

What is characterisation?

Characterisation is the way that a writer chooses to build or put together their character.

To understand characterisation, you have to look at all the different things that make that fictional person who they are.



What makes up a character?

Fictional characters are built from four main things...

- **Speech:** what the writer makes them say
- **Actions:** what the writer makes them do
- **Appearance:** what the writer makes them 'look like'. This could be their physical features as well as their clothes and props.
- **Others:** their links and relationships with other characters in the text (friends, enemies, family members etc).

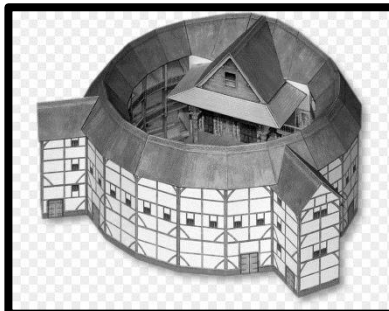
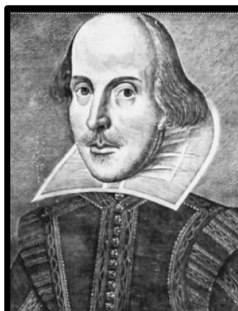
How do I explain characterisation?

Do the following for each part of their characterisation:

1. Find a relevant **quote** from the text.
2. **Infer** from it: what does it tell you about them and why?
3. Think about how this inference **links up** with inferences from other parts of their character.

Life in Shakespeare's time...

- Shakespeare (1564 – 1616) lived under the reign of two important rulers: Queen Elizabeth I (*Tudor*) and King James I (*Stuart*).
- A strong navy meant that England became a strong world power: people were proud of their identity!
- London became a cultural centre, and its population expanded by 400% in Shakespeare's lifetime; this included Shakespeare himself who moved from Stratford-Upon-Avon.
- Entertainments such as the theatre, bear-baiting and cockfighting were very popular but had to take place outside of the city walls.
- Religion was very important; people strongly believed in God.
- Science was in its early stages; people believed in magic and witchcraft.



Shakespeare's Globe

- A round, roofless theatre on the banks of the River Thames, just outside London's walls.
- Stage surrounded by the pit (standing room) and galleries (seats at extra cost)
- No scenery or lighting: musicians seated above.

Language Focus: Knowing Parts of Speech

There are lots of different 'types' of words. Each one has a different job to do in a sentence.

Essential parts of speech...

Noun: An object word: a person, place, or thing.
(eg: dog, caravan, London, potion)

Verb: A doing word: an action or process.
(eg: run, jump, think, love, hate)

Parts of speech that create detail...

Adjective: a word that describes a noun (eg: blue)

Adverb: a word that describes a verb (eg: quickly)

Smaller parts of speech...

Pronoun: a word that takes the place of a noun
(eg: I, he, she, it, they, mine, his, hers)

Article: a word that shows singular quantity
(eg: a, an or the)

Preposition: a word that shows something's position.
(eg: in, on, under, behind, in front of)

Previous Knowledge Alert!

Key Stage 2 work:

- Which parts of speech did you already know? Which are new?

Previous Y7 work:

- How does *punctuation* help build characterisation?
- Are *inferences* important in understanding characters and the play's action?
- Does Shakespeare use any *poetic forms or imagery* in his work?