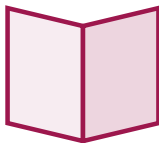


Longer Fiction or Drama II

AP English Literature ■ Unit 6

AP English Literature



What we will cover

- 1 What Textual Details Reveal About a Character
- 2 The Function of Contrasting Characters
- 3 Choices, Actions, and Speech Reveal Complexity
- 4 How Plot Orders Events
- 5 The Function of a Sequence of Events
- 6 The Function of Contrasts Within a Text

What Textual Details Reveal About a Character

Unit 6 is the second longer-fiction-or-drama unit and it adds the two most sophisticated tools in the course: **narrator reliability** and the **symbol**.

In a long work with several perspectives, the discrepancies between them are not a problem to reconcile.

The Function of Contrasting Characters

A foil is not an antagonist. A foil may be an ally, a sibling, a friend – what makes them a foil is that they are similar enough for the difference to be visible.

The useful question is always:
*what does this character have
that the protagonist lacks, and
what does the text do with
that gap?*

Choices, Actions, and Speech Reveal Complexity

This is where AP Literature parts company with simpler reading. Inconsistency is not a flaw in a character; it is the evidence that the character has an interior. A character who always acts on what they think is a position, not a person.

- **Inconsistencies between the private thoughts of characters and their actual behaviour reveal tensions** 内心与行为之间的张力.
- A character's **competing, conflicting, or inconsistent choices contribute to complexity** 复杂性.

How Plot Orders Events

Some narrative structures **interrupt the chronology** of a plot: **flashback** 倒叙, **foreshadowing** 伏笔, and **in medias res** 从中间开始.

The Function of a Sequence of Events

Those interrupting structures **affect the reader's experience** of the narrative – what is known when, and therefore what is felt when.

A flashback withholds until a later point, so the earlier scenes are read twice – once in ignorance and once in retrospect.

The Function of Contrasts Within a Text

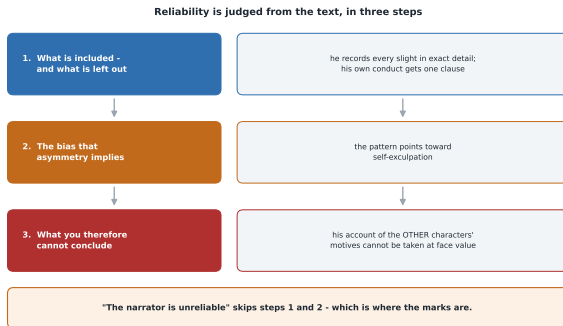
Note the last phrase. The CED explicitly permits a text to support more than one reading.

An essay that acknowledges a competing interpretation and shows why its own is better is doing exactly what the sophistication point rewards.

Details, Diction, and Syntax Reveal Perspective

- A narrator's or speaker's **tone toward events or characters** influences readers' **interpretations**.
- The **syntactical arrangement** of phrases and clauses can **emphasise details or ideas**.
- **Information included and not included conveys the perspective** 包含与略去的信息 of characters and narrators.
- A narrator's perspective **may influence the details and the amount of detail** in a text.

How a Narrator's Reliability Affects a Narrative



the distinction this unit turns on

How a Narrator's Reliability Affects a Narrative

- Readers can infer narrators' biases by noting which details they choose to include and which they omit.
- **Readers who detect bias in a narrator may find that narrator less reliable** 不可靠.
- The reliability of a narrator may influence a reader's understanding of a character's motives.

The Function of a Symbol

The last point is a warning. A conventional symbol arrives with meanings attached, and the text may be using them, refusing them, or inverting them. Check what the text does before importing the convention.

- When a **material object** comes to represent an idea or concept, it becomes a **symbol** 象征.
- When a **character** comes to represent an idea, that character becomes **symbolic**.
- A symbol is an object that **represents a meaning**, so it is said to be symbolic or representative of that meaning.
- **Certain symbols are so common and recurrent** that readers bring associations to them before reading.

Developing a Literary Thesis, Commentary, and Evidence

Unchanged from Units 3-5: an **interpretation** requiring textual defence; a **line of reasoning** of claims communicated through **commentary**; evidence used **strategically**, **effective** with commentary, **sufficient** in quantity and quality, developed **recursively**.

Control Over the Elements of Composition

Writers convey ideas through the strategic selection and placement of phrases and clauses.

Writers use words that enhance the clear communication of an interpretation.

Punctuation conveys relationships between parts of a sentence.

Exam tips

- Discrepancies between perspectives are **the method**, not a problem to reconcile.
- A **foil** is similar enough for the difference to show. Ask what they have that the protagonist lacks.
- **Inconsistency is evidence of an interior**. A perfectly consistent character is a position, not a person.
- For any structural interruption, ask **what the reader knows at that moment**. That is the effect.
- Reliability is a **chain**: inclusion and omission, then bias, then what you cannot conclude. Show all three.
- With a **conventional symbol**, check whether the text uses, refuses, or inverts the association before importing it.