What Skills Help You Critique a Literary Work?

Learning Objective:

We will critique the credibility of characterization using details.

Teacher reads
Students read
P/s nv x2

Reading for Details

Sometimes the truth is in the details.

Baseball game in Central Park, New York City

The Language of Literary Criticism

Here are some of the words and phrases critics use when they critique characterization.

Words and Phrases Used to Describe Characters	
Positive	Negative
original	stereotyped
believable *or* credible *or* convincing	unbelievable *or* not credible *or* unconvincing
well-rounded	flat
dynamic—*refers to characters who change and grow*	static—*refers to characters who remain the same*

Teacher model: The evil step-mother in Snow White is a stereotyped character because....

Students talk to you partner about another character from a story or movie who is stereotypical.

Reading for Details

When you read fiction, it's important to

- read the whole work carefully

- pay attention to key details

Reading for Details: Characterization

As you read, look for details related to characters'

qualities

thoughts

words

actions

These will help us decide if a character is credible (or believable)

Reading for Details: Characterization

Reading for details will help you critique the credibility of characters in a story.

For example, you probably wouldn't believe in an acrobat who

- was terribly afraid of heights

  OR

Is it a swing— or a trapeze?

- used the wrong terms to describe his work

What are the kinds details about a character that we look for when critiquing their credibility?   p/s, nv x2

Reading for Details: Characterization

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do these details make the characters seem believable?

- Has the writer provided enough details to bring the characters to life on the page?

- Or do the characters seem like flat cardboard figures?

Which is an example of a detail that would help us critique the credibility of a character who is a scientist?

A. He drives his car to work.

B. He uses the correct scientific terminology when talking about experiments. wb

How do you know? Ps/ nv x2

Importance

Why is it important to be able to critique the credibility of characters?
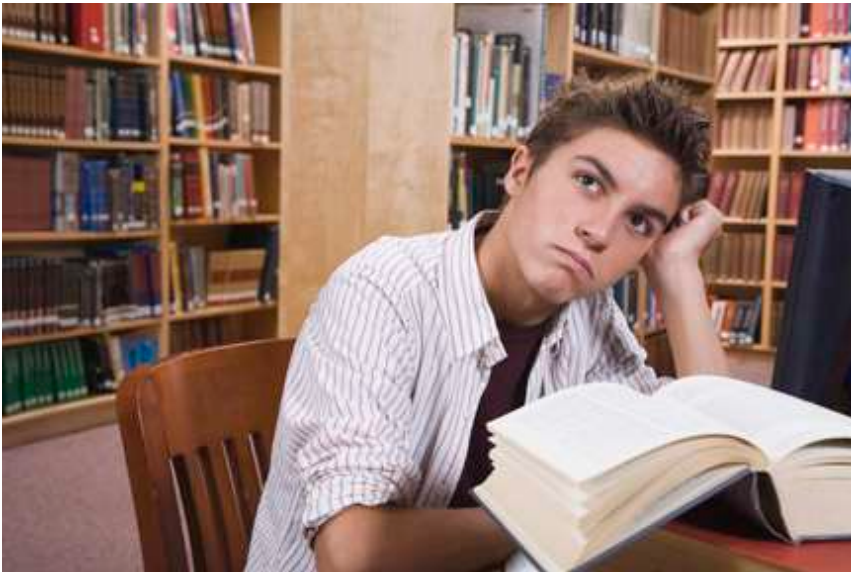
- You will have to be able to decide if characters are credible when reading.

- It will help you make better choices as a consumer.

- It will help you when you analyze what you read in high school.

Now turn to your partner and tell them which reason is most important to you. You can use on of my reasons or one of your own.
p/s   - volunteers

Making Generalizations

Making generalizations as you read can help you critique a story's credibility. Ask yourself

What conclusions can I draw about people or life based on the story?

When we look for details to critique characters' credibility we use them to make generalizations.

A **generalization** is a conclusion drawn from several examples or pieces of evidence.

Evidence		**Evidence**		**Generalization**
Whenever you volunteer at the homeless shelter, you get a good feeling inside.	**+**	Your neighbor contributes to many charities, and she always seems happy.	**=**	Helping other people makes us feel happy and good about ourselves.

What is a generalization?   P/S nv x2

What Skills Help You Critique a Literary Work?

Quick Check

Difficult challenges can become easy when you have friends to support you.

Jamal blushes when her music teacher praises her violin playing.

Match each example with the correct term.

detail

generalization

In your own words, how did you know? PS/nv x2

Why do we need to be able to assess the credibility of characters?

Helps you make informed decisions
Decide if information source is reliable
Improve your reading comprehension

Turn to your partner and discuss why you think it is
important to identify credibility in characters.
You can use a reason of your own or one of my reasons.
PS Volunteers

Making Generalizations to Critique Credibility

To make a generalization about a character

1. take evidence from the text

2. combine it with what you already know

3. come up with a broad statement that illustrates a truth about what you've read

4. Test your generalization for credibility by comparing it to further details from the text.

Making Generalizations

Making a generalization about a character.

I do:

Evidence in text		My Knowledge		Generalization
Ebenezer Scrooge is very stingy, and he has no friends.	**+**	The way we treat others usually determines whether we have friends.	**=**	People who do not share with others will not have many friends.

How did I make my generalization?

Ps, nv x2

Making Generalizations

Your generalization can help you test whether the characters and plot are believable or realistic.

I do:

Generalization

Do all the details fit?

People who do not share with others will not have many friends.

Yes. None of the details in the story contradict, or go against, this idea.

How did I decide if my generalization was credible?   Ps/ nv x2

Making Generalizations
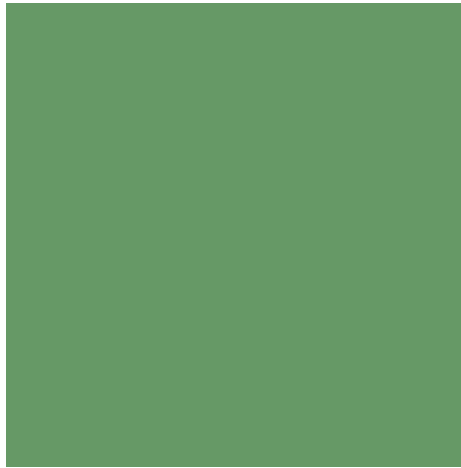
Making a generalization about a character.

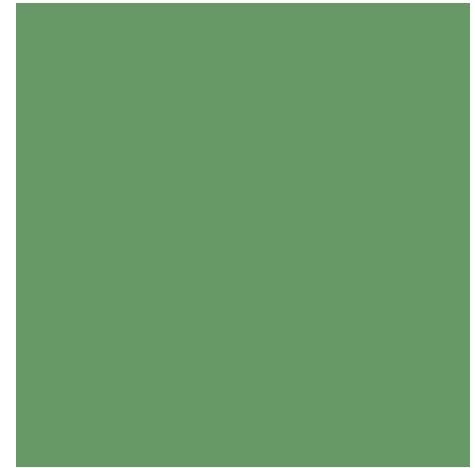All Summer in a Day page 30 (last paragraph)

We do:

Evidence in text	My Knowledge	Generalization

+ **=**

How did we make our generalization?   Ps, nv x2

Making Generalizations

Your generalization can help you test whether the characters and plot are believable or realistic.

I do:

Generalization

Do all the details fit?

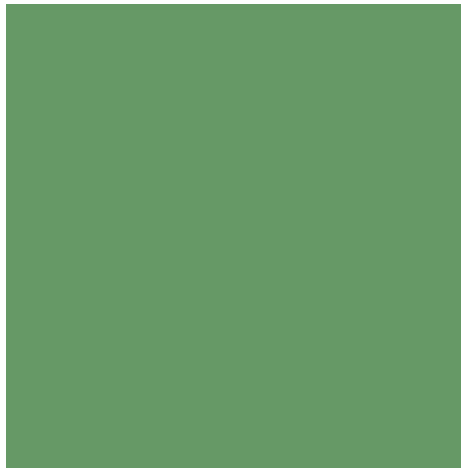How did we decide if our generalization was credible?   Ps/ nv x2

Making Generalizations

Making a generalization about a character.

We/you do:

Evidence in text		My Knowledge		Generalization
	+		**=**	

How did we make our generalization?

Ps, nv x2

Making Generalizations

Your generalization can help you test whether the characters and plot are believable or realistic.

We/you do:

Generalization

Do all the details fit?

How did we decide if our generalization was credible?   Ps/ nv x2

Closure:

What do we look for, in the text, to help us critique a character's credibility?   wb

What is a conclusion drawn from several examples or pieces of evidence?   Wb

What is something you learned today about critiquing a character's credibility?

What Skills Help You Critique a Literary Work?

Quick Check

Which of the following events in a story **would not** support this generalization: "The only way to fix a mistake is to take responsibility for it"?

Answer

A
A teenage boy named Paul steals a woman's purse on a dare from his friends.

B
Paul pretends to find the purse, returns it, and collects a reward. Everyone is happy.

C
Paul's feelings of guilt keep him awake at night. He starts to fail his classes.

[End of Section]

Independent Practice

1. Re-read a passage in a favorite short story or novel that contains important information about a character or the plot. Identify details that make the character or the plot event seem credible or realistic.

2. Make a generalization about people or life based on your knowledge and evidence from a movie you've seen. How does this generalization help you critique the credibility of the movie?

The End