

Q: How can I avoid story-telling?

- ◆ Focus on the key aspects of the theme or character that are critical to the topic. Be selective. It might be typical character traits that are important to the author's narrative agenda.
- ◆ Use your narrative devices to help you analyse key characteristics and defining moments in the story. For example, evaluate recurring symbols. How do they reflect the author's views and values?
- ◆ Hone in on defining moments of the text; what dilemmas do the protagonists face. What choices do they make at key moments of the narrative? What is the narrative climax?
- ◆ Always connect the evidence or example with the author's views and values. (Refer to your "checklist of ideas". Keep updating your checklist.)

Comparative depictions: "before" and "after"

How does the character develop and change?

Compare the similarities and differences between characters and between a "before" and an "after" self.

- ◆ **Examine character transformations: a "before" and an "after" self**
 - » This juxtaposition is critical to the author's views and development of key ideas. What point are they making? What is the resolution?
 - » **For example**, Macbeth begins as an honourable and loyal warrior who courageously defends the king. He betrays the king and embarks on a killing spree.
 - » (See *A Christmas Carol* (Model Story Excerpts): how does Scrooge change? Analyse the character before and after his journey with the Three Christmas Spirits.)
 - » Jem Finch has a different attitude after his personal encounter with Boo Radley.
 - » See the "Language of Comparison", p. 37.

Example 1: *A Christmas Carol* Read Story 2.

- » Compare Fred's and Scrooge's attitude to Christmas. How does it reflect their character? How does it reflect Dickens' views and values?
- » Compare Scrooge's "before" and "after" selves. How does this change and difference reflect Dickens' views?

Example 2: *Chinese Dancing: Joo Inn Chew* (Story 6)

When Joo-Inn Chew joins the Bendigo Chinese Association, she embraces, rather than, avoids (eschews) her ethnic differences. This new groups helps her to re-imagine her differences in a positive and helpful way that leads to a sense of emotional fulfilment.

- » In your paragraph include a comparison between the positive and the negative real-life examples. Hone in on key actions, such as the audience's affirmation; their applauds.
- ◆ Use this juxtaposition to analyse the author's views and values.

“Before” and “After”

To Kill a Mockingbird – Jem changes his attitude towards “Boo Radley”. Do you agree?

Claire’s first draft - story-telling style

In many ways, Jem and Scout copy the prejudice in the town towards Boo Radley. They play a lot of games to try to encourage Boo to come out of his house. One of the games supposes that Boo is a ghost. When the children touch the window, Scouts sees a shadow and Jem puts his arms over his head and he becomes rigid. In the other game, Jem loses his pants when he races away one night from Boo’s place. However, when he goes back, his pants are neatly folded and sewed up as if someone expects that Jem will come back to get them. Jem is puzzled by this incident because he is pretty sure that it is Boo Radley. “Like somebody was reading my mind...like somebody could tell what I was going to do.”

Claire’s second draft: a “before” and an “after” focus

Eventually, Jem treats Arthur (Boo) Radley with greater respect and sensitivity, aware that he was wrong to copy the bigotted attitudes of the townsfolk. Lee sets up a comparison between the naive boy, who played “asinine” games, and the mature boy who gains personal knowledge of Boo. When Jem finds the pants that have been neatly folded and mended, he gains a personal insight into Boo’s sensitive nature. Likewise, when he finds the carvings that have been done as a gift to both Jem and Scout. “The boy had on shorts and a shock of soapy hair fell to his eyebrows,” just like Jem. “The girl doll wore bangs,” just like Scout. These acts of kindness contrast to the baseless rumours relating to the “malevolent phantom” who is responsible for the town’s misfortune. Jem gains an insight into the nature of prejudice and bigotry. He realises that Boo had been the target of intolerance which is then reflected in Arthur Radley’s desire to hide Boo. Through Jem’s changing attitude, Lee shows that these actions are human-made and can inflict considerable harm upon people.

See The Language of Analysis

- ◆ *the language of comparisons: a range of comparative devices help to emphasise the author’s views, values and themes, pp. 39 - 42; 47-49*
- ◆ *reference to foreshadowing devices, p. 43*
- ◆ *the language of stereotypes, pp. 14-16 (bigotry, prejudice, intolerance)*

Claire’s topic sentence tends to describe the children, rather than analyse their change in attitude.

Claire tends to “story-tell”.

You need to improve your topic sentence and use some comparative techniques to help you focus on Harper Lee’s views and message.

- *What is similar?*
- *What is different?*

Topic Sentence: Jem’s changing attitude

Evidence and examples to show the difference in attitudes.

Work systematically through the comparison:

- *signpost the comparison and the author’s intention*
- *provide quotes from the example(s) and explain their significance*
- *compare the difference in Jem’s attitude before “then” and “now”*
- *Round up with a link back to the topic sentence and to Lee’s main theme and message.*

