

7.4 The relationship between character and setting

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 12 marks**

KEY WORDS interaction with surroundings 与环境互动

Objective

Build the skills to read **interaction with surroundings** 与环境互动.

You must be able to:

- state what a character’s interaction with surroundings provides
- state what behaviour in or description of surroundings reveals
- explain the double contribution the CED names
- distinguish describing a place from responding to it

1 Worked examples

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

■ Interaction

The way characters interact with their surroundings provides insights about those characters and the setting(s) they inhabit. Insights about both.

■ Behaviour and description

The way characters behave in or describe their surroundings reveals an attitude about those surroundings and contributes to the development of those characters and readers’ interpretations of them.

■ Double contribution

The CED says the behaviour both **reveals an attitude** and **contributes to the development** of the character. It is evidence and it is also part of how the character is built.

■ Describing and responding

A character who calls a house “cramped” has described and judged in one word. The judgment is the evidence; the description is only the occasion for it.

2 Practice

2.1 State what interaction with surroundings provides. [2]

2.2 State the double contribution of behaviour in surroundings. [2]

2.3 Describing is not the same as responding.

(a) Explain the difference. [2]

(b) State where the evidence lies. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Interaction with surroundings provides insights about [1]

- **A** characters and the settings they inhabit
- **B** the publisher
- **C** the genre only
- **D** the reader

3.2 Calling a house “cramped” is [1]

- **A** description and judgment together
- **B** neutral description
- **C** dialogue
- **D** narration only

3.3 Two characters describe the same room in opposite terms.

(a) State what this reveals. [1]

(b) Explain what it does not settle. [2]

Solutions

2.1 insights about the characters and about the settings they inhabit.

2.2 it reveals an attitude about the surroundings and contributes to the development of the character and readers' interpretations.

2.3 (a) description reports what is there; responding attaches a judgment to it. (b) in the judgment.

3.1 A. both.

3.2 A. both at once.

3.3 (a) the difference between the two characters' attitudes. (b) what the room is actually like, since both accounts are evidence about their speakers rather than neutral description.