**Visual Character *Analysis* Sketch**

**The Steps:**

1. Choose a major character from *Of Mice and Men* **(Curley, Candy, Crooks, Lennie, Curley’s Wife, George, Slim)**
2. Using *huge* paper from the roll cart, draw a **life-size likeness** of the character (must be anatomically school appropriate). Be sure to leave PLENTY of space for text.
3. Surround your image with text that analyzes your character. **We’re focusing on indirect characterization.**  Text can be in bubbles, boxes, clouds, or free-floating. **See the tips below to guide your writing.**
4. Write legibly. Pre-meditate and proofread your writing by pre-writing on a different sheet of paper, then transferring your finalized text to the poster.
5. Include a relevant line from Langton Hughes’ poem “A Dream Deferred” – a line that represents what happens to your character’s dream.

**The Character Sketch:**

* **Unlike** a biographical sketch, which focuses on **significant events** in a person's life, a **character sketch** concentrates on **revealing personality and character**. In other words, it creates a **vivid impression** of a subject rather than recounting a life story.
* The character sketch has come to mean any portrait, graphic or written, that is an attempt to preserve **the character of an individual**. Multimedia students: In the graphic arts, character sketches may later be assembled into a composition, or a film, or a game, etc.
* You want the reader to have a **strong mental image** of the person, to know how the person talks, to know the person's characteristic ways of doing things, to know something about **the person's value system**. Character sketches only give snap shots of people; therefore, you should **not** try to write a history of the person.
* As you work on this poster, you should decide what kind of **emotional reaction you want the reader to have** in relationship to this person. What kind of **details** can you select to create that **emotional reaction**? Avoid making broad characterizing statements; instead, let the **details** you give suggest specific characteristics.
* It is important to **put words into the person's mouth** by using ***critical*** **direct quotations** – the ones that ***show*** the **values and characteristics** of your character – not just incidental quotes that do not show character/personality. **Use page numbers!**
* Keep in mind that the **image** you draw is **less important** than **the** **text** you surround your image with. We have varying degrees of artistic ability here… I don’t expect artistic perfection ☺
* **Analysis** is the process of breaking a complex topic into smaller parts to gain a better understanding of it.

**You will be graded on:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Effort (10)** | **Accuracy (10)** | **Analysis (10)** | **Visual Appeal/ Neatness (5)** |
| Effort is evident. The group’s thoughtfulness and hard work combined seamlessly to create a solid poster. | Textual support is correct. Characterization is accurate. Page numbers and line numbers are used to support valid/legitimate direct quotations. | The details of the text on the poster succeed in giving the reader the desired emotional reaction to the character. | The poster is legible, clear, and visually appealing. |

**Characterization Notes**

Characterization is an important element in almost every work of fiction, whether it is a short story, a novel, or anywhere in between. When it comes to characterization, a writer has two options:   
  
**1. DIRECT CHARACTERIZATION** - the writer makes direct statements about a character's personality and tells what the character is like.  
  
**2. INDIRECT CHARACTERIZATION** - the writer reveals information about a character and his personality through that character's thoughts, words, and actions, along with how other characters respond to that character, including what they think and say about him.  
  
An alert writer might recognize that the two methods of characterization fall under the decision to “show” or to “tell”. Indirect characterization “shows” the reader. Direct characterization “tells” the reader.  
  
As with most “show” versus “tell” decisions, “showing” is more interesting and engaging to the reader, and should be used in preference to “telling”. Does that relegate direct characterization to the prose trash heap? No. There are times when direct characterization is useful. Whereas indirect characterization is more likely to engage a reader’s imagination and paint more vivid images, direct characterization excels in brevity, lower word count, and moving the story forward. For example, a writer may want to reveal a minor facet of a character’s personality without distracting from the action in a scene. It is up to the writer to decide when each characterization method is appropriate.

To observe the difference between direct and indirect characterization, read the paired paragraphs below. Each is written to convey the same basic information. One of each pair demonstrates direct characterization while the other demonstrates indirect characterization. See if you can identify which method is being used.

**Paragraph Pair 1:**  
**A.** Ed Johnson scratched his head in confusion as the sales rep explained Dralco’s newest engine performance diagnostic computer. The old mechanic hated modern electronics, preferring the old days when all he needed was a stack of manuals and a good set of tools.  
  
**B.** “That Ed Johnson,” said Anderson, watching the old mechanic scratch his head in confusion as the sales rep explained Dralco’s newest engine performance diagnostic computer. “He hasn’t got a clue about modern electronics. Give him a good set of tools and a stack of yellowing manuals with a carburetor needing repair, and he’d be happy as a hungry frog in a fly-field.”  
  
**Paragraph Pair 2:**  
**A.** Julie owned a multitude of outfits and accessories, and it always took her forever to decide which combination might impress Trent. As usual, she called her sister several times for advice. After doing so, Julie decided to give the navy blue skirt with the white sweater a try.  
  
**B.** Julie held up six different outfits in front of the mirror and pondered which would go best with her navy blue shoes, pastel eye shadow and the diamond earrings she’d already procured from her overflowing vanity. After ninety minutes of mixing and matching, and cell-phoning her sister three times for advice, Julie finally made up her mind. She’d give the navy blue skirt and white sweater a try, hoping Trent would love it.