**“Harrison Bergeron”**

**by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.**

**Methods of Characterization**

There are basically two methods to describe a character:

**Direct characterization**: The author/narrator directly tells the reader information about the character. Often physical or historical attribute are conveyed in this manner.

**Indirect characterization:** Character is described indirectly through:

1. his or her actions
2. what he or she says
3. what he or she thinks, feels, remembers
4. what other characters say about him/her?

Indirect characterization is used more frequently as this method allows the character to reveal himself or herself to the reader. This method also allows the reader to infer the personality and attitudes of the character. The reader must make judgments based on evidence, not direct statements.

**Assignment**:

Choose 2 characters from the story and create a T-Chart of their Direct and Indirect Characteristics. Use quotes to prove your assessment of their character.

T- Chart: Character A: George

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Direct Characterization | Indirect Characterization |
| * Intelligent | * Thinks that all people should always be treated equally |
| * Handicapped | * Overly sensitive |
|  |  |

T-Chart: Character B: Harrison Bergeron

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Direct Characterization | Indirect Characterization |
| * Athletic (Can Break Out of Prison) | * Superior to everyone else |
| * Under-Handicapped | * Rules the whole stage not following the law of the government |
| * Extremely Dangerous |  |
| * Genius |  |
| * Very tall (About 7 feet) |  |

PLOT GRAPH

All stories have the same basic premise in terms of structure – a beginning, middle & end. How the author manipulates that structure is where the story gets genuinely interesting. **Assignment**: Use this graph to create a breakdown of the plot of Harrison Bergeron (\*it’s kind of tricky but do the best you can!)

3. Climax/Problem: Harrison escapes the jail cell and destroys the handicaps from all the ballerinas and musicians.

2. Rising Action: Harrison gets caught and

arrested by the government and gets taken

away by his parents.

4. Falling Action: Diana, the handicapper general shoots Harrison Bergeron to the ground and threatens all the musicians to get their handicaps back on in 10 seconds.

1. Introduction: It was 2081 and everyone was finally 5. Conclusion: The emperor gets killed and Hazel treated equally in every single manner. feels doozy and does not know why she is crying.