ENGLISH 10 - TERM 1 - UNIT 2

Conflict, Character, and Characterization

Student Reading Material and Review Guide

This guide explains the first craft topics in Unit 2: conflict, types of conflict, character, and characterization. It helps students connect what they saw in their selected text to the literary terms used in class.

Target competencies

ENG-G10-T1-U002-C001 to C007

Conflict, character vs. character, character vs. society, character vs. nature/environment, character vs. self, character, and characterization.

Why These Concepts Matter

From reading a text to preparing an adaptation

Literary craft means the choices a writer makes to shape a story. In this part of Unit 2, the focus is on two major craft areas: **conflict** and **characterization**. These two ideas work together. Conflict gives the story pressure. Characters show how people respond to that pressure.

Connection to your chosen text
Your group has selected a story for adaptation. This reviewer helps you name what you already noticed: the problem in the story, the people involved, the traits they show, and the ways those details can become performance choices.

Unit competency	Plain-language focus
ENG-G10-T1-U002-C001 - conflict	Know what conflict is and explain how it moves the story forward.
ENG-G10-T1-U002-C002 - character vs. character	Identify struggles between two characters or groups of characters.
ENG-G10-T1-U002-C003 - character vs. society	Identify struggles against rules, expectations, traditions, or community pressure.
ENG-G10-T1-U002-C004 - character vs. nature/environment	Identify struggles against weather, place, danger, illness, or physical conditions.
ENG-G10-T1-U002-C005 - character vs. self	Identify struggles inside a character, such as fear, guilt, doubt, desire, or choice.
ENG-G10-T1-U002-C006 - character	Recognize who is in the story and what role each one plays.
ENG-G10-T1-U002-C007 - characterization	Explain how the writer reveals what a character is like through evidence.

Conflict

The struggle or pressure that moves a story forward

Conflict is the struggle between opposing forces in a story. A force can be a person, a rule, a dangerous place, a problem in society, or even a feeling inside the character. Conflict matters because it gives the story direction. It tells the reader what is at stake.

A story may contain many problems, but the **central conflict** is the main struggle that affects the whole story. For adaptation, the central conflict is the problem that the audience must clearly see or feel.

Small conflict
A short or local problem. It may affect one scene, one conversation, or one decision.

Central conflict
The main struggle of the story. It shapes the character's actions and the important scenes.

Evidence-first rule
Do not name the conflict from the title alone. Look for actions, words, reactions, blocked goals, and important decisions. A strong conflict claim points to a specific detail from the text.

How to recognize conflict:

Question	What to look for in the text
What does the character want?	A goal, need, hope, duty, object, relationship, or answer.
What blocks the character?	A person, rule, lack of money, danger, fear, mistake, or difficult choice.
What pressure increases?	A deadline, argument, secret, threat, loss, consequence, or emotional tension.
What changes because of the conflict?	A decision, relationship, mood, plan, belief, or ending.

Types of Conflict

Four common categories used in Grade 10 craft analysis

Character vs. Character
A character struggles against another character. The struggle may be physical, verbal, emotional, or moral.

Example: A student wants to tell the truth, but a classmate threatens to expose a secret.

Character vs. Society
A character struggles against rules, traditions, social expectations, laws, or community judgment.

Example: A girl wants to study, but her community expects her to stop school and work.

Character vs. Nature / Environment
A character struggles against weather, place, illness, distance, hunger, darkness, or physical danger.

Example: A family must cross a flooded road to reach safety.

Character vs. Self
A character struggles with fear, guilt, doubt, desire, pride, shame, or a difficult choice.

Example: A police officer must choose between protecting a friend and doing his duty.

A story can have more than one conflict
The best answer is not always the first conflict students notice. Ask which conflict controls the important choices and the ending. That conflict is usually the central conflict.

Major Conflict and Adaptation

Turning the story problem into a performable scene

When a story is adapted into drama, theater, or short film, conflict must become visible. The audience cannot simply be told that a character has a problem. The adaptation should show pressure through action, dialogue, silence, movement, props, sound, or camera choices.

Story evidence	Conflict meaning	Adaptation choice
A character hides a letter.	The character may be afraid of the truth being known.	Show the character looking around, folding the letter quickly, or lowering the voice.
Two characters argue about money.	There is pressure caused by poverty or limited resources.	Use tense pauses, close distance, or a visible empty wallet or bill.
A character stands outside during heavy rain.	The environment creates danger or difficulty.	Use sound effects, wet props, dim lighting, or hurried movement.
A character says, 'I cannot do this.'	The character may be facing an inner conflict.	Use a soft voice, slow movement, or a long pause before the line.

Reference sentence
The central conflict is between _____ and _____. I know this because the text shows _____. This matters because the conflict pushes the character to _____.

Character

Who is in the story and what role each person plays

A **character** is a person, animal, or figure in a story. A character may speak, act, decide, react, hide something, change, or affect what happens. In adaptation, characters become roles that actors, voice performers, or narrators must portray.

Character term	Meaning	Simple example
Protagonist	The main character or central figure whose goal or problem is followed closely.	The person trying to solve the main problem.
Antagonist	The person, group, force, or pressure that blocks the protagonist.	A rival, a rule, a storm, or a fear.
Supporting character	A character who helps reveal the main character, conflict, or theme.	A friend, parent, guard, witness, neighbor, or messenger.
Narrator	The voice that tells the story. The narrator may or may not be a character.	A first-person 'I' narrator or an outside narrator.
Foil	A character who contrasts with another character so their traits become clearer.	A careful friend beside a reckless friend.

Character is not only a name
A complete character reading asks what the character wants, what blocks the character, how the character reacts, and what the reaction shows.

Characterization

How the writer reveals what a character is like

Characterization is the way a writer reveals a character. The writer may tell the reader directly, or the writer may show clues through speech, action, thoughts, appearance, and reactions.

Direct Characterization
The text directly tells what a character is like.

Example: 'Mina was nervous.'

The trait is named clearly.

Indirect Characterization
The text shows clues, and the reader infers the trait.

Example: 'Mina folded and unfolded the paper while waiting.'

The action suggests nervousness.

Common clues for indirect characterization:

Clue	Question to ask	What it can reveal
Speech	What does the character say? How is it said?	Attitude, honesty, fear, pride, kindness, anger.
Thoughts	What does the character think, remember, or worry about?	Motivation, fear, guilt, hope, doubt.
Actions	What does the character do, avoid, choose, or repeat?	Traits, priorities, habits, courage, selfishness.
Appearance	What details are shown about clothing, posture, face, or condition?	Social position, mood, preparation, tiredness, confidence.
Effects on others	How do other characters react to this person?	Power, trust, fear, respect, conflict, influence.

Trait, feeling, and motivation are different
A **trait** is a more stable quality, such as brave or selfish. A **feeling** is an emotion at a moment, such as afraid or happy. A **motivation** is the reason for an action, such as love, duty, pride, or need.

Ways to Classify Characters

Useful labels for clearer reading and adaptation

Character labels help readers talk about how a character works in the story. These labels should not be used as guesses. They should be supported by evidence from the text.

Classification	Meaning	How to prove it
Major character	A character who has a large effect on the conflict, plot, or ending.	Show that the character appears often or makes important choices.
Minor character	A character with a smaller role, but still useful to the story.	Show how the character supports a scene, reveals information, or affects another character.
Dynamic character	A character who changes in an important way.	Compare the character's early behavior with later behavior.
Static character	A character who mostly stays the same.	Show that the character's main attitude or behavior does not change.
Round character	A character with several traits, mixed feelings, or complex motives.	Find more than one side of the character.
Flat character	A character shown with only one or two simple traits.	Show that the text gives limited detail or one clear purpose.

Adaptation note
Even a minor character can be useful in performance. A narrator, messenger, friend, parent, or witness can help the audience understand the conflict without adding long explanations.

From Evidence to Character Reading

A simple path from detail to interpretation

Step	What the reader does	Example
1. Notice evidence	Find a word, line, action, reaction, or description.	He keeps checking the door.
2. Name what it suggests	Infer a trait, feeling, or motivation.	This may show that he is anxious.
3. Explain why	Connect the clue to meaning.	He seems to expect someone or fear being seen.
4. Connect to conflict	Explain how the trait or motive affects the story problem.	His fear adds tension to the scene.
5. Plan performance	Decide how to show it in adaptation.	The actor can glance at the door before speaking.

Reference sentence
The character seems _____. I know this because the text shows _____. This matters because _____. In our adaptation, we can show this by _____.

Conflict and Character Work Together

The pressure of the story reveals who the characters are

Conflict and characterization should not be studied as separate ideas only. In many stories, conflict is the reason character becomes clear. When a character faces pressure, the reader sees what the character values, fears, wants, and chooses.

Conflict asks
What is the problem?
Who or what is pushing against the character?
What is at stake?

Characterization asks
What does the character say or do under pressure?
What trait or motive is revealed?
How should this be shown?

Example of a full explanation:

Text detail: 'Carlo kept touching the coins in his pocket.'

This detail may show a **character vs. society** conflict if Carlo's problem is connected to poverty or lack of money. It also reveals characterization because his repeated action suggests worry. In an adaptation, the actor can touch the pocket, avoid eye contact, or pause before answering to show anxiety without saying, 'I am worried.'

Careful interpretation:

Weak explanation	Stronger explanation
Carlo is poor.	Carlo may be worried about money because he keeps touching the coins in his pocket.
The girl is bad.	The girl's refusal to help may suggest selfishness, but more evidence is needed before judging her whole character.
The conflict is people fighting.	The conflict is between the character's need to tell the truth and the pressure from classmates to stay silent.

Reference Guide for Adaptation

How concepts become performance decisions

In this unit, students are not only reading for meaning. They are preparing a text for drama, theater, or short film. This means every important reading decision should help the group make a performance decision.

Literary concept	Reading question	Performance question
Central conflict	What is the main struggle?	What scene must clearly show this struggle?
Conflict type	What kind of force blocks the character?	Should the pressure be shown through another actor, a rule, a setting, or an inner moment?
Character	Who matters most in the story?	Who needs to be acted, narrated, voiced, or represented?
Trait	What quality does the character show?	How should the actor show this through voice, face, movement, or silence?
Motivation	Why does the character act this way?	What should the audience understand about the character's reason?
Direct characterization	What does the text tell us clearly?	What information may be spoken by the narrator or shown quickly?
Indirect characterization	What clues must the reader infer?	What action, prop, pause, or facial expression can show the clue?

Good adaptation choices are text-based
A group should be able to explain: 'We chose this action, line, prop, or staging choice because the text shows _____.' This keeps the adaptation connected to the original story.

Quick Term Bank

Short definitions for review

Term	Short definition
Conflict	The struggle or pressure that moves the story forward.
Central conflict	The main struggle that affects the whole story.
Character vs. character	A struggle between characters.
Character vs. society	A struggle against rules, expectations, laws, or social pressure.
Character vs. nature/environment	A struggle against weather, place, illness, danger, or physical conditions.
Character vs. self	A struggle inside the character's mind or heart.
Character	A person, animal, or figure in a story.
Characterization	The way the writer reveals what a character is like.
Direct characterization	The text directly tells a character trait.
Indirect characterization	The text shows clues so the reader can infer a trait.
Trait	A quality of a character.
Motivation	The reason behind a character's action.

Final Synthesis

The reading chain students should remember

Conflict and characterization are not just vocabulary words. They are tools for explaining how a story works. A careful reader moves from visible evidence to a clear idea, then from that idea to a performance decision.

Reader's move	Question	Result
1. See the detail	What word, line, action, or scene is visible?	The answer is grounded in the text.
2. Name the concept	Is this conflict, character, or characterization?	The reader uses the right literary term.
3. Explain the effect	What does this detail help us understand?	The answer becomes interpretation, not copying.
4. Connect to adaptation	How can this be shown in performance?	The group makes a text-based production choice.

Core reminder
A strong explanation does four things: it names the concept, gives evidence, explains the effect, and avoids saying more than the evidence can prove.

Useful reference patterns:

Conflict: The central conflict is between _____ and _____. The text shows this when _____. This conflict matters because _____.

Characterization: The character seems _____. I know this because _____. This reveals _____, and our adaptation can show it through _____.

Adaptation: We chose this line, action, prop, movement, or camera/stage choice because the text shows _____.

This reading material is aligned with English 10, Term 1, Unit 2: Literary Form and Craft, focusing on ENG-G10-T1-U002-C001 to ENG-G10-T1-U002-C007 from the teacher's Capacities unit notes. It supports the unit goal of using textual evidence to explain how craft choices affect meaning and reader response.