

The Anchor Papers From Another Perspective

Some Elements of Quality Fiction	Anchor 6/4	Anchor 5/4	Anchor 4/3	Anchor 3/3	Anchor 2/2	Anchor 1/1
Sense of Place	<p>The attic in Maria and Joe’s home is central to the plot. The response demonstrates the ability to ground the action and dialogue in the setting. The walls are described as old, damp, cob-web walls. An old rusted chest is found behind a stack of dusty boxes. After moving a large purse, Maria trips over a lamp and falls to the floor.</p>	<p>A sense of place begins in the attic of Maria and Joe’s home with observations by the narrator that “The attic was a mess. There were cobwebs and old boxes and chests that used to be a beautiful mahogany and gold.” Maria’s comment- “It is pretty <i>scarey</i> up here, Joe” adds to the feel of the attic. As the plot develops, the setting moves briefly to Joe’s bedroom, then back to the attic, and finally outside the home of Maria and Joe.</p>	<p>It is a door in the attic that provides the entry into Maria and Joe’s adventures. Minimal descriptions of the attic, some description of “a island with <i>sanday</i> beaches, <i>pamtrees</i>, and blue water as far as they could see”, and some description of “the woods all of their clothes were dry and it looked like they were in Alaska!” -leave much room for the reader to fill-in the gaps about the places this story evolves around.</p>	<p>The story begins in Maria and Joe’s attic but quickly moves to two locations (Military Intelligence 6 and Something Air Service) where no description is provided.</p>	<p>The response jumps right in with the finding of the <i>leppercon</i> with no description to support a sense of place thus leaving the reader wondering if Maria and Joe are still in the attic</p>	<p>The response indicates the setting is the attic where a box of CDs was found along with a CD player. More boxes of CDs are found in the attic when Maria and Joe return each Saturday.</p>

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Character Development	<p>Characters have clear motivations and personalities which determine their actions with consistency. Joe lacks patience and is easily exasperated while Maria is more deliberate and able to concentrate. It is Maria's deliberateness and concentration that bring the problem to a resolution.</p>	<p>Maria's words and actions show a character changing some over the course of the story. At the beginning of the story, she says the attic is pretty scary and shows her fright over the dummy "Ahhh! It talked to me! Get it away. Get it away!" Later in the story, she decides to "go and follow it" back up to the attic and "down the stairs and watched it from the window."</p> <p>It is Joe's curiosity that led to the discovery of the dummy and his comfort around the dummy – all of which help move the plot along.</p>	<p>Through the characters' words and actions we learn that Joe plays X-Box and is more adventurous than Maria and that Maria voluntarily cleans her room and is hesitant about making decisions. It is Joe's adventurous nature that creates the plot as it is he who initiates each decision in the story.</p>	<p>The reader learns little about the characters, especially Maria. "Maria didn't dare take a sip" of the liquid in a bottle that Joe sipped. The reader is told by the narrator that Joe became a spy and did very well as a spy.</p>	<p>The narrator tells the reader that Maria and Joe agreed to "help the <i>lepercon</i> find his gold if he gave them 10 pieces of gold. The narrator also provides the reader with a description of the leprechaun. It is the dialect used by the leprechaun in dialogue that supports the description of him.</p>	<p>From the narrator tells the reader about Maria and Joe's actions, the reader learns they like to "lisened to them" [the CDs] and "danced for hours." The narrator also tells the reader that Maria and Joe "disided to put there <i>CD's</i> in them, so different people could <i>lisen</i> to them."</p>

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Problem / Resolution	Excited to discover what is in the old trunk, Maria and Joe are disappointed when they discover it is locked. Initially, they are unable to find the key but Maria discovers the key and a message cautioning its use after falling in the attic.	The problem surfaces when “the dummy mysteriously got up and went back up to the attic... Suddenly it began thrashing about and throwing things here and there... then started talking...’Where is it. Where is it? No, wait, it must not be here! To the next house!’” With the dummy getting into a spaceship the reader is left to wonder “what the dummy was looking for...”	There is little lapse of time between when Joe mentions their Mom and then Maria reminds Joe “Oh no, we have been gone almost all day she must be worried sick” and the resolution “So they raced through the door and took one last look at the island and then climbed through the door.!” The result is that three-quarters of the story rambles-on- a -bit before a problem is identified.	The problem surfaces when Joe disappears after drinking the liquid in the bottle. Once Joe disappears, the narrator tells the reader what happens to Joe but does not mention if Maria knows what happened to Joe or what happened to Maria.	It is the leprechaun who announces the problem at the beginning of the story by saying “please don’t hurt me I was looking for me gold. I had it but then this little girl <i>snached</i> it right out of me little hands.” Limited details in the story rush the reader through to the resolution when the gold is found “under a rainbow in a bucket. “	It is difficult to identify a problem and therefore subsequently a resolution in the story.

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Story Mountain	<p>Maria’s strong desire to find the key and open the trunk builds into the rising action, especially when Maria returns to the attic alone to search for the key and discovers it after tripping over a lamp.</p>	<p>The rising action is built through the dialogue and actions of Joe, Maria, and the dummy. As the reader approaches the climax in the story, the dummy’s mysterious actions add greatly to the suspense.</p>	<p>The focus is clear and the chronological organization of the characters’ activities is easy to follow with dialogue interspersed to help move the plot along and reveal character traits. The response misses the opportunity to engage the reader sooner in the story with the identification of a problem.</p>	<p>The rising action builds quickly with Joe’s disappearance after drinking the liquid in the bottle. The action continues with Joe’s success in spy training.</p>	<p>The rising action races quickly to a solution with limited details to support the pace.</p>	<p>There is a slight rise in action as each Saturday new boxes of CDs are found in the attic in fact “twice as <i>more</i> boxes <i>evey</i> time.”</p>

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Effective Ending	The response demonstrates an attempt at an ending that brings the story's meaning home with the final sentence "After all, who knows what might be in your attic.?"	The response demonstrates an attempt to have a powerful ending. The lingering questions about "what the dummy was looking for" and "what happened to Maria that night" probably contribute to a sense of little resolution at the end of the story.	The story ends leaving the reader wondering how the attic was cleaned while Maria and Joe were away on their adventures and misses the opportunity to tie-up loose ends in the story, resolve the unresolved difficulties, or bring home the stories' meaning.	The response is a skeletal narrative so focused on the narrow actions of a hero that it abandons the original story and leaves the reader guessing as to the outcome.	The unresolved difficulty is resolved in the story but with so little details it weakens the effect of the ending.	The story ends weakly with a statement "But every time they found twice as more boxes every time."

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Power of Language	Rich details create vivid images for the reader: “rope snapping with the age” “gleaming broaches”	Descriptions help create sensory images for the reader: “ a sharp creaking noise” complements Maria’s comment “It is pretty scary up here, Joe”. Effective use of language and an emerging personal style are most noticeable with the use of colorful verbs: “stumbled”, “waltzed right up the steps”, “thrashing about”.	There is a good sense of transitions from one activity to another in the story and some instances of using strong verbs “amazed” “raced”.	The pace and conversational tone of the response- “..knowing Joe would goof-off” “...Joe found something somewhere behind a stack of dusty boxes” “Of course. He didn’t learn how to use a weapon.”- engage the reader with Joe’s adventures.	There is a hint of effective dialogue with the use of dialect “looking for me gold... right out of me little hands”.	Shifts in focus, from dancing to finding more boxes to “different people” to boxes multiplying, create a disorganized piece of writing which the reader cannot easily follow.

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Degree of Control of Standard English Conventions	In this on-demand response, there are a variety of sentence structures (simple, compound, and complex) used in the writing and there are few errors in correct usage and grammar in the complex text.	In this on-demand response, there are a variety of sentence structures (simple, compound, and complex) used in the writing which enhance the fluency of the writing. The response shows control of grammar and mechanics. Dialogue is correctly punctuated, paragraphs are indented, and even ellipses are used correctly.	The response demonstrates a particularly good use of clauses and the reader uses a variety of sentence structures. Spelling errors stand out but are overshadowed by the length and complexity attempt in the text.	There are few errors in usage and spelling and just a few errant commas sprinkled here and there.	Sentence structure is simplistic overall, and uncontrolled attempts at complexity end in run-on sentences. Problems with mechanics, including commas, periods, apostrophes, and proper dialogue punctuation detract from the flow of the text.	There is little control of even the simplest sentences. Spelling errors such as <i>Saterdag</i> , <i>lisined</i> , and <i>disided</i> are particularly noticeable, while punctuation, capitalization, and grammatical errors appear throughout the piece.