What’s CHARACTERIZATION all about?

- When an author uses **DIRECT CHARACTERIZATION**, he/she clearly states or directly describes a character. For example, “Kat is popular and snobby.” The author tells rather than shows us what Kat is like.

- When an author uses **INDIRECT CHARACTERIZATION**, character traits are revealed through actions, dialogue, appearance, thoughts and feelings, or other characters’ comments. For example, “Jess left the pizza crust on the floor.” The author shows rather than tells us what Jess is like.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Characterization</th>
<th>Indirect Characterization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Direct comments by the narrator</td>
<td>• Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Words/Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Thoughts/Feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other Characters’ Comments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions:** Choose a character from “Thank You M’am” to analyze. Identify four character traits that character displays in the story. Provide evidence from the text to support your choices of traits and then classify the type of characterization used for each trait.

**Character Choice:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Type of Characterization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>
Directions: Fill in the details based on your reading of “Thank You M’am.”

(1) Exposition – Introduction of who and where
Setting
Time ____________________
Place ____________________
Characters
Main ____________________
________________________
________________________
Mood____________________

(2) Rising Action - Conflict and complications
________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________

(3) Climax – Moment of greatest tension ____________________
________________________
________________________
________________________

(4) Falling Action – Events directly after the climax ____________
________________________
________________________
________________________

(5) Resolution – Final part of the story ______
________________________
________________________
________________________
________________________
Directions: Fill in the details based on your reading of “Thank You M’am.”

(1) Exposition – Introduction of who and where
Setting
  Time 11:00 pm
  Place: the sidewalk of a city street
Characters
  Main Roger, Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones
  Mood Tense

(2) Rising Action - Conflict and complications
Roger tries unsuccessfully to steal Mrs. Jones’s purse, but she catches him and won’t let him go. She takes him home where she lets him wash up and feeds him dinner.

(3) Climax – Moment of greatest tension Mrs. Jones gives Roger $10 to buy the shoes he wants.

(4) Falling Action – Events directly after the climax After telling him to behave himself, Mrs. Jones sends Roger on his way.

(5) Resolution – Final part of the story Mrs. Jones shuts the door before Roger can say thank you or anything else to her.
**Making Inferences with Dialogue**  
*“Thank You, M’am” by Langston Hughes*

**CHARACTER:** MRS. JONES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT SHE SAID</th>
<th>WHAT I CAN INFER (At least one inference)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Pick up my pocketbook, boy, and give it here.”</td>
<td>1. She is a tough woman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. She is not afraid of criminals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. She is used to giving orders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Least I can do right now is wash your face. Are you hungry?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Well, you didn’t have to snatch my pocketbook to get some suede shoes. You could’ve asked me.”</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I have done things too, which I would not tell you, son – neither tell God, if He didn’t already know.”</td>
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**CHARACTER:** ROGER

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<tr>
<td>When Mrs. Jones asked if he was ashamed of himself, he replied, “Yes’m.”</td>
<td>1. He shows respect to adults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. He is not an angry person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When asked if he would run if she turned him loose, he replied, “Yes’m.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“There’s nobody home at my house.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Do you need somebody to go to the store, maybe to get some milk or something?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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# SAMPLE ANSWERS

**Making Inferences with Dialogue**  
“Thank You, M’am” by Langston Hughes

**CHARACTER: MRS. JONES**

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<th>WHAT SHE SAID</th>
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| “Pick up my pocketbook, boy, and give it here.” | 1. She is a tough woman.  
2. She is not afraid of criminals.  
3. She is used to giving orders. |
| “Least I can do right now is wash your face. Are you hungry?” | She is kind and caring. She is concerned about Roger’s appearance. |
| “Well, you didn’t have to snatch my pocketbook to get some suede shoes. You could’ve asked me.” | She wants to teach Roger right from wrong. She is a generous woman. |
| “I have done things too, which I would not tell you, son – neither tell God, if He didn’t already know.” | Mrs. Jones has made bad decisions in her past. |

**CHARACTER: ROGER**

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| When Mrs. Jones asked if he was ashamed of himself, he replied, “Yes’m.” | 1. He shows respect to adults.  
2. He is not an angry person. |
| When asked if he would run if she turned him loose, he replied, “Yes’m.” | He is honest. He is afraid of Mrs. Jones and getting in trouble. |
| “There’s nobody home at my house.” | His parents are unable or unwilling to take care of him. |
| “Do you need somebody to go to the store, maybe to get some milk or something?” | He wants to be helpful. He is trying to make up for what he did earlier. |
**Name:**

**Directions:** Categorize the examples of conflict from “Thank You M’am” and explain your decisions. The first one is done for you as an example.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONFLICT</th>
<th>INTERNAL or EXTERNAL?</th>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A teenager stole Mrs. Jones’ pocketbook.</td>
<td><strong>EXTERNAL</strong></td>
<td>Mrs. Jones is struggling against another person, Roger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger is captured by Mrs. Jones, who won’t set him loose.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger has nobody home at his house.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger wants a pair of blue suede shoes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger does not want to be mistrusted after he tried to steal Mrs. Jones’s purse and she was so kind to him.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger wants to say “thank you” but can’t get the words out.</td>
<td></td>
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**ANSWER KEY**

**Directions:** Categorize the examples of conflict from “Thank You M’am” and explain your decisions. The first one is done for you as an example.

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<td><strong>EXTERNAL</strong></td>
<td>Mrs. Jones is struggling against another person, Roger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger is captured by Mrs. Jones, who won’t set him loose.</td>
<td><strong>External</strong></td>
<td>Roger struggles against Mrs. Jones, another person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger has nobody home at his house.</td>
<td><strong>External</strong></td>
<td>Roger struggles with the absence of his parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger wants a pair of blue suede shoes.</td>
<td><strong>Internal</strong></td>
<td>Roger struggles with his inner desires.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger does not want to be mistrusted after he tried to steal Mrs. Jones's purse and she was so kind to him.</td>
<td><strong>Internal</strong></td>
<td>Roger is worried about how he will be perceived by others, specifically Mrs. Jones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger wants to say “thank you” but can’t get the words out.</td>
<td><strong>Internal</strong></td>
<td>Roger is unsure of himself and doesn’t speak quickly enough to express his feelings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Directions:** Read over the eight choices below and circle the choice(s) you will complete. You may work with a partner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Create a poster giving children tips for how to solve conflicts. Your poster must include a slogan, an image, and at least 5 tips.</th>
<th>Write a short skit in which a conflict occurs and is resolved. Be sure to make clear if the conflict is internal or external, why the conflict occurred, who was involved, and how it was solved.</th>
<th>Create a comic strip depicting a comic and how it is resolved. Your comic strip must include at least six boxes. Be sure to make clear if the conflict is internal or external, why the conflict occurred, who was involved, and how it was solved.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write a letter to a middle school student describing a conflict you experienced and how it ended. Give them advice on how they could handle a similar situation.</td>
<td><strong>Conflict &amp; Characterization Choice Board</strong></td>
<td>Write a short story focused on one character. Describe your character’s words, actions, thoughts and feelings, appearance, interactions with others, as well as their hopes and dreams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a journal entry from Mrs. Jones’s point of view after the story ends. Be sure to explain why she chose to help Roger and why she could relate to him.</td>
<td>Create your own book cover for the story “Thank You M’am.” Your cover must include an image, the title, and the author’s name.</td>
<td>Illustrate a key part of the story “Thank You M’am.” Pull out an important line or two from the story and draw a picture to go with those lines.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Directions: Write a half-page letter from Roger to Mrs. Jones set ten years after the story. What do you think he would say to her now that he could not say to her then? Would he thank her? Ask how she is doing? How do you think her actions affected his life? What is his character like now? Think about these questions and follow the format of the letter below.

September 22, 20__

Dear Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones,

__________________________

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Respectfully Yours.

Roger
Constructive Response Form

Sample Transitions

**Opening statements:** to begin with, at first, in the beginning, at the start

**To introduce examples:** for example, for instance, in support of this, as evidence

**To continue:** also, furthermore, in addition

**To compare or contrast:** similarly, likewise, in contrast, on the other hand

**Ending statements:** finally, to conclude, in conclusion, to close, in summation

**Score:** _____/3 x 5 = _____/15

**To earn a 3 you must...**

- Turn the prompt into a statement.
- Answer the prompt clearly and completely.
- Give 1st example
- Explain 1st example
- Give 2nd example
- Explain 2nd example
- Give 3rd example
- Explain 3rd example
- Use sentence starters/transitions correctly.
- Restate your topic sentence in your conclusion sentence.

3 = 9-10 checks 2 = 5-8 checks 1 = 2-4 checks 0 = 0-1 checks

**Prompt:**

________________________________________________________________________

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**Response:**

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________________________________________________________________________
**Prompt:** Analyze the conflict in “Thank You M’am” by Langston Hughes. Choose two conflicts: one internal and one external conflict to discuss.

**Sentence 1** *(restate the prompt and identify the two conflicts to discuss)* There are several conflicts that occur in “Thank You M’am” by Langston Hughes. One internal conflict takes place between __________________________ and __________________________, while one external conflict takes place between __________________________ and __________________________.

**Sentence 2** *(identify and define internal conflict)* In “Thank You M’am,” Langston Hughes includes internal conflict, which is __________________________

______________________________

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**Sentence 3** *(give an example of internal conflict)* One example of this from the story is when the narrator states, “ __________________________

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**Sentence 4** *(explain what this example shows)* This example shows __________________________

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Sentence 5 (identify and define external conflict) In “Thank You M’am,” Langston Hughes also includes external conflict, which is ____________________________

______________________________________________________________

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Sentence 6 (give an example of external conflict) An example of this from the story is when the narrator states, “ ____________________________

______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

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______________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Sentence 7 (explain what this example shows) This example shows __________________

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Sentence 8 (restate your main idea by summing up your examples and explanations) In conclusion, ____________________________

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