Chapter 1 : Characterization | Definition of Characterization by Merriam-Webster

Plot is the overall story line of a piece of fiction. It is what you would talk about if someone asked you what happened in the story. Plots typically consist of set elements such as rising action.

Elements of Story or Fiction - character, setting, plot, point of view, style, tone, theme Elements of fiction and elements of story in general can be used by the reader to increase their enjoyment and understanding of different literary pieces. Once students are aware that all stories have elements of character, setting, plot, theme, point of view, style, and tone; they can be encouraged to ask themselves to identify the characteristics of each for a particular story. The more familiar they become with the different kinds of elements the better they will understand and critically analyze stories. Character Character is the mental, emotional, and social qualities to distinguish one entity from another people, animals, spirits, automatons, pieces of furniture, and other animated objects. Character development is the change that a character undergoes from the beginning of a story to the end. Young children can note this. The importance of a character to the story determines how fully the character is developed. Characters can be primary, secondary, minor, or main. Characters are developed by Actions: Later he grins when Wilbur falls trying to spin a web. I never do those things if I can avoid them I prefer to spend my time eating, gnawing, spying, and hiding I am a glutton not a merry-maker. He agrees to fetch the egg sac so that he may eat first every day and grow fatter and bigger than any other known rat. The wording the author uses in the narrative adds to characterization. He would kill a gosling if he could get away with it. These statements certainly develop character. Unity of character and action: Stories with main character change: They have a variety of traits that make them believable. Central characters are well developed in good literature. Meg, Claudia, Duck, Wilbur, and Jess are the central character, or protagonist hero or heroine. Flat characters are less well developed and have fewer or limited traits or belong to a group, class, or stereotype. A character foil are minor characters whose traits contrast with a main character. The lamb is young and naive as Wilbur, but she is smug instead of humble. Anthropomorphic characterization is the characterization of animals, inanimate objects, or natural phenomena as people. Skilled authors can use this to create fantasy even from stuffed toys Winnie-the-Pooh. Animal characters in realism are best when the animals act only like animals as in The Incredible Journey. Character Change Dynamic characters are rounded characters that change. Wilbur as the panicky child. Is it true they are going to kill me when the cold weather comes? She cannot accompany us home, because of her condition. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that I take her egg sac with me. You are the only one that can get it. Please, please, please, Templeton, climb up and get the egg sac. This desperate plea does not come from personal need. Further, he tells Templeton to "stop acting like a spoiled child. Static stock characters are round or flat characters that do not change during the story. Charlotte is the same wise and selfless character at the end of the story as at the beginning. Folktales, fairytales, and other types use static and flat characters whose actions are predictable, so the listener or reader is free to concentrate on the action and theme as it moves along toward an often times universal discovery. Plot Plot is the order in which things move and happen in a story. Chronological order is when a story relates events in the order in which they happened. Flashback is when the story moves back in time. Dreams are easier for children to understand because of their experience with them. Flashbacks are more problematic. Conflicts occur when the protagonist struggles against an antagonist villain that goes against the protagonist , or opposing force. Conflict and order make plot. The author creates the conflict by describing one of the following types of interactions. A Wizard of Earthsea, Ursula K. Ged struggles against the flaws in himself, as the shadow, must make himself whole. He will now live his life for its own sake, not for hatred, pain, ruin, or the darkness of evil. Child will probably call it "will Wilbur live? Julie in Julie of the Wolves by Jean George. A story that lacks struggle, lacks suspense, lacks alternatives, lacks a sense that it had to happen, and therefore, satisfaction. All the reader can say at the conclusion of such a story is "So what does that prove? A Wrinkle in Time shows Meg in a powerful planet saving person-against-person conflict. The author builds the plot, character, Double Fudge by Judy Blume has a different sense of conflict. There are little incidents that happen throughout the book but nothing of

significance to anyone but Fudge and maybe some family members. Pattern of action Rising action builds during the story and reaches a peak at the end. The Borrowers by Mary Norton. Steady action maintains the same amount of action through out the story, rising and falling from time to time. Rise and fall action: Suspense is what makes us read on. Will Charlotte run out of words? Is Templeton too selfish to help? Will Wilbur win at the fair? Foreshadowing is the planting of clues to indicate the outcome of the story. Not all readers will be alert to these. Some may notice them subconsciously and describe their inferences as guesses or feelings. When we first meet Charlotte we are told that she eats living things and the friendship looks questionable. But White adds that "she had a kind heart, and she was to prove loyal and true to the very end. Another clue is when Charlotte assures Wilbur, after he learns of the slaughter, with, "I am going to save you. Achieved at the expense of the character and the idea. A writer must be careful with sensationalism, so as not to weaken the character or theme, to balance suspense over action, and then hint at the outcome, as not to overpower small children but provide relief as needed. The peak and turning point of the conflict, the point at which we know the outcome of the action. Children call it the most exciting part. The Borrowers when the boy ventilates the fumigation. Resolution is the falling action after the climax. When the reader is assured that all is well and will continue to be, so the plot has a closed ending. If the reader is left to draw their own conclusions about the final plot then the ending is open. Many adults as well as children are disturbed by open endings. Inevitably is the property of it had to be. This is high praise for a writer. The Incredible Journey has some coincidental events that remove credibility from the plot. First, a handwritten note blows into the fire and leaves the housekeeper baffled. She therefore does not know that the two dogs and cat have struck out on their own, and does not search for them. Later a boy hunting for the first time with his own rifle saves the cat from a lynx with one remarkable shot. Sentimentality is a natural concern or emotion for another person. The way a soap opera or a tear-jerker plays on its viewers. Black Beauty by Anna Sewell is told by the horse and stuffed with sentimentality. The head hung out of the cart-tail, the lifeless tongue was slowly dropping with blood; and the sunken eyes. It was a chestnut horse with a long, thin neck I believe it was Ginger; I hoped it was, for then her troubles would be over. If men were more merciful they should shoot us before we came to such misery. The rapid pace of folktales does not allow time for tears by false sentiment. We do not anguish over the fate of Rumpelstiltskin, when he stamped his feet and split in two and that was the end of him. The most destructive element from the over use of sentimentality is not boredom, but the fact that the young reader, faced with continual sentimentality, will not develop the sensitivity essential to recognize what is truly moving and what is merely a play on feelings. If, after all, we regard the death of a pet mouse with the same degree of emotional intensity as the death of a brother, we have no sense of emotional proportion.

Chapter 2 : How to Use Plot and Character Together in Your Novel | A Well Told Story

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It shows how the characters relate to one another, their goals and motivations, as well as their moral character. During the exposition, the protagonist learns their main goal and what is at stake. It starts with a conflict, for example, the death of a character. The inciting incident is the point of the plot that begins the conflict. It is the event that catalyzes the protagonist to go into motion and to take action. Rising action involves the buildup of events until the climax. In this phase, the protagonist understands his or her goal and begins to work toward it. Smaller problems thwart their initial success and their progress is directed primarily against these secondary obstacles. This phase demonstrates how the protagonist overcomes these obstacles. The protagonist makes the single big decision that defines not only the outcome of the story, but also who they are as a person. Freytag defines the climax as the third of the five dramatic phases which occupies the middle of the story. At the beginning of this phase, the protagonist finally clears away the preliminary barriers and engages with the adversary. Usually, both the protagonist and the antagonist have a plan to win against the other as they enter this phase. For the first time, the audience sees the pair going against one another in direct or nearly direct conflict. This struggle usually results in neither character completely winning or losing. The central struggle between the two characters is unique in that the protagonist makes a decision which shows their moral quality, and ultimately decides their fate. In a tragedy, the protagonist here makes a poor decision or a miscalculation that demonstrates their tragic flaw. In the beginning of this phase, the antagonist often has the upper hand. The protagonist has never been further from accomplishing their goal. The outcome depends on which side the protagonist has put themselves on. The conflict officially ends. Plot device A plot device is a means of advancing the plot in a story. It is often used to motivate characters, create urgency, or resolve a difficulty. This can be contrasted with moving a story forward with dramatic technique; that is, by making things happen because characters take action for well-developed reasons. An example of a plot device would be when the cavalry shows up at the last moment and saves the day in a battle. In contrast, an adversarial character who has been struggling with himself and saves the day due to a change of heart would be considered dramatic technique. Plot outline[edit] A plot outline is a prose telling of a story which can be turned into a screenplay. Sometimes it is called a "one page" because of its length. It is generally longer and more detailed than a standard synopsis, which is usually only one or two paragraphs, but shorter and less detailed than a treatment or a step outline. In comics, the roughs refer to a stage in the development where the story has been broken down very loosely in a style similar to storyboarding in film development. This stage is also referred to as storyboarding or layouts. In Japanese manga, this stage is called the nemu pronounced like the English word "name". The roughs are quick sketches arranged within a suggested page layout. The main goals of roughs are: In fiction writing, a plot outline is a laundry list of scenes with each line being a separate plot point, and the outline helps give a story a "solid backbone and structure". A-Plot[edit] An A-Plot is a cinema and television term referring to the plotline that drives the story. This does not necessarily mean it is the most important, but rather the one that forces most of the action. Plot summary[edit] A plot summary is a brief description of a piece of literature that explains what happens. In a plot summary, the author and title of the book should be referred to. Also, it is no more than a paragraph long while summarizing the main points of the story.

Chapter 3 : Plot (narrative) - Wikipedia

Learning effective characterization for literary fiction is essential for great stories: imagined characters created to reveal theme and meaning, and that drive plot action in some way and are not simply bystanders to fatalism.

With plot or character? Your characters must serve your plot, and your plot must work with your characters. Why is he alone? How is he going to deal with little green men knocking on his door? And the larger question—is the reader going to believe his reactions? But you must make it look, sound, feel, taste and smell real to the reader. Yet some details are more important than others. I learned a lot about writing techniques through my love of reading. In my teens, one of my favorite authors was Sinclair Lewis. He was brilliant at character sketches. In just a sentence or two, he could get inside the personality of a small town mayor or the head of a major corporation. His stories moved slowly, and eventually I stopped reading him. Contrast that with the action-packed movies being produced today. They serve up chases, explosions and world-crushing meteors, bombarding the screen one after the other. And they justify the action with logic. If you want to study some writers who do both plot and character with equal brilliance, try Stephen King or Dean Koontz. They deliver a great reading experience over and over. Then I go back to my own stories. In this story, I started with my protagonist. Why has he lived so long? What experiences shaped him? How did he find out he was immortal? A group of monks found him and took him back to their monastery, where he got his education. He was on the fast track to becoming abbot until a group of monks began to whisper that he was in league with the devil because he never got sick and never aged past his early thirties. One night, they attacked him with knives, and he staggered away into a barn, where he prepared to die. But he woke up the next day with his wounds healing. With no good options, he stole clothing, money and a horse from a rich man, then later sailed to Italy and became an art importer. I always plan to start with a gripping first scene that will plunge the reader into the action. But there are always details to discover along the way. How exactly are Noah and Olivia going to get away from Bainbridge? How do they resolve the conflict with Pearson? The two main threats—Bainbridge and Pearson—are woven together after Noah fights off the brother and takes a wounded Olivia to his estate. And Noah wrestles with the problem of how to reveal his background without driving away Olivia. As they struggle with their relationship, Bainbridge and Pearson hatch a plot to kidnap her. Instead, she finds out his secret in the worst possible way. Before her eyes, his burns begin to heal. As the book progresses, plot and character continue to work together. Noah and Olivia face an escalating series of high-stakes perils, but in every case their reactions to each other and to these threats are the most important factor in every scene. It takes me about three chapters to get into their heads deeply enough to know how they will react in each situation they face. And as I write, I may go back and fill in more about their character so the reader can understand them better. Still, I try never to overload any one part of the story with too much background. Each scene has to move the plot forward toward an ending that will satisfy me and the reader. I write stories where my main characters are falling in love against a backdrop of suspense and danger. Does Olivia understand Noah well enough to stay with him? Can he take the risk of loving again? Or can they find a way to solve this basic problem?

As the book progresses, plot and character continue to work together. Noah and Olivia face an escalating series of high-stakes perils, but in every case their reactions to each other and to these threats are the most important factor in every scene.

February 24, by Fiction Editor Beth Hill last modified February 26, Dozens of elements go into novels, into crafting quality fiction. Yet there is no doubt that plot, setting, and character deserve a great deal of attention. Stories of every length are about characters doing things in some place—people, place, and event. Plot, setting, and character deal with the story of stories. This is what the reader opens a book to find. The reader comes to a novel to be entertained, to pass time, to lose himself in a world different from his own. He wants to imagine himself as the lead character, having exploits, going places he may never visit in his real life. He may come to story on a journey of self-discovery, willing to learn as the protagonist learns. He wants to identify with a person other than himself, experience events far from those of his daily life, become immersed in a new country or city or world. He wants character, plot, and setting. And he wants them realistic enough that he can become lost in the fiction. Both sides agree that stories need characters doing things, overcoming adversities, coming to decision points. They agree that stories must take place somewhere. Their basic disagreement is on the degree of emphasis given to character and plot. Neither side doubts the value of setting, though no writer will approach his use of setting the same way any other writer does. Still, writers and readers expect a story to take place somewhere and at some time. Though a reader may choose a book with one setting over a book with another, other elements being equal. Or, viewed from the other side, they come for a plot that entertains, one that influences character behavior and thought. Character First Those who prefer the emphasis on character find that the focus on character motivation and conflict, character insight, and character goals and desires makes for rich fiction. Connection with character gives them a stronger connection to the story. In a character-driven story, we are likely to find more inner debate, more character angst, more opportunities for decision making, and fewer action scenes. What the character thinks and feels is given more emphasis than what he does. The character drives the story events. He still acts and reacts, since action is one indicator of his thoughts and a key to what he believes in. But plot is not the driver of his story. Events are excuses for that growth. A story with emphasis on character growth can be richly satisfying since the reader has many points with which he can identify, many possible connection points with the character. Of what interest is a novel in which nothing of consequence happens? They want action and event, and find that these events are what propel the story. The plot directs the character. Characters still have motivation and goals, but they may be nebulous or thin, merely excuses for the character to delve into matters beyond his everyday interests. Stories with intricate or exciting plots keep the reader on the edge of his seat, anxious to see how the lead character will solve the problem or get out of the jam. Less time is given to character contemplation or character growth, although both may be part of the overall story. Because of the emphasis on events and how they affect not only the main character but anonymous others, character development may suffer. A major complaint of plot-first novels? There may be a lot happening, but who cares? Contrast Fiction without fleshed-out characters takes on the feel of an action movie peopled with robots—individual scenes may be exciting, but the reader is removed from any emotion or involvement in the scene. When there is nothing at stake for a character—or no character invested in the story—the reader also has nothing invested. Story requires memorable characters to engage the reader or viewer. Anchor the reader to the whole of the story. On the other hand, wonderfully developed characters rich in needs and inner conflict who do nothing are ultimately boring. They need to be active, involved with others, with setting, with the events happening around them. And the more involved they are with others and those events—causing events and reacting to them—the more the reader will be drawn into the story. The kids could put a girl in a raincoat and stick raindrops on the background to show the weather conditions. They can be human, animal, mechanical, or any combination thereof. Readers typically search for a character they can identify with to better relate to a story. Character answers the question who. Novels typically follow the lead character, the protagonist, through the story

events. This protagonist is acted on by other characters and events in the story and acts on those other characters and events in turn. Something out of the ordinary—an inciting event—moves the lead character from the status quo and into the drama of the story. Their conflict is one of the major drivers of the plot. Main characters, both protagonist and antagonist, have friends who help them achieve their goals and prevent their opponent from reaching his. Additional characters can bring veracity to setting and create opportunities for even more conflict. Plot Plot is the whole of the events of the story. This is the action action includes dialogue , the part of story that answers the question what happened. Plot unfolds through scenes, through story events and dialogue. Plot events can take place right in front of the reader or be related to him through flashback or by exposition. Plot is concerned with events that happen to the main characters and that have an impact on their decisions. Setting Setting is the place of story. It includes locations office, bedroom, bar, cave, forest , cities or countries or planets, era or age, time of day, and cultural milieu. Setting answers the questions where and when. That is, a story whose setting contributes to the tone and plot cannot be dropped into a different setting and remain the same story. Setting influences character type, word choice, pace, tone, even genre. Setting enhances story by enfolding plot and character in a place where they fit, where their strengths can best be highlighted. As do readers, writers have their preferences. One writer may have learned how to write character before she learned how to plot or vice versa. Or, one may have a natural talent for action rather than the psychological development of characters and therefore leans first to plot. Whatever comes easiest is likely to be the element on which the writer spends most of her time. Yet, all writers can bring more to their stories, more character motivation or more action. They can take their strengths and add to them by learning more about how to delve into character and how to write action scenes that have the reader turning the pages for more. As you write, remember the reasons the reader comes to fiction. See that your readers are satisfied by giving them a pleasing blend of character, plot, and setting. Give them a plot that goes somewhere and characters they can care about in a setting that enhances both.

Transcript of Plot and characterization, with setting, conflict, and theme. Major Course Terms Plot is shown over five points: Exposition Plot, Setting, Conflict, and.

The final objective is to see the story as a whole and to become aware of how the parts are put together to produce a unified effect. Exposition The introductory material which gives the setting, creates the tone, presents the characters, and presents other facts necessary to understanding the story. Foreshadowing The use of hints or clues to suggest what will happen later in the story. Inciting Force The event or character that triggers the conflict. Conflict The essence of fiction. The conflicts we encounter can usually be identified as one of four kinds. It begins with the inciting force and ends with the climax. Crisis The conflict reaches a turning point. At this point the opposing forces in the story meet and the conflict becomes most intense. The crisis occurs before or at the same time as the climax. Climax The climax is the result of the crisis. It is the high point of the story for the reader. Frequently, it is the moment of the highest interest and greatest emotion. The point at which the outcome of the conflict can be predicted. Falling Action 2 The events after the climax which close the story. Resolution Denouement Rounds out and concludes the action. They have good and bad qualities. Their goals, ambitions and values change. A round character changes as a result of what happens to him or her. A dynamic character grows or progresses to a higher level of understanding in the course of the story. Protagonist The main character in the story Antagonist The character or force that opposes the protagonist. Foil A character who provides a contrast to the protagonist. They have only one or two striking qualities. Their predominant quality is not balanced by an opposite quality. They are usually all good or all bad. Such characters can be interesting or amusing in their own right, but they lack depth. Third-Person Objective The narrator is an outsider who can report only what he or she sees and hears. Third-Person Limited The narrator is an outsider who sees into the mind of one of the characters. Omniscient 3 The narrator is an all-knowing outsider who can enter the minds of more than one of the characters. Man versus Man Conflict that pits one person against another. Man versus Nature A run-in with the forces of nature. On the one hand, it expresses the insignificance of a single human life in the cosmic scheme of things. Man versus Society The values and customs by which everyone else lives are being challenged. The character may come to an untimely end as a result of his or her own convictions. The character may, on the other hand, bring others around to a sympathetic point of view, or it may be decided that society was right after all. Man versus Self Internal conflict. Not all conflict involves other people. Sometimes people are their own worst enemies. Does he give in to temptation or rise above it? Does he demand the most from himself or settle for something less? Does he even bother to struggle? Often, more than one kind of conflict is taking place at the same time. Not all foreshadowing is obvious. Frequently, future events are merely hinted at through dialogue, description, or the attitudes and reactions of the characters. Foreshadowing frequently serves two purposes. It builds suspense by raising questions that encourage the reader to go on and find out more about the event that is being foreshadowed. Foreshadowing is also a 4 means of making a narrative more believable by partially preparing the reader for events which are to follow. Verbal Irony The contrast between what is said and what is actually meant. Irony of Situation This refers to a happening that is the opposite of what is expected or intended. Dramatic Irony This occurs when the audience or reader knows more than the characters know. Some possible attitudes are pessimism, optimism, earnestness, seriousness, bitterness, humorous, and joyful. Mood The climate of feeling in a literary work. The choice of setting, objects, details, images, and words all contribute towards creating a specific mood. For example, an author may create a mood of mystery around a character or setting but may treat that character or setting in an ironic, serious, or humorous tone SYMBOLISM A person, place or object which has a meaning in itself but suggests other meanings as well. Things, characters and actions can be symbols. Anything that suggests a meaning beyond the obvious. Some symbols are conventional, generally meaning the same thing to all readers. A theme may be stated or implied. Theme differs from the subject or topic of a literary work in that it involves a statement or opinion about the topic. Themes may be major or minor. A major theme is an idea the author returns to time and again. It becomes one

of the most important ideas in the story. Minor themes are ideas that may appear from time to time. It is important to recognize the difference between the theme of a literary work and the subject of a literary work. The subject is the topic on which an author has chosen to write. The theme, however, makes some statement about or expresses some opinion on that topic. For example, the subject of a story might be war while the theme might be the idea that war is useless. Four ways in which an author can express themes are as follows: Themes are expressed and emphasized by the way the author makes us feel.. By sharing feelings of the main character you also share the ideas that go through his mind. Themes are presented in thoughts and conversations. The things a person says are much on their mind. Look for thoughts that are repeated throughout the story. Themes are suggested through the characters. The main character usually illustrates the most important theme of the story. A good way to get at this theme is to ask yourself the question, what does the main character learn in the course of the story? The actions or events in the story are used to suggest theme. People naturally express ideas and feelings through their actions. One thing authors think about is what an action will "say". In other words, how will the action express an idea or theme? Language that appeals to the senses. Descriptions of people or objects stated in terms of our senses. Any language that goes beyond the literal meaning of words in order to furnish new effects or fresh insights into an idea or a subject. The most common figures of speech are simile, metaphor, and alliteration. Simile 6 A figure of speech which involves a direct comparison between two unlike things, usually with the words like or as. The muscles on his brawny arms are strong as iron bands. Metaphor A figure of speech which involves an implied comparison between two relatively unlike things using a form of be. The comparison is not announced by like or as. The road was a ribbon of moonlight. Alliteration Repeated consonant sounds occurring at the beginning of words or within words. Alliteration is used to create melody, establish mood, call attention to important words, and point out similarities and contrasts. Personification A figure of speech which gives the qualities of a person to an animal, an object, or an idea. It is a comparison which the author uses to show something in an entirely new light, to communicate a certain feeling or attitude towards it and to control the way a reader perceives it. Onomatopoeia The use of words that mimic sounds. They appeal to our sense of hearing and they help bring a description to life. A string of syllables the author has made up to represent the way a sound really sounds. Hyperbole An exaggerated statement used to heighten effect. It is not used to mislead the reader, but to emphasize a point. A novel where exciting events are more important than character development and sometimes theme.

Chapter 6 : Plot and Character - Literary Theory and Criticism

Plot, setting, and character are the major elements of fiction. Learn the basics about these elements and the nature of their interaction. The Editor's Blog is a.

For me, the biggest game changer came when I was introduced to this character-centric, three-act tension plot structure , which I adapted slightly to meet my own needs. You can visit the link for a full break down of this plot structure. But of course, character development can be a challenging balancing act in itself. If your character changes too much, it might come off a little unbelievable. I tend to focus on one specific lesson they need to learn or one skill they need to develop. Link those situations to major plot points Once I have my character-based points of crisis in place, I tie each point to my plot. This gives each point of crisis an overall plot push and some level of character development, which balances the book. I then hand the story back over to the plot to start building up to the next point. My main character, Jocelyn, was kidnapped by a North Korean spy agency as a kid and raised to become one of them. The book picks up ten years after her kidnapping when Jocelyn is looking to escape from, and get revenge on, her captors. I knew Jocelyn was raised in a traumatic environment. I also knew because of that it would be very difficult for her to trust people. So, I decided early on that trust was the big developmental lesson I wanted her to learn by the end of the book. To that end, I developed a series of events where she would first have no choice but to trust people until she ultimately made the choice to trust them on her own. Each of these events became a point of crisis that I paced throughout the book using the structure above. From a plot standpoint, I was lucky. How did I get here? Earlier drafts of Crossing the Line were, in fact, much more character focused. Each mission was in place to serve the character. Because of that, the missions were more independent of one another. One of the first notes my editor gave me before she even bought the book was that the missions should be connected and the plot more centric. She was absolutely right. Thanks to this plot structure, it was a fairly easy fix. Her note also helped me realize the full potential of this structure and how each point of crisis can serve both character and plot to create a balanced and solid story. How do you approach character and plot? What works really well for you? What do you struggle with? Tell me in the comments!

Chapter 7 : Plot and Character â€" Make Them Work Together | Rebecca York

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Characterization Characterization Definition Characterization is a literary device that is used step-by-step in literature to highlight and explain the details about a character in a story. It is in the initial stage in which the writer introduces the character with noticeable emergence. After introducing the character, the writer often talks about his behavior; then, as the story progresses, the thought-processes of the character. The next stage involves the character expressing his opinions and ideas, and getting into conversations with the rest of the characters. Characterization as a literary tool was coined in the mid 15th century. This point of view was later abandoned by many because, in the 19th century, the dominance of character over plot became clear through petty bourgeois novels. Types of Characterization An author can use two approaches to deliver information about a character and build an image of it. These two types of characterization include: Direct or explicit characterization This kind of characterization takes a direct approach towards building the character. It uses another character, narrator, or the protagonist himself to tell the readers or audience about the subject. Indirect or implicit characterization This is a more subtle way of introducing the character to the audience. Characterization in Drama On stage or in front of the camera, actors usually do not have much time to characterize. For this reason, the character faces the risk of coming across as underdeveloped. In dramaturgy, realists take a different approach, by relying on implied characterization. This is pivotal to the theme of their character-driven narrative. Classic psychological characterization examples, such as The Seagull, usually build the main character in a more indirect manner. This approach is considered more effective because it slowly discloses the inner turmoil of the character, over the course of the show, and lets the audience connect better. The actors who act in such roles usually work on them profoundly to get an in-depth idea of the personalities of their respective characters. This kind of realism needs the actors to build the character from their own perspective initially. This is why realistic characterization is more of a subtle art, which cannot directly be recognized. Examples of Characterization in Literature Example 1: The Great Gatsby By F. Scott Fitzgerald There are many examples of characterization in literature. The Great Gatsby, is probably the best. In this particular book, the main idea revolves around the social status of each character. The major character of the book, Mr. Gatsby, is perceptibly rich, but he does not belong to the upper stratum of society. This means that he cannot have Daisy. Moreover, you might also notice that Tom, Jordan, and Daisy live in East Egg while Gatsby and Nick reside in West Egg, which again highlights the difference in their financial background. This division is reinforced at the end of the novel when Nick supports Gatsby against the rest of the folk. Occupations have also been used very tactfully in the novel to highlight characteristics of certain protagonists. The prime example is Gatsby who, despite being so rich, is known by his profession: He had an illegal job that earned him a fortune, but failed to get him into the upper class of New York society. Function of Characterization Characterization is an essential component in writing good literature. Modern fiction , in particular, has taken great advantage of this literary device. Understanding the role of characterization in storytelling is very important for any writer. To put it briefly, it helps us make sense of the behavior of any character in a story by helping us understand their thought processes. A good use of characterization always leads the readers or audience to relate better to the events taking place in the story. Dialogues play a very important role in developing a character, because they give us an opportunity to examine the motivations and actions of the characters more deeply.

Chapter 8 : Characterization - Examples and Definition

Lastly, Aristotle notes that forming a solid plot is far more difficult than creating good characters or diction. Having asserted that the plot is the most important of the six parts of tragedy, he ranks the remainder as follows, from most important to least: Character, Thought, Diction, Melody, and Spectacle.

Characterization Definition of Characterization Characterization is the act of creating and describing characters in literature. The way that characters act, think, and speak also adds to their characterization. There are two subsets of the definition of characterization: We explore this distinction in more depth below. Direct Versus Indirect Characterization Direct characterization, also known as explicit characterization, consists of the author telling the audience what a character is like. A narrator may give this information, or a character in the story may do it. Examples of direct characterization would be: This requires the audience to make inferences about why a character would say or do those things. This type of characterization is also known as implicit characterization. While it takes more time to develop a character through indirect characterization, it often leaves a deeper impression on the reader than direct statements about what a character is like. Here are examples of indirect characterization: He really should join. But just thinking about it made beads of sweat collect at the top of his bald spot. I reached for my coffee cup and was disappointed to realize it was empty. Consider the following situations: This is a primary place for direct characterizations of ourselves. We put up pictures and data to describe our looks, and we answer questions and write essays to describe our personalities. Witnesses to crimes use characterization to give police a better idea of who the culprits might be. This type of characterization is generally based on physical attributes, though detectives also may try to understand the psychology of a criminal to catch him or her. When a person has died, their loved ones use characterization to give a sense of what kind of person he or she was. This is primarily to show personality. That may sound like a long time, but considering that Ancient Greek tragedies date back a few thousand years, characterization is a relatively recent development. This is because older forms of literature, including Ancient Greek tragedies, were much more focused on plot. Characterization increased in popularity as scholars began to consider psychology as a scientific field, especially from the 19th century onwards. People became much more interested in why people do things and the way in which they react instead of just what happens. Literature has reflected this shift. However, that is not to say that works written before the 19th century had a lack of characterization. William Shakespeare writing in the late 16th and early 17th centuries created some of the most psychologically complex characters ever. It is simply a much more integral part of the storytelling process now. Examples of Characterization in Literature Example 1 Cathy was chewing a piece of meat, chewing with her front teeth. Samuel had never seen anyone chew that way before. And when she had swallowed, her little tongue flicked around her lips. Steinbeck says this directly many times over and in many different ways. However, in this example of characterization, Steinbeck instead opts for a more chilling image. Cathy seems to eat meat much as a snake would. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view [â€¦] until you climb into his skin and walk around in it. Atticus is a very compassionate character who is able to extend his empathy to every member of the community. We learn about the true nobility of his character through his actions, in defending a man no one else will believe is innocent, and through the strength of his words. This quote quite famously captures his facility for empathy. Since this poem is about his mistress, one might expect that it would be full of praise. Instead, he describes her only in the most unappealing ways and compares her to lovely things only to show that she is the opposite. This is an example of direct characterization. Example 4 Perhaps it had something to do with living in a dark cupboard, but Harry had always been small and skinny for his age. Harry had a thin face, knobbly knees, black hair, and bright green eyes. He wore round glasses held together with a lot of Scotch tape because of all the times Dudley had punched him on the nose. The only thing Harry liked about his own appearance was a very thin scar on his forehead that was shaped like a bolt of lightning. Rowling This characterization example from the first book of J. This is because children have a harder time inferring all the information necessary about a character through words and actions alone.

Chapter 9 : Elements of Story or Fiction - character, setting, plot, point of view, style, tone, theme

Narrative Elements Characterization What is it? Why is it important? How do I create it? Characterization is the way in which authors convey information about their characters. Characterization can be direct, as when an author tells readers what a character is like e. Characterization is a crucial part of making a story compelling. In order to interest and move readers, characters need to seem real. Authors achieve this by providing details that make characters individual and particular. Create characterization by choosing details that make real or fictional characters seem life-like and individual. Freeman could never be brought to admit herself wrong on any point. The baker wore a white apron that looked like a smock. Straps cut under his arms, went around in back and then to the front again, where they were secured under his heavy waist. He wiped his hands on his apron as he listened to her. He kept his eyes down on the photographs and let her talk. I had my own dreams of transformation, Western dreams, dreams of freedom and dominion and taciturn self-sufficiency. The first thing I wanted to do was change my name. A girl named Toby had joined my class before I left Florida, and this had caused both of us scalding humiliation. I believed that having his name would charge me with some of the strength and competence inherent in my idea of him. And I liked the sound. Bennet] began scolding one of her daughters. Have a little compassion on my nerves. You tear them to pieces. He teased the dog. The porters, far from getting up from their seats when he came in, took no more notice of him than if a simple fly had flown across the reception room. Severus Snapeâ€""Severus" means "strict" or "severe" in Latin. Severus Snape is a strict professor who treats Harry harshly. Sirius Black is a wizard who transforms into a black dog. Peevesâ€""To peeve" means "to annoy. Rowling, Harry Potter series.