Characterization

When you read a good story, you feel as if you know the characters. That’s because authors use characterization to reveal, or show, what a character is like.

Hughes describes the woman’s physical traits.

Hughes uses actions to show what she is like.

Monitor Your Reading

When you monitor your reading, you check with yourself to see if you understand. Look into the text above and find something that isn’t clear to you. Then, as you read the story, use these strategies to better understand, or clarify ideas.

Look Into the Text

She was a large woman with a large purse that had everything in it but a hammer and nails. It had a long strap, and she carried it slung across her shoulder. It was about eleven o’clock at night, dark, and she was walking alone, when a boy ran up behind her and tried to snatch her purse. The strap broke with the sudden single tug the boy gave it from behind. But the boy’s weight and the weight of the purse combined cause him to lose his balance. Instead of taking off full blast as he had hoped, the boy fell on his back on the sidewalk, and his legs flew up.

The large woman simply turned around and kicked him right square in his blue-jeaned sitter. Then she reached down, picked the boy up by his shirt front, and shook him until his teeth rattled.

FOR BEFORE READING

Thank You, M’am

short story by Langston Hughes

Objectives

Reading Strategy
- Plan and Monitor: Clarify Ideas
- Literary Analysis
  - Analyze Characterization

Teach Strategies

Characterization

Look Into the Text Read the introduction to define characterization. Then use the callouts on p. 39 to locate examples.

To help students use the clues to understand characters, ask: The woman is large and kicks the boy. What do these clues show about her?

Possible response:

- She is a tough character who isn’t afraid of things.

Ask: Why did the boy’s teeth rattle?

Possible responses:

- The woman shook him too hard.
- He was afraid.

Reading Transparency 2 (also online)

Use the Transparency Reinforce the features of characterization by introducing the ways authors show what a character is like. Then read aloud the dialogue. Ask: What do the woman’s words show about her?

Possible response:

- She is bossing the boy around; she is a strong woman.

Monitor Your Reading

Clarify Ideas Read the introduction with students to define the strategy. Work through the How To box to model rereading and reading on.

Have students try the strategies with something else that is not clear to them in Look Into the Text.

Reading Transparency 2

Characterization

How does an author create characters?

Introduce: Authors use four techniques to show what a character is like. They:

- Tell the character’s physical traits.
- Describe the character’s actions.
- Shown how other characters react.
- Show what a character says or thinks.

The exact words a character speaks are called dialogue. Quotation marks show where the exact words begin and end.

After that, the woman said, “Pick up my pocketbook, boy, and give it here.”

“If I turn you loose, will you run?” asked the woman. “No,” said the boy. “Then I won’t turn you loose,” said the woman. She did not release him.

“You ought to be my son, I would teach you right from wrong. Least I can do right now is to wash your face. Are you hungry?”

Possible responses:

- She is bossing the boy around; she is a strong woman.
- The woman shook him too hard.
- He was afraid.

Ongoing Assessment

Have students explain how they would advise a friend who wasn’t clear about what was read.
Langston Hughes wrote about the experience of being an African American in the early and middle 20th century. He was one of the most famous members of the “Harlem Renaissance,” a group of writers, musicians, and artists who lived and worked in the Harlem neighborhood in New York City. Harlem became the setting, or location, for many of Hughes’s works, including “Thank You, M’am.” When he was growing up, Hughes moved a lot. He lived in Missouri, Kansas, Illinois, Ohio, and Mexico. His parents were divorced, and he also spent time living with his grandmother and other relatives. In one essay, Hughes said that during these years he slept in “ten thousand beds.”

Langston Hughes believed in equal opportunities for all Americans.

Even though his home changed often, the one thing that never changed was his love of books and writing. Hughes wrote his first poem in the eighth grade, and he was named class poet. The Central High School Monthly in Cleveland, Ohio, was the first magazine to publish one of his poems.

Hughes went on to write three novels, nineteen books of poetry and short stories, twenty plays, and many newspaper articles and essays. Many of his poems were also set to music by the jazz musicians of his time.

DIEFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION
English Language Learners

PREVIEW the selection:
• Show the art on p. 41: The story takes place in a neighborhood like this, at night.
• Show the portraits on pp. 45 and 47: Two people who might look like this come in contact with each other in the story.
• Demonstrate stealing a purse and explain: The story gets started when the boy tries to steal a woman’s purse.
• Make an angry face and explain: The woman gets angry. Read the quote in paragraph 3 on p. 44.

CD
Hear the Selection Recording, and put the CD in students’ books.

Read Aloud to provide a supported listening experience:
• Have students use the Listen feature in the Online Coach where they see the text chunked into manageable phrases as it is read aloud.
• Read the selection aloud to students as you provide comprehensible input. For example, you can pantomime a number of the actions, such as losing balance or taking off full blast on p. 42.
Thank You, M'am

by Langston Hughes

Analyze Visuals

About the Art Jacob Lawrence, like Hughes, lived in Harlem during the Harlem Renaissance.

Interpret and Respond Ask students: If you painted your own neighborhood, what would you show?

Critical Viewing: Setting

Observe Daytime Details Ask: What is this neighborhood like?

ELL Questioning For less proficient students, ask yes/no questions or questions with embedded answer choices:
• Is there a place for children to play?
• Is this neighborhood a quiet place or a busy place? How can you tell?
For more proficient students, ask open-ended questions:
• What kinds of work are people doing? How are they having fun?

Visualize the Night Scene Ask: How would the scene change late at night?

Possible response:
• At night, there may be fewer people on the streets. Young people might be hanging around together.

Critical Viewing: Setting

What is this neighborhood like? How would the scene change late at night?

Online Coach™

Build Reading Power
Assign students to use the software, based on their instructional needs.

Read Silently
• Comprehension questions with immediate feedback
• Vocabulary support

Listen
• Professional model of fluent reading
• Text highlighting to facilitate tracking
• Vocabulary support

Record
• Oral reading fluency practice
• Ongoing fluency assessment with immediate feedback

Thank You M'am 41
Shaking the Text

Set a Purpose  Remind students of their responses in the Anticipation Guide. Ask: What might you hope to gain from reading a story about a young person who commits a crime?

Possible responses:
• You might get to learn about the consequences of choosing crime.
• The story might have suspense.

Read  Have students read pp. 42–45. Support and monitor their comprehension using the reading support provided. Use the Differentiated Instruction below to meet students’ individual needs.

Reading Support

Characterization  Ask: What do the physical traits, actions, words, and reactions of others tell about the two characters?

Possible responses:
• The woman is strong and forceful.
• The boy might be small and afraid.

Clarify Ideas  Ask students whether they were surprised by the boy’s answer and why. Have students read a few more lines and then restate the boy’s answer.

In Other Words
shung  hanging
taking off full blast  running away very fast
right square in his blue-jeaned sitter  on his rear end, or backside
permit him to stoop  let him lean down

Key Vocabulary
• consequence  n. result of another action
• commit  v. to perform, do, or carry out something, often a crime

Differentiated Instruction

Interactive Reading  As you conduct the interactive reading session with students, adjust your teaching strategies to their needs.

Struggling Readers

Picture the Text  Show visually how key ideas in the story relate. For example, pause after each major choice that Roger makes and complete a choice-and-consequence diagram. For example:

Choice  Consequence

steals a purse  gets caught

For example:
You a lie! (You are a liar.)
Yes’m (Yes, Madam)

Discuss additional examples from the story and provide restatements.

Challenge

Lead the Discussion  Have students lead the discussion during reading, posing additional questions for the group. Help leaders model positive discussion techniques, such as encouraging each member’s participation.

English Language Learners

Rephrase Dialect  Dialect is a version of a language with some differences in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.
“Um-hum! Your face is dirty. I **got a great mind** to wash your face for you. Ain't you got nobody home to tell you to wash your face?”

“No’m,” said the boy.

“Then it will get washed this evening,” said the large woman, starting up the street, dragging the frightened boy behind her.

He looked as if he were fourteen or fifteen, **frail and willow-wild**, in tennis shoes and blue jeans.

The woman said, “You ought to be my son. I would teach you **right from wrong**. Least I can do right now is to wash your face. Are you hungry?”

“No’m,” said the being-dragged boy. “I just want you to turn me loose.”

---

**D Daily Routines**

**Vocabulary**

See the Vocabulary and Fluency Routines tab for more information.

**Word Wall** Display the words to provide a visual scaffold. Choose a Word Wall practice activity from p. 51 in the Daily Routines tab. For example: KWL.

**Respond to Questions** Compose yes/no questions using the words. For example: Do circumstances affect a person’s maturity?

**Word Sorts** Place words into categories. For example:
- Parts of speech
- Related meanings

---

**Fluency: Phrasing**

This cluster’s fluency practice uses a passage from “Thank You, M’am” to help students practice appropriate phrasing. Use Reading Handbook T723 and the Fluency Model CD to teach or review the elements of fluent phrasing, and then use the daily fluency practice activities to develop students’ oral reading proficiency.

---

**E Critical Viewing: Effect**

Here is how one artist portrayed a New York City scene. What mood, or feeling, does the artist create?

---

**Thank You, M’am**

---

**Reading Support**

**Language** Explain that the phrase is a creative way of saying “the boy who was being dragged.” Have students analyze the author’s use of descriptive language and explain how it impacts meaning. Ask: How does the descriptive language help you understand what is happening?

Possible response:
- The language describes the woman’s action toward the boy, and shows she is in charge.

**Analyze Visuals**

**About the Art** John Sloan was a painter who used realism to depict poor urban neighborhoods.

**Interpret and Respond** Ask: What about this painting looks “realistic” to you?

---

**G Critical Viewing: Setting**

Ask students to study the places shown in the painting.

**Build Background** Some students may be unfamiliar with characteristics of an urban setting. Explain:

- the elevated train
- the water tower
- the density and height of the buildings
- the skyline in the background

Ask: What is the setting of the painting like?

Possible response:
- Some places are dark, in shadows, while others in the background are in bright lights.

Ask: What mood or feeling does the artist create?

Possible responses:
- The mood seems gloomy.
- There is a feeling of loneliness.
“Was I bothering you when I turned that corner?” asked the woman.
“No.”
“But you put yourself in contact with me,” said the woman. “If you think that that contact is not going to last awhile, you got another thought coming. When I get through with you, sir, you are going to remember Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones.”

Sweat popped out on the boy’s face and he began to struggle. Mrs. Jones stopped, jerked him around in front of her, put a half nelson about his neck, and continued to drag him up the street. When she got to her door, she dragged the boy inside, down a hall and into a large kitchenette-furnished room at the rear of the house. She switched on the light and left the door open. The boy could hear other roomers laughing and talking in the large house. Some of their doors were open, too, so he knew he and the woman were not alone. The woman still had him by the neck in the middle of her room.

She said, “What is your name?”

“Roger,” answered the boy.

“Then, Roger, you go to that sink and wash your face,” said the woman, whereupon she turned him loose—at last. Roger looked at the door—looked at the woman—looked at the door—and went to the sink. “Let the water run until it gets warm,” she said. “Here’s a clean towel.” “You gonna take me to jail?” asked the boy, bending over the sink.

“Not with that face, I would not take you nowhere,” said the woman. What did Hughes use italics to draw your attention to what Roger did? What does this choice tell you about Roger?

When I get through with you, sir, you are going to remember Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones.

GRAMMAR

Plural Nouns

Teach/Model: Display the transparency. Remind students that a noun names a person, place, thing, or idea. Explain the definitions and spelling rules, writing the plural nouns on the transparency as you work through the story.

Practice A: Have students collect the nouns and tell if they are singular or plural. Write some in the chart and ask students to fill in the corresponding form—singular or plural. B. After partners talk and write sentences, have each student read his or her favorite sentence aloud. Ask the group to identify the plural.

Grammar & Writing Practice Book, pp. 11–12

TEACH & PRACTICE

A Reading Support

Characterization: Ask what type of person might talk like this.
Possible response:
Mrs. Jones sounds like a teacher, parent, or very confident person.

B Reading Support

Characterization: Ask why Roger’s action is so important here.
Possible response:
Roger wants to do the right thing, and he knows she is trying to help.

Monitor Comprehension

Explain: Have students think aloud to explain if they have found out the consequences Roger faces.

MODEL Say:

So far Roger has been dragged to the woman’s house and had his face washed but we don’t know if these are the only consequences he will have to face.

We don’t know yet what else Mrs. Jones might do. Roger still may have to face more consequences.

My purpose for reading will probably not be completely met until the end of the story.

Ask if students had any other purposes for reading the story. Have them think aloud how other purposes have been met so far.
**Critical Viewing: Characterization**

How does this picture compare to the picture you have in your mind of Mrs. Jones?


**Analyze Visuals**

**About the Art** At the time this story was written, Bernard Safran was painting portraits of world leaders and other important figures for the cover of *Time* magazine. After leaving *Time*, Safran turned his attention to painting images of daily life in his native New York City.

**Interpret and Respond** Ask:

- If you saw this image on the cover of *Time*, what would you predict the feature story might be about?
- If you were an artist, which would you prefer as your subject: famous or regular people? Why?

**Critical Viewing: Characterization**

**Analyze Character** Ask students to identify details that show what the woman in the painting is like.

**ELL Use Graphic Organizer** List the details students notice and use a graphic to show how details lead to conclusions.

Ask: What is your impression of the woman?

Have students compare the woman in the picture to how they see Mrs. Jones.

Possible responses:
- Both are large.
- Neither is wealthy.
- Mrs. Jones doesn’t seem worried like the woman in the painting.

**Vocabulary and Concepts**

*Link Vocabulary with the Essential Question.*

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION:** What Influences a Person’s Choices?

Some possible questions:

- What circumstances might have led the boy to make the choice to steal?
- Why did the boy choose to commit this crime?
- Do you think the boy considered the consequences of his choice?
- The boy is a juvenile. Would an adult have made the same choice?
- What can be done to salvage the boy’s future and stop him from choosing crime?
- Does the boy’s choice show maturity?

Have students use the Key Vocabulary words in their responses.
Lesson 12, continued

Read

PREPARE TO READ

OBJECTIVES

Vocabulary
- Strategy: Use Contextual Analysis

Reading Strategies
- Plan and Monitor: Predict; Clarify Ideas; Confirm Prediction

Literary Analysis
- Analyze Characterization
- Viewing
  - Respond to and Interpret Visuals
  - Grammar Transparency
- Subject-Verb Agreement (be)

TEACH & PRACTICE

A. Chunking the Text

Predict Have students discuss and generate questions about Mrs. Jones to make a complex prediction about what she will teach Roger.

ELL Rephrase Language Explain that in this phrase, life is used as an adjective: “life lessons” are lessons one learns about life. Ask students for other ways they might explain “life lessons.”

Read Have students read pp. 46–49 to check their predictions. Support and monitor their comprehension using the reading support provided.

B. Reading Support

Characterization Have volunteers role-play this dialogue. Ask: How do Mrs. Jones’s words show whether she means to help Roger?

Possible response:
- Mrs. Jones’s words are angry, but she offers Roger dinner. She seems like she is helping him.

In Other Words

- make a dash for it try to run
- Everybody’s got something in common.
- All people are alike in some way.
- presentable clean and neat

C. Reading Support

Clarify Ideas Reread the paragraph aloud. Ask what Mrs. Jones might have grown up without anyone taking care of her.

Possible response:
- Mrs. Jones might have grown up without anyone taking care of her.

In Other Words

- life: frown, frowning, frowned

D. Grammar Transparency

Subject-Verb Agreement: Forms of Be

Teach/Model Display the transparency. Review the present tense forms of the verb be: am, is, are. Use the examples on the transparency to explain how the verb you choose depends on the subject.

Practice A. Have students complete sentences about the characters. Point out each subject as you read the paragraph aloud. Ask students to look back at the examples to verify which verb to use. B. After the class starts the reaction paragraph, ask students to write two more sentences and share one sentence aloud.

GRAMMAR SKILLS PATH

6 Plural Nouns
7 Subject-Verb Agreement: Forms of Be
8 Subject-Verb Agreement: Action Verbs
9 Verbs with Compound Subjects
10 Review: Subject-Verb Agreement

In Other Words

- life: frown, frowning, frowned

How Do You Know

What Verb to Use?

Match It to the Subject.

- Use Earth Be
  - I am surprised at Roger.
  - We are surprised at Mrs. Jones.
  - You are surprised at Mrs. Jones.
  - He is surprised at Mrs. Jones.

- In or on a dark street.

Try It

A. Tell what happens at the start of the story. Use am, is, are or are.

Line or write, Mrs. Jones walked down a dark street.

- Roger is afraid, and he...
In another corner of the room behind a screen was a gas plate and an icebox. Mrs. Jones got up and went behind the screen. The woman did not watch the boy to see if he was going to run now, nor did she watch her purse, which she left behind her on the daybed. But the boy took care to sit on the far side of the room, away from the purse, where he thought she could easily see him out of the corner of her eye.

**Critical Viewing: Characterization**
Study the boy's look. What lines from the story could go with this look?

**Confirm Prediction**
Were you right about what Mrs. Jones is teaching Roger? Explain.

**Access Vocabulary**
Do you know what screen means here? If not, look for clues. It must be big because an icebox, or refrigerator, is behind it.

**Critical Viewing: Characterization**
Analyze Character Ask students to study the boy’s eyes and facial expression.

Ask: What is your impression of the boy?

Have students scan p. 46 for lines from the story that go with this look.

Possible response:
- Roger may have looked uncertain like this when he was deciding if he should run out of Mrs. Jones’s kitchen.

**Reading Support**
Access Vocabulary Ask students where they have heard the word screen. For example: movie/tv screen, screen door, sunscreen. Have them identify what these have in common.

Possible response:
- A shield or barrier, a flat surface, something you can almost see through.

**Monitor Comprehension**
Confirm Prediction Have students match their predictions with what Mrs. Jones teaches Roger. Discuss the accuracy of their predictions.

**OUT-OF-SCHOOL LITERACY**

**Interpreting Television Shows**
Help students see how much prior knowledge they bring to the text by connecting the selection to students’ experience with watching television crime shows.

- Which crime or police shows have you seen recently on television?
- What are some reasons that people in these shows commit crimes?
- What circumstances might lead someone to choose crime?
- What consequences did the people in the shows have to face when they made bad choices?
- Do you have empathy for people who make bad choices? Why or why not?

As students answer, encourage the use of the highlighted Key Vocabulary.
OBJECTIVES
Vocabulary
- Key Vocabulary  
Reading Strategy
- Plan and Monitor: Clarify Ideas  
Literary Analysis
- Analyze Characterization  
Writing
- Form: Response to Literature  
Grammar
- Subject-Verb Agreement (action verbs)

TEACH & PRACTICE

A Reading Support
9 Characterization Ask students to recall Roger's words and actions earlier in the story. Have them contrast them with what he says at the top of p. 48.

Point out that Roger offers to go to the store. Ask: How is Roger feeling at this point in the story?

Possible responses:
- Roger might be feeling like he wants to do something for Mrs. Jones because he knows she is trying to help him. He also might feel bad about trying to steal from her, so he is trying to make it up to her.

B Reading Support
10 Clarify Ideas Have students reread the paragraph to identify the reason Mrs. Jones doesn't ask Roger about himself. Ask: If Mrs. Jones doesn't ask Roger about himself, why does she tell him so much about herself and her work?

Possible response:
- She wants to make Roger feel comfortable rather than ashamed. She is treating him like a friend.

GRAMMAR

Subject-Verb Agreement: Action Verbs

Teach/Model Display the transparency. Compare the action verbs in each pair, and ask students why the verb in each even-numbered sentence ends in -s.

Practice A. Have students recall events in the story to generate sentence endings. For numbers 1–4, ask students to identify the subject in the sentence and to tell you how the verb for each subject should end. B. Have students write three sentences to tell about the characters. Have volunteers find the verbs and explain why some end in -s.

GRAMMAR SKILLS PATH
6 Plural Nouns
7 Subject-Verb Agreement: Forms of Be
8 Subject-Verb Agreement: Action Verbs
9 Verbs with Compound Subjects
10 Review: Subject-Verb Agreement

Lesson 12, continued
READ

if she wanted to. He did not trust the woman not to trust him. And he did not want to be mistrusted now.

“Do you need somebody to go to the store,” asked the boy, “maybe to get some milk or something?”

“Don’t believe I do,” said the woman, “unless you just want sweet milk yourself. I was going to make cocoa out of this canned milk I got here.”

“That will be fine,” said the boy.

She heated some lima beans and ham she had in the icebox, made the cocoa, and set the table. The woman did not ask the boy anything about where he lived, or his folks, or anything else that would embarrass him. Instead, as they ate, she told him about her job in a hotel beauty shop that stayed open late, what the work was like, and how all kinds of women came in and out, blondes, redheads, and Spanish. Then she cut him a half of her ten-cent cake.

“Eat some more, son,” she said.

When they were finished eating, she got up and said, “Now here, take this ten dollars and buy yourself some blue suede shoes. And next time, do not make the mistake of latching onto my pocketbook nor anybody else's—because shoes got by devilish ways will burn your feet. I got to get my rest now. But from here on in, son, I hope you will behave yourself.”

She led him down the hall to the front door and opened it. “Good night! Behave yourself, boy!” she said, looking out into the street as he went down the steps.

HE DID NOT TRUST THE WOMAN NOT TO TRUST HIM. AND HE DID NOT WANT TO BE MISTRUSTED NOW.

In Other Words
to be mistrusted her to stop trusting him latching onto grabbing, taking devilish ways had behavior, wrong actions behave yourself do the right thing, follow the rules

How Do You Know What Action Verb to Use?
Match it to the Subject.

- Action verbs tell when a subject does something. He sells. He sells, or get. If the sentence is about one other person, place, or thing, add s to the action verb.
  1. She sells the paper.
  2. She sells the paper, too.
  3. He sells the paper.
  4. He sells the paper, too.
  5. We sell the paper.
  6. We sell the paper, too.
  7. They sell the paper.
  8. They sell the paper, too.

- If there is more than one action verb in a sentence, all verbs must agree with the subject. The mother bought a newspaper, taking the money, and getting into a car.

Try It
A. Write the character from “Thank You, M’am” that fit the sentences. Use action verbs. Possible responses:

  1. Mrs. Jones
  2. Mrs. Jones
  3. Mrs. Jones
  4. Mrs. Jones

B. Write three sentences to tell more about what Mrs. Jones said in the story. Sentences will vary.

Grammar Transparency 8
The boy wanted to say something other than, “Thank you, m’am,” to Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones, but although his lips moved, he couldn’t even say that as he turned at the foot of the **barren stoop** and looked up at the large woman in the door. Then she shut the door.

---

**Analyze**  
**Thank You, M’am**

1. **Explain**  
Why does Mrs. Jones want Roger to learn the lessons she is teaching him? What might be the **consequences** of ignoring these lessons?  

2. **Vocabulary**  
How does Mrs. Jones show that she has **empathy** for Roger?  

3. **Analyze Literature: Characterization**  
Collect examples of characterization in a chart. Tell a partner what each character is like.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Clue</th>
<th>Mrs. Jones</th>
<th>Roger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>physical traits</td>
<td>large woman</td>
<td>frail, willow-wild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thoughts</td>
<td>wants to run</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>actions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reactions of others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Reading Strategy: Clarify Ideas**  
As you read, the author may provide information that clarifies your ideas. Talk with a partner about a time when your ideas about the events or characters changed as you read on.

**Return to the Text**  
Reread and Write  
What do you think influenced Roger’s choices? Reread to form an opinion and gather at least two pieces of evidence from the text. Then write your opinion.

---

**Key Vocabulary**

- **empathy** n., understanding someone else’s problems, feelings, or behavior

---

**In Other Words**

- **barren stoop** empty staircase that led to her door