

9.3 Significant events in a plot

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

Objective

Build the skills to explain **accumulating events** 事件的累积.

You must be able to:

- state what significant events often illustrate
- state what events do as they accumulate
- explain the CED's verb 'collide'
- distinguish accumulation from sequence

1 Worked examples

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

■ What they illustrate

Significant events often illustrate competing value systems that relate to a conflict present in the text. An event is significant when it stages a conflict of values.

■ Accumulation

Events in a plot collide and accumulate to create a sense of anticipation and suspense. Two verbs: they meet each other and they build up.

■ 'Collide'

Collision is stronger than sequence. Events that collide interfere with one another — a decision made for one reason is undone by something set in motion earlier.

■ Accumulation and sequence

A sequence is one thing after another; accumulation is one thing on top of another, so the weight increases. That increasing weight is where suspense comes from.

2 Practice

2.1 State what significant events often illustrate.

[2]

2.2 State the two things events do as a plot develops. [2]

2.3 Accumulation is not sequence.

(a) State the difference. [2]

(b) State where suspense comes from. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Significant events often illustrate competing [1]

- **A** value systems
 - **B** page counts
 - **C** genres
 - **D** narrators
-

3.2 Events that "collide" [1]

- **A** interfere with one another
 - **B** follow neatly
 - **C** are unrelated
 - **D** repeat
-

3.3 A decision made in chapter three is undone by something set in motion in chapter one.

(a) State the CED's verb for this. [1]

(b) Explain how it produces suspense. [2]

4 Go further

- work through the **9.3 Significant events in a plot** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Longer Fiction or Drama III** section of the AP English Literature handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 competing value systems that relate to a conflict present in the text.

2.2 they collide and accumulate.

2.3 (a) a sequence is one thing after another; accumulation is one thing on top of another, so the weight increases. (b) from that increasing weight.

3.1 A. value systems.

3.2 A. they interfere.

3.3 (a) collide. (b) the reader who knows about the earlier action watches the later decision being made in ignorance of it, and the gap between what the reader knows and the character knows is suspense.