

Direct & Indirect Characterization

Direct Characterization: the author reveals details about the characters through telling

Indirect Characterization: the author reveals details about the characters through showing

Read the short story "Slower than the Rest" by Cynthia Rylant.

Identify each sentence from the story as either direct or indirect characterization.

1. _____ Leo was the first one to spot the turtle...
2. _____ Leo's father grumbled something about turtle soup...
3. _____ Leo's mother was sympathetic toward turtles...
4. _____ Both his little sisters squealed when the animal stuck its ugly head out to look at them and they thought its claws horrifying...
5. _____ ...Leo was grateful for a pet of his own.
6. _____ He settled Charlie in a cardboard box, threw in some lettuce and radishes...
7. _____ He hadn't many friends because he was slower than the rest.
8. _____ ...He had been separated from the rest of his classmates and placed in a room with other children who were as slow as he.
9. _____ Charlie was the friendliest turtle anyone had ever seen.
10. _____ The turtle's head was always stretched out, moving left to right, trying to see what was in the world.
11. _____ ...The lines around Charlie's forehead and eyes and the clamp of his mouth made Leo think Charlie was wise the way old people are wise.
12. _____ Leo was bored.
13. _____ He quietly walked over to the windowsill and picked up the box. He set it on the teacher's desk.
14. _____ "But other animals"-he lifted the cover off the box-"have no hope. They are too slow. They will die." He lifted Charlie out of the box. "It isn't fair," he said, as the class gasped and giggled at what they saw. "It isn't fair for the slow ones."
15. _____ Leo's teacher had tears in her eyes.
16. _____ Leo's thoughts drifted off. He thought about being home, lying in this bed and drawing pictures, while Charlie hobbled all about the room.
17. _____ As he shook the principal's hand and blushed and said his thank-yous, he thought his heart would explode with happiness.