

Name:
Teacher:
RELA 7-
Date:

Identifying *Characters* Through *Characterization*

An author often gives characters several different traits to make them seem real and believable.

Read each paragraph below and the words that follow. Circle the letter in front of all words that are character traits of the person described in that paragraph. Circle the words or phrases that led you to that conclusion.

Pam was smiling as she watched her new puppy playing in the sun. Carefully she picked it up, stroked its soft fur, and said, "I'll take good care of you." Pam had read several books about pet care, and she knew that a puppy would mean work as well as fun. When she looked at her puppy, she felt that she was ready for the responsibility.

Pam is _____.

- a. caring
- b. responsible
- c. detached
- d. nervous

Before going on to the next step, Brandon consulted his notes. He then reached for one of the chemicals on the shelf, which he slowly poured into the container. Then, he checked the next step. He said to himself, "I'm not going to let anything go wrong with this experiment."

Brandon is _____.

- a. diligent
- b. meticulous
- c. thoughtless
- d. determined

Read each passage. Then circle the letter in front of the answer that best completes each question.

Arnold seems always to be in a bad mood lately. His sister has tried telling jokes to cheer him up but that hasn't worked. His parents have tried to get him to tell them what's bothering him, but he has refused. At present, Arnold just seems to enjoy being grumpy.

You learn about Arnold's character traits _____.

- a. through Arnold's words
- b. through description
- c. through Arnold's thoughts
- d. through Arnold's actions

You can tell that Arnold's sister and parents are _____.

- a. concerned
- b. caring
- c. foolish
- d. moody

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Barbara saw her sister, Ellen, heading across the street. “Who said you could borrow my bike?” Barbara yelled.

“It’s an emergency,” said Ellen. “My bike has a flat tire and I’m late for soccer practice.”

“You knew that tire was flat this morning,” said Barbara. “You never ask to borrow anything. You just take!” Then Barbara took the handle bars and began leading her bike away.

From this passage, you can tell that Ellen is _____.

- a. cheerful b. shy c. thoughtless d. caring

From this passage you can tell that Barbara is _____.

- a. cheerful b. determined c. shy d. selfish

The characters are revealed _____.

- a. through description c. through Ellen and Barbara’s words
b. through Ellen’s thoughts d. through Barbara’s description

Recognizing Character Traits: Characterization refers both to the personality of a character and the way in which an author reveals that personality. A character’s personality is made up of different qualities, or character traits, that the reader discovers as the work unfolds. Some characters show only one major character trait; others show a number of different traits and are more like real people. Some characters change as a result of their experiences; others remain the same.

Read the following passage, and then answer the questions below it.

When Mrs. Halpern saw what the dog had done, she lost her temper completely. “That dog goes straight to the pound!” she screamed.

Just then Louella Sneed, the neighborhood gossip, came barging in. “I suppose it was that stray dog that broke all the dishes.” She said knowingly. “I told you a stray would only mean trouble. Why I remember when the Johanssen boy brought a stray home—“ She broke off as a loud banging came from the yard.

Mrs. Halpern walked outside with Louella close at her heels. There she saw her daughter Katey, hammer in hand, banging together what appeared to be a doghouse.

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Katey looked up, a plea in her eyes. “I thought if I always kept him on a leash—or tied up here—“

Mrs. Halpern’s eyes softened as she viewed the hard efforts her daughter had made. “All right,” she said. “You can keep the beast. But just be sure that he doesn’t get into the house again.”

Which character, Mrs. Halpern or Louella Sneed, _____
shows only one major character trait?

What is that trait? _____

Which character, Mrs. Halpern or Louella Sneed, _____
shows a number of different character traits?

What are those traits? _____

Character Motivation: Motivation is a feeling, an idea, or a goal that causes a character to act in a certain way. Sometimes a character’s motivation is clearly stated by the author. Sometimes motivation is not clearly stated but can be determined from a character’s words and actions.

Read the following passage from *Anne of Green Gables*, in which a neighbor meets Anne for the first time. Then answer the questions below it.

“Well, they didn’t pick you for your looks, that’s for sure and certain,” was Mrs. Rachel Lynde’s emphatic comment. Mrs. Rachel was one of those delightful and popular people who pride themselves on speaking their mind without fear or favor...”Come here, child, and let me have a look at you. Lawful heart, did anyone ever see such freckles? And hair as red as carrots! Come here, child, I say.”

Anne “came there,” but not exactly as Mrs. Rachel expected. With one bound she crossed the kitchen floor and stood before Mrs. Rachel, her face scarlet...

“I hate you,” she cried in a choked voice, stamping her foot on the floor. “I hate you—I hate you—I hate you—“ a louder stamp with each assertion of hatred. “How dare you call me skinny and ugly?...How would you like to be told that you are fat and clumsy and probably hadn’t a spark of imagination in you?”

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1. What motivates Mrs. Lynde to give her opinion of Anne's appearance?

2. Is Mrs. Lynde's motivation stated or unstated?

If stated, point out where it is stated. If unstated, list the details that indicate Mrs. Lynde's motivation. _____

3. What motivates Anne to be rude to Mrs. Lynde?

4. Is Anne's motivation stated or unstated? _____

If stated, point out where it is stated. If unstated, list the details that indicate Anne's motivation.
