

Lesson —Literary Devices

Goal: 5.01g—Students will be able to identify literary devices such as characterization and tone in an excerpt from literature.

Literature: *To Kill A Mockingbird*

Guided Practice:

- 1) In your own words, define the word **characterization**.

- 2) Now, access the following websites that provide different definitions of the word **characterization**:
 - a. <http://www.wordcentral.com/browse/characterization>

 - b. <http://onlinedictionary.datasegment.com/word/characterization>

*On both sites, browse the word **characterization**, but also browse words that are related to characterization to give you a complete meaning. Try words like **character** or **characterize**.

NOW—How does your definition match up? What is similar about your definition and the one provided online?

- 3) In your own words, define the word **tone**.

- 4) Now, access the following websites that provide different definitions of the word **tone**:
 - a. http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&rlz=1G1GGLQ_ENUS269&defl=en&q=define:tone&sa=X&oi=glossary_definition&ct=title

 - b. <http://www.pbcc.cc.fl.us/documents/SLC/Tone.pdf>
*This file not only includes definitions of tone, but it also includes a list of words used to describe the tone of passages.

NOW—How does your definition match up? What is similar about your definition and the one provided online?

QUIZ YOURSELF:

In the following sentences, try to identify how Paul is **characterized** in this passage. Also, what **tone** is the author using to describe Paul's situation.

Paul enters the room, pacing back and forth as he tries to find his seat. He sits down, frustrated and clearly upset, with papers folded neatly under his arm. He composes himself, sitting directly across from his soon to be wife and her attorney, and he manages to fake a sly smile as his own attorney enters the room. Beads of sweat settle just above his eyebrow and as he begins to speak, his voice trembles, and he barely makes an audible sound.

How would you describe Paul's character?

What words lead you to this character description? What tone is the author using in this passage?

What words lead you to identify this particular tone?

You may have said that this passage **characterizes** Paul as nervous and anxious about his impending divorce. The facts that he “paces back and forth” indicates his nervousness and the “beads of sweat” that “settle just above his eyebrow” likewise demonstrate his anxiety. Also, you may note that Paul lacks confidence as he tries to “fake” a smile. Due to his voice that “trembles”, it is safe to assume that Paul is apprehensive about the meeting.

You also may have said that the author uses a **realistic tone** by describing Paul so openly. The author forwardly admits that Paul is “frustrated and clearly upset.” Also, the author openly indicates that as Paul speaks, “he barely makes a sound,” and this clearly demonstrates the reality of the situation.

You might also have determined the tone to be **sympathetic**. The author’s use of descriptive language helps the reader to really identify with Paul. The reader can also infer from the context of the story that Paul is encountering some sort of legal confrontation about which he does not feel secure. Instead of talking about Paul’s insecurity in negative, condescending words, the author vividly re-creates his anxiety causing the reader to commiserate with Paul, rather than judge him.

Independent Practice:

Now after clearly defining the words characterization and tone, use the following passage to answer questions directly related to these literary elements.

Link text from following page—*To Kill a Mockingbird* expert)
(Link questions from following page—Questions excerpt)

Closure:

Now, go back and check your answers:

- 1) C
- 2) D
- 3) A
- 4) C
- 5) B
- 6) A

Did you notice that you missed more of the characterization questions or the tone questions? Go back and make a list of what you don’t understand and consult the websites for clarification! Good Work!

