**English 6 – Ms. Pritchett**

**Lost in Lexicon – Chapters 1-6**

**Teaching Characterization**

**Interviewing Daphne and Ivan**

Now that Aunt Adelaide’s cupola has become a copula – or a kind of link – between the “real world” and the world of Lexicon, Daphne and Ivan are off on their adventure. What would you like to know about these two protagonists?

For this next activity, you and a partner will interview either Daphne or Ivan as they are beginning quest. One of you will play the interviewer, and the other will be in the “hot seat,” playing the role of Daphne or Ivan. If you are playing Daphne or Ivan, your job is to answer the questions just as you think Daphne or Ivan would if they could come to our class. Both the interviewer and the character should dress the part, so you’ll have to help each other brainstorm ideas for how you should act, talk, and dress.

Fortunately, the text has given you a lot of clues as to what makes both Daphne and Ivan tick. For instance, we already know that Daphne would rather be “winning free tickets to the teen fashion finals in Omaha” (4) than hanging out at her Great Aunt Adelaide’s house where there are no computers allowed. On the other hand, she also “rescued a couple of books, and hugged them to her chest” (5) when Aunt Adelaide started to put them away. What do each of these details tell you about what kind of person Daphne is?

**CHARACTERIZATION** is what we call the methods by which an author brings his characters to life. Sometimes an author uses a **direct method to simply tell us what a character is like**. More often, he will use a variety of techniques to indirectly hint at a character’s personality.

**Indirect methods of characterization might include:**

* Physical description
* Dialogue (both what the character says and what others say about the character)
* Thoughts (both what the character thinks and what other characters think of him/her)
* Actions
* Attitude (how the character is perceived by others)

**Characterization of Daphne and Ivan**

With your partner, use the following chart of characterization methods and try to find an example of each one for Ivan or Daphne, whichever character you will interview. (I’ve given you an example using Aunt Adelaide.)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Characterization method** | **Quote from the novel and page #** | **What the detail shows us about the character** |
| Physical appearance and what others think of character | *She looks like a heron planning to spear a fish, thought Ivan. (4)* | Comparing Aunt Adelaide to a heron laying in wait for its prey makes her seem like she’s leading Ivan and Daphne into some kind of trap. On the other hand, a heron is also a beautiful and solitary type of bird, which makes me think that Aunt Adelaide may just be an unusual, but admirable, person. |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Now that you’ve got some data from Chapters 1-6, you can begin to **write your list of questions**. Think about asking a range of questions. Here are some ideas:

* How did you feel about this particular (event, challenge, person, etc)….?
* Why did you decide to do \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ instead of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?
* Of all the people you’ve met in Lexicon so far, who have you liked the most/least? Why?
* What are your favorite activities and/or main interests?
* When \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ happened, what were you thinking/feeling? Explain.
* What motivated you to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

These are just some ideas. For your questions, try to refer to specific events, places, people, and decisions in the novel. That way, when you and your partner are writing responses, you’ll have plenty of clues to justify your answer. Also, avoid “thin” questions – ones that have a clear yes or no answer. Stick to “thick” questions that require justification, explanation, and exploration. Remember, your interview should get us into the mind of your main character *and* be interesting to watch.

Now, that you’ve got some questions, start to write your answers. Each **answer should contain at least one reference to the text**. More are always welcome and will help to create a more believable portrait of your character. **Write out at least five question cards and five response cards**. (See example on the next page.)

Once you have written your five questions and responses, you and your partner are ready to **decide on costumes and props and to rehearse**. Your presentation should be anywhere from 5-7 minutes long, so make sure that your answers are long enough to fill the allotted time. Good luck and have fun!

**Example Card:** Let's say you were interviewing Aunt Adelaide:

**Question 1 for Aunt Adelaide**

**Interviewer:** Good morning, Aunt Adelaide. It’s lovely to have you here with us in Ms. Pritchett’s English class today.

**Aunt Adelaide:** Thank you very much, dear, and it’s a pleasure to be here at your school. Still, I must say that I don’t recall all these computers, Smart Boards, and projectors in the classroom when I went to school. We did just fine with books.

**Interviewer:** Okay, well then, shall we get started? My first question has to do with your great niece and great nephew, Daphne and Ivan. When they got bored at your house, why did you send them out to find the cupola? Why did you make up a treasure hunt instead of just telling them to go through it in the first place?

**Aunt Adelaide:** Well, my dear, I can’t fully explain that one right now. After all, if I told you everything, then you wouldn’t have any reason to keep reading about Daphne and Ivan’s quest. But, I will tell you that I worry about kids these days. They seem to lack the treasures of imagination. You see, when they were little that had “to be led to treasures,” but now Daphne and Ivan should be “old enough to find [treasures] on [their] own” (4). The trouble is that they aren’t used to having to make fun. Everything has “been all arrange for [them] already, audience-tested and prescreened” (5). I wanted to encourage Daphne and Ivan to go on a real adventure, but I knew they would have difficulty getting started on their own. It’s not their fault; it’s just that you kids these days seem to wait for entertainment to come to you.