

Exercise walk-through

Characters who change or remain unchanged ■ 9.1

eXercise

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

Method — Why unchanged

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

Method — 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.

Method — 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.

Method — 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.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

State why minor characters often remain unchanged.

Solution 2.1

Method: Why unchanged

Worked steps

because the narrative does not focus on them **B1**, which is a structural rather than psychological explanation **B1**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

Name the two functions the CED gives them.

Solution 2.2

Worked steps

to advance the plot [B1](#); to interact with major characters [B1](#).

Practice 2.3 ■ 2 marks

Lack of change conveys meaning.

- (a) State the CED's claim.
- (b) State what an unchanged minor character can show about the text.

Solution 2.3

Method: Interpretation

Worked steps

(a) readers' interpretations are affected by a character changing or not **B1**, and by the meaning conveyed by such changes or their absence **B1**. (b) what the narrative treats as not worth attending to **B1**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

The CED's explanation for minor characters' lack of change is

A structural

B psychological

C moral

D historical

Solution 3.1

Method: Why unchanged

A structural



B psychological

C moral

D historical

Worked steps

A. structural.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Minor characters may exist to advance the plot or to

A interact with major characters

B narrate

C set the scene only

D end the book

Solution 3.2

Method: Two functions

A interact with major characters



B narrate

C set the scene only

D end the book

Worked steps

A. interact with major characters.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

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

- (a) State the likely function.
- (b) Explain what the flatness itself may show.

Solution 3.3

Worked steps

(a) to advance the plot or interact with major characters **B1**. (b) that the narrative does not extend attention to this character **B1**, which is a finding about the text's priorities rather than about the servant **B1**.