Introducing a character

David Lodge, *The Art of Fiction, pp.9–12*

Read the article and answer the following questions.

1. Why is character the most difficult part of the art of fiction to discuss in technical terms? (p.10)

2. Which different types of character are discussed? (p.10)

3. What is the traditional way to introduce character? (p.11)

4. Why is this method less popular today? (p.11)

5. How can we learn about character, class and lifestyle? (p.11)

Close reading of example extracts and discussion

1. Read the extract on pp.9 and 10. What do you learn about Sally’s character, class and lifestyle?
   a) Discuss
   b) Compare your answer with the analysis on p. 11.

2. Now read the extract on p. 11. Dorothea is static, as if posing for a portrait. (This contrasts with Sally who is shown in action.) Read the explanation of cinema shots on p. 12.

3. What advantage does reading about a character in a novel have over watching a character in a cinema?
   a) Discuss.
   b) Compare your answer with the comments in final paragraph on p. 12.

Introducing character in *Pride and Prejudice*

Read Chapter 1 of the text that you are studying and answer the following questions:

1. Are characters introduced through a physical description? Why/why not?
2. Are characters introduced through a biographical study? Why/why not?
3. Are their clothes described? If so, what hints can these provide about the characters (e.g. class, lifestyle)?
4. What does the behaviour of the characters reveal about them?
5. Is there any direct speech? How does this add to your first impression of the characters(s)?
6. Using evidence from the text, summarise in the chart below your first impressions of the key characters.
### Introducing a character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character’s name</th>
<th>Impression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Finally …**

Has the author commented on any of the characters, trying to influence your feelings? This is called authorial intervention or intrusive narration. Watch out for this!
Introducing a character

Answers!

David Lodge, *The Art of Fiction, pp.9-12*

Read the article and answer the following questions.

1. Why is character the most difficult part of the art of fiction to discuss in technical terms? (p.10) There are ‘many different types of character’ and ‘many different ways of representing them’.

2. Which different types of character are discussed? (p.10) *major characters and minor characters, flat characters and round characters, characters rendered from inside their minds…and characters viewed from outside by others.*

3. What is the traditional way to introduce character? (p.11) ‘give a physical description and a biographical study’

4. Why is this method less popular today? (p.11) *Times have changed: we are less leisurely and patient. Modern authors also prefer facts about the character to emerge gradually.*

5. How can we learn about character, class and lifestyle? (p.11) *Through clothes, speech and behaviour.*

Close reading of example extracts and discussion

1. Read the extract on p. 9 and 10. What do you learn about Sally’s character, class and lifestyle?
   
   a) Discuss.
   
   b) Compare your answer with the analysis on p. 11.

2. Now read the extract on p. 11. Dorothea is static, as if posing for a portrait. (This contrasts with Sally who is shown in action.) Read the explanation of cinema shots on p. 12.

3. What advantage does reading about a character in a novel have over watching a character in a cinema?
   
   c) Discuss.
   
   d) Compare your answer with the comments in final paragraph on p. 12.