

9.1 Characters who change or remain unchanged

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

KEY WORDS minor characters 次要人物

Objective

Build the skills to explain **minor characters** 次要人物.

You must be able to:

- state why minor characters often remain unchanged
- name the two functions the CED gives them
- state what affects readers’ interpretations
- explain why an unchanged minor character is still analysable

1 Worked examples

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

■ Why unchanged

Minor characters often remain unchanged because the narrative doesn’t focus on them. The explanation is structural, not psychological.

■ Two functions

They may only be part of the narrative to advance the plot or to interact with major characters. “Only” is the CED’s word: some characters exist for the machinery.

■ Interpretation

Readers’ interpretations of a text are often affected by a character changing — or not — and the meaning conveyed by such changes or lack thereof. Absence of change conveys meaning too.

■ Still analysable

A minor character who does not change can measure one who does, or can show what the narrative treats as not worth attending to — which is itself a finding about the text’s priorities.

2 Practice

2.1 State why minor characters often remain unchanged. [2]

2.2 Name the two functions the CED gives them. [2]

2.3 Lack of change conveys meaning.

(a) State the CED’s claim. [2]

(b) State what an unchanged minor character can show about the text. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 The CED’s explanation for minor characters’ lack of change is [1]

- A

B

C

D
- A structural

B psychological

C moral

D historical

3.2 Minor characters may exist to advance the plot or to [1]

- A

B

C

D
- A interact with major characters

B narrate

C set the scene only

D end the book

3.3 A servant appears in six scenes and is identical in each.

(a) State the likely function. [1]

(b) Explain what the flatness itself may show. [2]
