is no definite reading. A text is ambiguous when it supports both possibilities and vague when it supports neither.

2 Practice

2.1 State what contrasts often represent at this level.

[2]

2.2 Define nuance, ambiguity and contradiction. [3]

2.3 Ambiguity is not vagueness.

(a) State the difference. [2]

(b) State the CED's conclusion about contrasts. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 The CED says contrasts make texts more [1]

- **A** complex
 - **B** simple
 - **C** brief
 - **D** popular
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3.2 A text that supports two definite readings is [1]

- **A** ambiguous
 - **B** vague
 - **C** contradictory
 - **D** incoherent
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3.3 A novel's ending supports two incompatible readings, both textually grounded.

(a) State which term applies. [1]

(b) Explain why this is a strength rather than a flaw. [2]

4 Go further

- work through the **6.6 The function of contrasts within a text** 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 contradictions or inconsistencies that introduce nuance, ambiguity or contradiction.

2.2 nuance is a finer distinction; ambiguity is more than one available reading; contradiction is two things that cannot both be so.

2.3 (a) ambiguity offers two definite readings; vagueness offers none. (b) contrasts make texts more complex.

3.1 A. more complex.

3.2 A. ambiguous.

3.3 (a) ambiguity. (b) both readings are supported by the text, so the novel is holding a genuine tension rather than failing to say anything.