

7.5 How plot orders events

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to explain **pacing** 节奏.

You must be able to:

- define pacing in the CED's terms
- name four factors that contribute to pace
- explain how syntax affects pace
- distinguish pace from length

1 Worked examples

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

■ Definition

Pacing is the manipulation of time in a text. Manipulation —the writer decides how much text a given amount of story time occupies.

■ Factors

Arrangement of details, frequency of events, narrative structures, syntax, the tempo or speed at which events occur, or shifts in tense and chronology.

■ Syntax

Short sentences read fast and long ones read slow, so a paragraph of clipped clauses accelerates a scene regardless of what happens in it. Pace is partly a property of the prose.

■ Pace and length

A slow passage is not a long one. Ten pages covering a decade move fast; two pages covering a minute move slowly. Pace is the ratio of text to time.

2 Practice

2.1 Define pacing in the CED's terms.

[2]

2.2 Name four factors that contribute to pace. [2]

2.3 Pace is not length.

(a) Explain the difference. [2]

(b) State how syntax affects pace. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Pacing is the manipulation of [1]

- **A** time in a text
 - **B** page size
 - **C** the reader's age
 - **D** genre
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3.2 Two pages covering one minute move [1]

- **A** slowly
 - **B** quickly
 - **C** at average pace
 - **D** backwards
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3.3 A scene is written in short clipped sentences.

(a) State the effect on pace. [1]

(b) Explain why this holds regardless of the events. [2]

4 Go further

- work through the **7.5 How plot orders events** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Short Fiction III** section of the AP English Literature handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 the manipulation of time in a text, so the writer decides how much text a given amount of story time occupies.

2.2 any four of: arrangement of details; frequency of events; narrative structures; syntax; tempo or speed of events; shifts in tense and chronology.

2.3 (a) pace is the ratio of text to story time, so a long passage covering years is fast and a short one covering a minute is slow. (b) short sentences read fast and long ones read slow.

3.1 A. time.

3.2 A. slowly.

3.3 (a) it accelerates. (b) syntax is a property of the prose rather than of the events, so the reading speed changes even where the story time does not.