

7.1 Characters who change or remain unchanged

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

KEY WORDS epiphany 顿悟 • suddenly 骤然

Objective

Build the skills to explain an **epiphany** 顿悟.

You must be able to:

- define an epiphany in the CED’s terms
- state where a change in character often comes from
- state how an epiphany may affect the plot
- distinguish sudden from gradual change

1 Worked examples

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

■ Definition

Characters can change suddenly as the result of a moment of realization, known as an epiphany. An epiphany allows a character to see things in a new light and is often directly related to a central conflict of the narrative.

■ Where change comes from

Often the change in a character emerges directly from a conflict of values represented in the narrative, and changes in a character’s circumstances may lead to changes in that character.

■ Effect on plot

An epiphany may affect the plot by causing a character to act on his or her sudden realization. The realisation is not the whole event; the action following it is.

■ Sudden and gradual

Characters can change gradually over the course of a narrative as well. In short fiction, the epiphany is the common form because there is not room for a gradual one — a structural fact worth noticing.

2 Practice

2.1 Define an epiphany in the CED’s terms. [2]

2.2 State where a change in character often emerges from. [2]

2.3 An epiphany can affect the plot.

(a) State how. [2]

(b) State why the epiphany is common in short fiction. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 An epiphany is often directly related to [1]

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** a central conflict of the narrative
B the title
C the setting only
D the author’s life

3.2 The plot is affected when the character [1]

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | B |
| C | D |
- A** acts on the realization
B forgets it
C repeats it
D describes it

3.3 A character understands something in the last paragraph and does nothing.

(a) State whether the plot is affected. [1]

(b) Explain what the story gains from the inaction. [2]
