

Generic SHORT FICTION question stems by Big Ideas

CHARACTER

Characters in literature allow readers to study & explore a range of values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, & cultural norms represented by those characters.

SKILL	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE
<p>Identify and describe what specific textual details reveal about a character, that character's perspective, and that character's motives.</p>	<p>What details reveal our character? (description, dialogue, behavior)</p> <p><u>WHO</u> is describing the character/s?</p> <p>In what way do the events of the story unfold that are particular to the character or characters' perspective/s?</p> <p>What is revealed about a character by the way perspective is controlled?</p> <p>What do the character's actions reveal about their character? How does the description reinforce or enhance their bare actions?</p> <p>How do their actions (and inactions) reveal their values?</p>
<p>Explain the function of contrasting characters.</p>	<p>Who or what is the antagonist in this story?</p> <p>What contrasting values might be represented in the protagonist and the antagonist?</p>
<p>Describe how textual details reveal nuances and complexities in characters' relationships with one another.</p>	<p>What conflict is created by these different values?</p>
<p>Explain the function of a character changing or remaining unchanged.</p>	<p>Often, the change in a character emerges directly from a conflict of values represented in the narrative:</p> <p>What changes in the character's circumstances lead to changes in their character?</p> <p>Does the character have an epiphany? What is it?</p> <p>What effect does that epiphany have on the events of the story?</p>
<p>Describe how textual details reveal nuances and complexities in characters' relationships with one another.</p>	<p>Is there a group or a force that can be considered a character in this story?</p> <p>How does the character interact with other characters and forces in this story? What do those interactions reveal about her?</p> <p>What is the relationship between the character and the group/s and what does that reveal?</p>

SETTING

Setting and the details associated with it not only depict a time and place, but also convey values associated with that setting.

SKILL	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE
Identify and describe specific textual details that convey or reveal a setting.	When and where is this story set? What evidence establishes that?
Explain the function of setting in a narrative.	What mood or atmosphere is created by the setting?
Describe the relationship between a character and a setting.	What does the environment tell us about the protagonist or other characters?
Explain the function of setting in a narrative.	<p>What are the changes in the setting? How does that indicate a coming shift in the story?</p> <p>How does the contrasted setting (from the beginning and end of the story) function to establish and reinforce conflict in values or ideas associated with those settings?</p>
Describe the relationship between a character and a setting.	<p>How do the ways the protagonist interacts with their setting provide insight about both the character and the setting?</p> <p>Because we are reading this story through the lens of the narrator, what do the descriptions of the protagonist's interactions with the setting reveal about the narrator's attitude towards each of them? What does this affect about our own interpretations?</p>

STRUCTURE

The arrangement of the parts and sections of a text, the relationship of the part to each other, and the sequence in which the text reveals information are all structural choices made by a writer that contribute to the reader's interpretation of a text.

SKILL	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE
<p>Identify and describe how plot orders events in a narrative.</p>	<p>Summarize the events of this story. What is the plot? What is the dramatic situation of this story? Where is the conflict?</p>
<p>Explain the function of a particular sequence of events in a plot.</p>	<p>What is the relationship between the character, the setting, and the events that unfold in this story?</p>
<p>Identify and describe how plot orders events in a narrative.</p>	<p>What do the character types suggest archetypally? What about the environment suggests layers of archetypal nuance?</p>
<p>Explain the function of contrasts within a text.</p>	<p>Identify points of contrast in the text. Describe the things that shift and then contrast with each other and then characterize the differences. What conflict does these contrasts reinforce?</p>
<p>Identify and describe how plot orders events in a narrative.</p>	<p>Narrative pacing can be manipulated through arrangement of details, frequency of events, narrative structures, syntax, tempo/occurrence of events, or shifts in tense or chronology: What manipulation of details, events, syntax, tempo of events, changes in tense do you see in this story?</p>
<p>Explain the function of a particular sequence of events in a plot.</p>	<p>What is the emotional impact of the variations in narrative pacing?</p>

NARRATION

A narrator's or speaker's perspective controls the details and emphases that affect how readers experience and interpret a text.

SKILL	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE
<p>Identify and describe the narrator or speaker of a text</p>	<p>Who is the speaker? What relationship does that choice of speaker establish in terms of the relationship between this story and you, the reader?</p> <p>How does the protagonist see their circumstances, both at the beginning of the story and at the end? (perspective)</p> <p>What can you infer is the perspective of the narrator at the beginning and at the end of the story?</p> <p>How are these perspectives different?</p> <p>Can we tell if the speaker is the author?</p> <p>Is the narrator a character in this story?</p>
<p>Identify and explain the function of point of view in a narrative.</p>	<p>What is the point of view from which this story is told?</p> <p>What does the perspective of this point of view add to what can be told or shown in this story?</p> <p>Does the narrator seem to be a character in this story?</p> <p>Does this narrator seem to just observe or to be more all-knowing? How does this degree of knowing shape their perspective?</p> <p>Is the narrator affected by the events of the story?</p> <p>What is the narrator's distance from the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical setting • Time of this story • Relationships/characters <p>How can you tell? (Can you tell?)</p> <p>Is there "stream of consciousness" involved in this?</p>
<p>Identify and describe details, diction, or syntax in a text that reveal a narrator's or speaker's perspective.</p>	<p>Narrator/speaker/character background shapes the tone – how a subject or events is conveyed:</p> <p>In what way do the descriptive words convey a specific perspective towards the characters and events of the story?</p> <p>Tone arises from this perspective/s and the way that things are described:</p> <p>From which perspectives is the story told? What tone is first established through description? How does it change in the second part of the story?</p> <p>Consider the first and final sentences. What tone is conveyed there through choice of descriptiveness and sentence length?</p>
<p>Explain how a narrator's reliability affects a narrative.</p>	<p>Some narrators or speakers may provide details and information that others do not or cannot provide. Multiple narrators or speakers may provide contradictory information in a text:</p> <p>In what ways does the narrator or narrators provide information that may be contradictory or surprising?</p>

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Comparisons, representations, and associations shift meaning from the literal to the figurative and invite readers to interpret a text.

SKILL	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE
Identify and explain the function of a symbol.	A setting may become symbolic when it is, or comes to be, associated with abstractions such as emotions, ideologies, and beliefs. i.e Does this <u>rural</u> setting suggest anything symbolic? What does her encounter in the cove suggest symbolically?
Identify and explain the function of an image or imagery.	Can you find any recurring objects or images in this story?
Identify and explain the function of a simile.	Can you find any similes (or metaphors) in the story? What does the choice of comparisons reveal or enhance about an interpretation of the story?
Identify and explain the function of personification.	What attitude do choices of personification (the object and its characterization) add to your interpretation of this story?

LITERARY ARGUMENT

Readers establish and communicate their interpretations of literature through arguments supported by textual evidence.

SKILL	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE
<p>Develop a paragraph that includes 1) a claim that requires defense with evidence from the text and 2) the evidence itself.</p>	<p>What is your interpretation of this text based on the details of your reading?</p> <p>Write a claim statement that can be defended by evidence from the text AND that goes beyond facts that everyone would necessarily agree on.</p> <p>Write an interpretive paragraph that includes a claim, evidence from the text, and explanation of that evidence.</p>
<p>Develop a thesis statement that conveys a defensible claim about an interpretation of literature and that may establish a line of reasoning.</p>	<p>A thesis statement expresses an interpretation of a literary text, and requires a defense, through use of textual evidence and a line of reasoning, both of which are explained in an essay through commentary.</p> <p>A thesis statement may preview the development or line of reasoning of an interpretation. This is not to say that a thesis statement must list the points of an interpretation, literary elements to be analyzed, or specific evidence to be used in the argument.</p>
<p>Develop commentary that establishes and explains relationships among textual evidence, the line of reasoning, and the thesis.</p>	<p>A line of reasoning is the logical sequence of claims that work together to defend the overarching thesis statement.</p> <p>A line of reasoning is communicated through commentary that explains the logical relationship between the overarching thesis statement and the claims/evidence within the body of an essay.</p> <p>The body paragraphs of a written argument develop the reasoning and justify claims using evidence and providing commentary that links the evidence to the overall thesis.</p> <p>Effective paragraphs are cohesive and often use topic sentences to state a claim and explain the reasoning that connects the various claims and evidence that make up the body of an essay.</p> <p>More sophisticated literary arguments may explain the significance or relevance of an interpretation within a broader context, discuss alternative interpretations of a text, or use relevant analogies to help an audience better understand an interpretation.</p>

SKILL	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE
<p>Select and use relevant and sufficient evidence to both develop and support a line of reasoning.</p>	<p>Writers use evidence strategically and purposefully to illustrate, clarify, exemplify, associate, amplify, or qualify a point.</p> <p>Evidence is effective when the writer of the essay uses commentary to explain a logical relationship between the evidence and the claim.</p> <p>Evidence is sufficient when its quantity and quality provide apt support for the line of reasoning.</p> <p>Developing and supporting an interpretation of a text is a recursive process; an interpretation can emerge from analyzing evidence and then forming a line of reasoning, or the interpretation can emerge from forming a line of reasoning and then identifying relevant evidence to support that line of reasoning.</p> <p>Textual evidence may require revision to an interpretation and a line of reasoning if the evidence does not sufficiently support the initial interpretation and line of reasoning.</p>
<p>Demonstrate control over the elements of composition to communicate clearly.</p>	<p>Coherence occurs at different levels in a piece of writing. In a sentence, the idea in one clause logically links to an idea in the next. In a paragraph, the idea in one sentence logically links to an idea in the next. In a text, the ideas in one paragraph logically link to the ideas in the next.</p> <p>Writers achieve coherence when the arrangement and organization of reasons, evidence, ideas, or details is logical. Writers may use transitions, repetition, synonyms, pronoun references, or parallel structure to indicate relationships between and among those reasons, evidence, ideas, or details.</p>