

English 8 – Characterization

Characterization - the way that an author creates a character and the traits that make up a character.

Trait – an aspect to a character for which there is proof in the work of literature.

- Traits can be:
- **physical** (size, build, age, etc...)
 - **mental**
 - **emotional**

Authors can present traits TWO different ways, directly and indirectly.

Direct Characterization	Indirect Characterization
<p>- What the narrator directly says about a character.</p> <p><i>“He was a shy, slender boy of nine years old.”</i></p>	<p>- What we can picture of the character through clues like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The characters speech.The characters actions.What other characters think about them. <p><i>“David cursed at having to get a new box of cereal from the top cupboard, but he reached up easily and got it anyway.”</i></p> <p>What does this description tell you about David?</p>

Traits and Proofs:

Whenever you declare a character to have certain traits, you must be able to have proof from the text to back up your claims. Proofs should be in quotations from the text, and if needed, should contain a brief explanation.

Example:

Character	Trait	Proof
Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones	Kind and Understanding	She fixed dinner for the boy who tried to rob her and empathizes with the boy. Indirect Characterization through her actions and speech. - "I have done things too...Everybody's got something in common. So you set down while I fix us something to eat."