Lesson 7  (Student Book pages 61–68)

Analyzing Character Development

**LEsson Objectives**

- Analyze literary characters, including their traits, motivations, attitudes, and relationships.
- Describe the main conflict a character faces in a story or drama and determine how the character develops or changes in response to that conflict.

**The Learning Progression**

- Grade 5 requires students to focus on comparing two or more characters, settings, or events in a story.
- Grade 6 builds on the Grade 5 standard by requiring students to focus on how the plot unfolds and how the characters respond or change.
- Grade 7 builds on the Grade 6 standard by focusing on how story elements interact and affect the plot.

**Prerequisite Skills**

- Recognize that writers describe characters through physical appearance, words and thoughts, and actions.
- Identify and describe a setting.
- Identify and describe an event in a story or drama.
- Understand how to compare and contrast two elements in a text.

**TAP Students’ Prior Knowledge**

- Tell students that they will work on a lesson about analyzing how characters develop in a story. Explain that characters have traits, attitudes, and motivations. Ask students what traits are. (physical features) Explain that attitude is the way a character acts, thinks, and feels, and motivations are the reasons a character acts in certain ways.
- Ask students how they might act if they were happy (smile or laugh) or tired (yawn or put their head down). Discuss how you can tell how people feel by their expressions or actions.
- Next, display these sentences: “Did you hear that Mark won the journalism contest?” Mia squealed. “I knew he would.” Ask students what they tell you about Mark. (He is talented.) Discuss how someone’s statements about a person can give clues about the person’s character.
- Explain to students that recognizing character traits will help them understand a character’s behavior and enable them to predict how a character may act or react as a story’s plot unfolds.

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**Ready Teacher Toolbox**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prerequisite Skills</th>
<th>On-Level Skills</th>
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<td>Ready Lessons</td>
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<td>Tools for Instruction</td>
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Lesson 7  Part 1: Introduction

Analyzing Character Development

What makes the characters in a story seem real? It’s all in the details. Authors can describe the characters’ attitudes, or how they think, act, and feel. They can also describe the characters’ motivations, or the reasons for their actions.

Often, a character’s attitude and motivation change during a story. As the story unfolds, readers learn more about a character based on how that person responds to events.

Study the cartoon. For each panel, think about what the boy does and why he does it.

Complete the chart below, based on details you can see in the cartoon above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What the Boy Does</th>
<th>Why He Does It</th>
<th>What This Shows About Him</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He takes an ice-cream cone from a little girl.</td>
<td>He might think it is funny.</td>
<td>He is not always kind; he likes to play jokes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He hesitates when the girl becomes very upset.</td>
<td>He wonders if his joke was such a good idea.</td>
<td>He cares what other people think.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He gives the ice-cream cone back to the girl.</td>
<td>He wants the girl to feel better.</td>
<td>He knows how to do the right thing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Describe how the boy seems to change over time.

Characters in stories often change in response to events. If this sounds familiar, it should. It’s one of the ways in which authors make their stories similar to real life.

Genre Focus

Tell students that they will read a type of literature called drama. Drama is a story meant to be performed by actors, such as a play. It is written in script form, which contains dialogue and stage directions.

A script tells each character, or actor, what to say. The dialogue is presented with the character’s name followed by a colon and the words the character speaks. Stage directions are often shown in parentheses. They describe the setting and tell the actors how to speak, move, or behave.

Ask students to name plays they have read or seen. What stage directions were given? How were settings and characters described?

Explain that “Reaching the Top” is a play with two characters. The script shows the dialogue between the characters. The stage directions tell each character how to speak. They also describe the setting.

Discuss how when reading a play, readers think about the characters and their interactions. They may have to make inferences to understand a character. The stage directions can help them do this. Paying attention to the characters’ actions and words allows readers to see how characters react and change as events in the story unfold.
Lesson 7
Part 2: Modeled Instruction

AT A GLANCE
Students read a realistic fiction story about a girl who loses her grandmother’s dog. Students make inferences about the character and recognize how her character changes by analyzing how she reacts to events.

STEP BY STEP
• Invite volunteers to tell what they learned on the previous page about analyzing how a character changes during a story.
• Read aloud “Lost!” Then read the question: “Based on her responses to events, what kind of person is Rosalyn? Support your response with details from the story.”
• Tell students you will perform a Think Aloud to demonstrate a way of answering the question.

Think Aloud: What Rosalyn does and how she reacts to events can help me understand what kind of person she is. The first event is that Peanut gets lost. I know Rosalyn is upset by this because the text says that “panic surged through her veins.” I also know that Gram loves Peanut because the text says that Gram would be lost without Rosalyn and Peanut.

• Direct students to the first row of the chart. Review that the chart shows story events and responses to the events.

Think Aloud: The next event is that Rosalyn worries about getting lost, too. I’ll reread the text to see what Rosalyn does. I read that she makes a map.

• Ask students what making a map reveals about Rosalyn. Have them complete the second row.

Think Aloud: The next event is that Rosalyn sees Peanut. I’ll understand how Rosalyn feels by reading how she reacts when she sees Peanut.

• Have students complete the third row of the chart.

Finally, have students use the information in the chart to write a description of Rosalyn’s character. Invite volunteers to share their descriptions with the class. (Sample response: Rosalyn is old enough to be left home alone. She loves and respects Gram. She is clever to think of using a map to find Peanut and to keep from getting lost.)

Read the first part of a story about a girl named Rosalyn.

Lost! by Janelle Aaker

“Peanut!!” Rosalyn yelled hoarsely for the fiftieth time as panic surged through her veins. How often had Gram said, “Ros, without you and Peanut, I’d be lost”? Well, now yappy, pampered little Peanut was lost.

“I was so distracted by my texting that I dropped his leash,” Rosalyn groaned. “How can I face Gram?”

“Peanut!!” Rosalyn hollered into the woods. “I have to be careful or I’ll get lost, too,” she worried. “I need . . . a map!” Rosalyn darted back to Gram’s house, returning moments later with a pencil and paper.

10 steps—tree, she scribbled and illustrated. “Peanut!” Then, 12 left—bush. “Pea—!”

“Yap,” Peanut barked as Rosalyn finally saw him, his leash tangled in branches and his paws flashing. Rosalyn nearly shed tears of joy.

(continued)

Explore how to answer this question: “Based on her responses to events, what kind of person is Rosalyn? Support your response with details from the story.”

To answer this question, pay attention to what Rosalyn’s responses to story events say about her.

Complete the chart to show how Rosalyn responds to events. Consider what character trait each response reveals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Happens</th>
<th>How Rosalyn Responds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peanut gets lost.</td>
<td>Rosalyn is upset because Gram loves Peanut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosalyn worries about getting lost, too.</td>
<td>Rosalyn makes a map.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosalyn sees Peanut.</td>
<td>Rosalyn nearly sheds tears of joy.</td>
</tr>
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Describe Rosalyn’s character. Use details from the story and the chart to support your answer.

See sample response.

Tier Two Vocabulary: Hoarsely

• Read the first sentence. Tell students that context clues in nearby words and phrases can help them figure out the meaning of hoarsely.

• Point out the word yelled and the phrase for the fiftieth time. Ask what they tell you about Rosalyn’s actions. (Rosalyn has been calling out loudly over and over again.)

• Discuss what happens to your voice if you shout for a long time. (It gets rough, raspy, and faint.)

• Point out that hoarsely is an adverb because it has the suffix -ly. Ask students what they think hoarsely means. (“in a raspy, faint-sounding way”)

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Close Reading
At first, Rosalyn thinks of the dog as “yappy, pampered little Peanut.” Underline the sentence on this page that shows how her attitude toward Peanut has changed.

Hint
What conclusion does Rosalyn reach at the end of the story?

Circle the correct answer.
Why does Rosalyn's attitude toward Peanut change?
A. Losing Peanut makes Rosalyn realize how important the dog is to both her and Gram.
B. Rosalyn is sure she’ll get into trouble for texting instead of watching Peanut.
C. Rosalyn’s fear of getting lost in the woods makes her understand how Peanut feels.
D. Rosalyn is grateful to Peanut for giving her the chance to become a better person.

Show Your Thinking
Look at the answer that you chose above. Write down at least two details from the story that helped you identify your answer.
Responses will vary.

With a partner, compare and contrast Rosalyn's character at the beginning and end of the story.

Tier Two Vocabulary: Disgruntled
• Read this sentence from the story: “She untangled the leash and embraced the disgruntled animal.” Tell students that context clues can help them figure out the meaning of disgruntled.
• Explain that synonyms can be context clues. Ask students to find a phrase in a previous sentence that has nearly the same meaning as disgruntled animal. (distressed dog)
• Tell students to use the meaning of the synonym distressed to figure out the meaning of disgruntled. Ask what disgruntled means. (“irritated, annoyed, unhappy”)
• Have students confirm the meaning of disgruntled by consulting a dictionary.
Lesson 7

Part 4: Guided Practice

AT A GLANCE

Students read a play twice about two boys hiking. After the first reading, you will ask three questions to check your students' comprehension of the passage.

STEP BY STEP

- Have students read the play silently without referring to the Study Buddy or Close Reading text.
- Ask the following questions to ensure students' comprehension of the text:
  1. What activity are Yu and Lian doing? *(They are hiking up a mountain trail to the top of Cannon Mountain.)*
  2. How do you know that Lian is an experienced hiker? *(Lian says that he and his dad hiked the same trail three times last month.)*
  3. What is Yu's reaction when he reaches the mountain's summit and sees the view from there? *(Yu is awestruck by the view and wants to climb another nearby mountain that he sees.)*
- Ask students to reread the play and look at the Study Buddy think aloud. What does the Study Buddy help them think about?

**Tip:** Analyzing character development by describing how characters respond or change as the plot moves will help students be able to improve the use of narrative techniques in their own writing, such as using dialogue, pacing, and description to develop experiences, events, and characters.

- Have students answer the questions and follow the directions in the Close Reading.

**Tip:** Students can ask themselves questions to help them identify a character's thoughts. For example, "Does a character use words of praise or ridicule?" "Is the character's tone of speech friendly or unpleasant?"

- Finally, have students answer the questions on page 65. Use the Answer Analysis to discuss correct and incorrect responses.

ELL Support: Contractions

- Explain that a contraction is two words that have been joined together and shortened. Letters are dropped, and an apostrophe is put in place of the dropped letters.
- Point out the contraction *that's* in line 3. Identify the two words in the contraction, *that* and *is*. Tell students the letter *i* in *is* has been dropped and an apostrophe inserted. Substitute *is* in the sentence from the play:
  *That's what you said an eternity ago!* Explain that the meaning remains the same.
- Repeat with other contractions that appear in the text: *you're*, *it'll*, *there's*, *we're*, *won't*. 

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*Reaching the Top* by Ken Ruble

1. **Yu:** [breathlessly]: Just how much farther is it, Lian?
2. **Lian:** The top is just around the bend—won't be long now!
3. **Yu:** That’s what you said an eternity ago! Are you sure?
4. **Lian:** Dad and I hiked this trail three times last month.
5. **Yu:** Seeing the same old rocks sounds as fascinating as watching a turnip grow. Where exactly are we going again?
6. **Lian:** You’re beyond hopeless, Yu. We’re on the Kinsman Ridge Trail now, heading to the summit of Cannon Mountain, about 4,080 feet above sea level.
7. **Yu:** More like 4,080 blisters above sea level. Would it really have been so horrible to have taken the aerial tramway?
8. **Lian:** That would be so—anti-climactic! It’ll be worth it, I swear—there’s nothing quite like that magnificent view.
9. **Yu:** [muttering]: Tramways are an excellent form of transportation—nice comfy seats, no shooting foot pain . . .
10. **Lian:** [exclaiming from out of sight]: Oh, Yu! Come see!
11. **Yu:** [breathlessly trudges up the trail to join Lian at the summit, which affords a miles-long view of the White Mountains.]: The top is just around the bend—won’t be long now!
12. **Yu:** [breathlessly with awe, not exhaustion]: Wooooow! This is so giant one over there—can we climb that, too?
13. **Lian:** Climb a mountain? Oh, that would be too difficult.
14. **Yu:** [earnestly]: No, we could do it. It would be worth it.
Part 4: Guided Practice

STEP BY STEP

• Have students read questions 1–3, using the Hints to help them answer those questions.

Tip: If students have trouble answering question 3, remind them that they can see how Yu’s attitude changes by referring to the words and phrases they circled in the play’s beginning as well as the text they boxed near the end of the play.

• Discuss with students the Answer Analysis below.

ANSWER ANALYSIS

1 The correct choice is C. As Yu and Lian climb the mountain, Yu complains. For example, he asks how far they have to go; wishes they had taken the tram; he talks about getting blisters on his feet, and so on. Choice A misrepresents what Yu says: He is bored by the rocks. Choice B is incorrect because Lian, not Yu, has hiked the trail before. Choice D is wrong because Yu is breathless; he’s having trouble keeping up with Lian.

2 The correct choice is A. When Yu asks how much farther they have to go, it is because he wants the climb to be over. He is not enjoying it, and he finds it difficult. Choice B doesn’t really express any strong feelings on Yu’s part. Choice C is a statement made after the climb is completed, as is Choice D. As such, neither choice shows Yu's negative feelings about the climb itself.

3 Sample response: At first, Yu does not like the hike. He complains and asks a lot of questions. When they reach the summit, however, his attitude changes. The incredible view makes him want to go and climb another mountain, and he realizes his own potential.

RETEACHING

Use a chart to organize details from the story to answer question 3. Draw the chart below, and have students fill in the boxes. Sample responses are provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lian describes the 4,080-foot mountain they are hiking.</td>
<td>Yu complains that it’s more like 4,080 blisters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yu arrives at the summit.</td>
<td>Yu is awestruck.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Integrating Standards

Use these questions to further students’ understanding of “Reaching the Top.”

1 Which statement by Lian summarizes his attitude about hiking a mountain trail?
   “It’ll be worth it, I swear—there’s nothing quite like that magnificent view.”

2 At the beginning of the play, Yu makes the following comparison: “Seeing the same old rocks sounds as fascinating as watching a turnip grow.” What does this comparison reveal about Yu's attitude toward hiking?
   It tells that Yu is disinterested in hiking and looking at the scenery, because Yu sarcastically compares the view on a hike to watching a vegetable grow, which is not an interesting activity for most people. A vegetable grows slowly.
L7: Analyzing Character Development

Part 5: Independent Practice

Read the story. Then answer the questions that follow.

from “Departure”  
by Sherwood Anderson

1 All through his boyhood and young manhood George Willard had been in the habit of walking on Trumon Pike. He had been in the midst of the great open place on winter nights when it was covered with snow and only the moon looked down on him; he had been there in the fall when bleak winds blew and on summer evenings when the air vibrated with the song of insects. On the April morning he wanted to go there again, to walk again in the silence. He did walk to where the road dipped down by a little stream two miles from town and then turned and walked silently back again. When he got to Main Street clerks were swiping the sidewalks before the stores. "Hey, you George: How does it feel to be going away?" they asked.

2 The westbound train leaves Winesburg at seven forty-five in the morning. Tom Little is conductor. His train runs from Cleveland to where it connects with a great trunk line railroad with terminals in Chicago and New York. Tom has what in railroad circles is called an “easy run.” Every evening he returns to his family. In the fall and spring he spends his Sundays fishing in Lake Erie. He has a round red face and small blue eyes. He knows the people in the towns along his railroad better than a city man knows the people who live in his apartment building.

3 George came down the little incline from the Willard House at seven o’clock. Tom Willard carried his bag. His son had become taller than the father.

4 On the station platform everyone shook the young man’s hand. More than a dozen people waited about. Then they talked of their own affairs. Even Will Henderson, who was lazy and often slept until nine, had got out of bed. George was embarrassed. Gertrude Wilmot, a tall thin woman of fifty who worked in the Winesburg post office, came along the station platform. She had never before paid any attention to George. Now she stopped and put out her hand. In two words she voiced what everyone felt: “Good luck,” she said sharply and then turning went on her way.

5 George glanced up and down the car to be sure no one was looking, then took out his pocketbook and counted his money. His mind was occupied with a desire not to appear green. Almost the last words his father had said to him concerned the matter of his behavior when he got to the city. “Be a sharp one,” Tom Willard had said. “Keep your eyes on your money. Be awake. That’s the ticket. Don’t let anyone think you’re a greenhorn.”

6 After George counted his money he looked out of the window and was surprised to see that the train was still in Winesburg.

7 The young man, going out of his town to meet the adventure of life, began to think but he did not think of anything very big or dramatic. Things like his mother’s death, his departure from Winesburg, the uncertainty of his future life in the city; the serious and larger aspects of his life did not come into his mind.

8 He thought of little things—Turk Smollet wheeling boards through the main street of his town in the morning, a tall woman, beautifully gownned, who had once stayed overnight at his father’s hotel, Butler Wheeler the lamp lighter of Winesburg hurrying through the streets on a summer evening and holding a torch in his hand; Helen White standing by a window in the Winesburg post office and putting a stamp on an envelope.

9 The young man’s mind was carried away by his growing passion for dreams. One looking at him would not have thought him particularly sharp. With the recollection of little things occupying his mind he closed his eyes and leaned back in the car seat. He stayed that way for a long time and when he arose himself and again looked out of the car window the town of Winesburg had disappeared and his life there had become but a background on which to paint the dreams of his manhood.

Answer the questions. Mark your answers to questions 1 and 2 on the Answer Form to the right.

Answer Form

1 How does George’s attitude toward his hometown change as events unfold?
   A He begins to miss scenes of his childhood.
   B He feels the town now belongs to his past.
   C He thinks that the townspeople are critical of him.
   D He begins to enjoy speaking with the people of the town.

2 George Willard thinks more about his past than his future as he is leaving Winesburg. Which of the following sentences from the passage best supports this statement?
   A “The young man, going out of his town to meet the adventure of life, began to think but he did not think of anything very big or dramatic.”
   B “He thought of little things—Turk Smollet wheeling boards through the main street of his town in the morning…”
   C “The young man’s mind was carried away by his growing passion for dreams.”
   D “One looking at him would not have thought him particularly sharp.”

Theme Connection

• How do all the stories in this lesson relate to the theme of people recognizing their potential?
• Cite examples from the stories that show how a character changes or grows in a positive way.
Part 5: Independent Practice

3 Sample responses:

Part A: Student circles “dreamy” or “inexperienced”

Parts B and C:
If the student circled “dreamy” in Part A, then possible sentences are: “The young man's mind was carried away by his growing passion for dreams” and “One looking at him would not have thought him particularly sharp.”

If the student circled “inexperienced” in Part A, possible sentences are: “His mind was occupied with a desire not to appear green” and “Almost the last words his father had said to him concerned the matter of his behavior when he got to the city.” (DOK 3)

4 Sample response: George is having a difficult time leaving Winesburg even though he is ready to move to the big city. Early on, George walks the Trunion Pike one more time. This is relevant because he has walked there many times before and is realizing how much he will miss it. When he gets to the station, George is surprised at how many people have come to see him off. This is relevant because George sees that people care about him and like him more than the realized. These things show that George is having a difficult time leaving. (DOK 3)

Integrating Standards

Use these questions and tasks as opportunities to interact with “Departure.”

1 What evidence shows George enjoys solitude?
   George took walks by himself. He “had been in the midst of the great open place when…only the moon looked down at him.…”

2 Give a brief summary of the story’s plot in your own words.
   George revisits places from his youth. He leaves to take the train from his town to a new life in the city. Townspeople see him off. He boards and checks that his money is in order. He thinks about the town and his past, but as the train moves along, he dreams about his future.

3 What does the author mean by referring to Winesburg as “a background on which to paint the dreams of his manhood”?
   The author means that Winesburg forms the basis for George’s life experiences because it is where George grew up.

4 Write a sentence describing what George might say about his hometown to someone he meets in the city.
   Sample response: Winesburg is a small country town where everyone knows and cares about everyone else.

5 Discuss in small groups: How do you think George will act when he arrives in the city? Use evidence from the text to support your thinking.
   Discussions will vary. Students might mention that George will act confident because he doesn’t want to appear a greenhorn.
Writing Activities

Compare-and-Contrast Essay

- Have students consider the character development of Yu in “Reaching the Top” and George in “Departure.”
- Challenge students to write an essay that compares and contrasts the ways the authors show how Yu and George change and grow. Remind students to use evidence from the text in each story to support their ideas.
- Students can use an outline to organize their ideas. Tell students to be sure to write clearly and coherently.
- Have volunteers share their essays with the class.

Objective Pronouns

- Display this sentence: “Yap,” Peanut barked frantically as Rosalyn finally caught a glimpse of him, his leash tangled in branches and his paws flailing. Have students identify the pronouns. (him, his)
- Point out the objective pronoun him and the possessive pronoun his. Him is used as the object following the preposition of. Identify other objective pronouns. (me, you, her, it, us, them)
- Have students rewrite the sentence by changing the gender of the pronouns to female. Then have students write two sentences using objective pronouns.

LISTENING ACTIVITY

Listen Closely/Interpret Point of View

- Have students work in small groups and study the cartoon on page 61.
- One student describes what happens in each image from the boy’s point of view. The rest of the group listens closely.
- Another student then clearly describes the events and character’s feelings in each image from the girl’s point of view as the group listens.
- A third student sums up the similarities and differences in the characters’ points of view.

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

Talk in a Group/Discuss a Character’s Motivation

- After reading “Departure,” have students discuss the motivation behind George’s actions.
- Provide these prompts: Why do you think George revisited the places he had walked when he was young? Why did George count his money so secretively? After the train leaves, do you think George still wants to go to the city?
- Allow 15 minutes for discussion. Have students take turns speaking and listening.

MEDIA ACTIVITY

Be Creative/Mak e an Audio Recording

- Have students work in pairs to make a digital audio recording of the drama “Reaching the Top.” Partners each take the role of a character. Students follow stage directions and supply additional sound effects as desired.
- Play selected recordings for the class and discuss how the experience of listening to the drama compares to the reading experience.

RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Write/Present a Multimedia Journal

- Have students analyze Rosalyn’s character in “Lost!” by writing a character journal.
- Students reread the story and write several journal entries from Rosalyn’s point of view. Each entry should relate to a different event in the story.
- Encourage students to include images and music in their journals. Students might use a dog’s photo for Peanut or a song that illustrates a particular emotion that Rosalyn was feeling.
- Have students present their journals to the class.