SMART™ Lesson

Character Development in Fiction

Introduction

In every story, there are characters who make the story interesting. It is important to understand the characters and their development in a story to fully appreciate the plot and the message that the author is trying to convey.

Defining Character Development

Character development is the process of creating and growing a character over the course of a story. This includes the way that a character changes, develops, and reacts to events as they happen throughout the story. It is important to identify the different stages of a character's development and understand how their actions impact the story.

The Different Types of Characters

There are different types of characters that you will encounter in a story:

- Protagonist: This is the main character in the story. The story usually revolves around them.
- Antagonist: This is the character that opposes the protagonist in the story.
- Secondary Characters: These are characters that support the main characters in the story. Although they are not as important as the protagonist and antagonist, they are still essential to move the story forward.

The Different Stages of Character Development

A character goes through different stages of development in a story:

1. Introduction: This is the stage where the character is introduced to the reader. The author usually provides some background information and gives the reader an idea of what the character is like.
2. Rising Action: This is the stage where the character is faced with challenges or conflicts. The way that the character reacts to these challenges is key in understanding their development.
3. Climax: This is the stage where the conflict or challenge reaches its peak. The character's actions in this stage will determine the final outcome of the story.
4. Falling Action: This is the stage where the character resolves the conflicts or challenges that were presented in the climax of the story.

5. Resolution: This is the stage where the story comes to an end. The author usually ties up any loose ends and provides a conclusion to the story.

Worksheet Questions

1. What is character development?
2. Why is it important to understand character development in a story?
3. List the three types of characters that you can find in a story.
4. What is the protagonist in a story?
5. What is the antagonist in a story?
6. What is the role of the secondary characters in a story?
7. List the five different stages of character development.
8. Why is the climax an important stage in character development?
9. What happens in the falling action stage of character development?
10. What happens in the resolution stage of character development?