

Understanding Stargirl Structure – Conflict

In every story, there must be conflict. Without that tension between the character's desires, there is no reason for the story to move forward. Novels in particular usually have layers of conflict – different tensions on different levels that must all be resolved. The three types of conflict are Human vs. Human, in which the desires of different characters clash, Human vs. Nature, in which the protagonist's desires are blocked by his or her environment, or Human vs. Self, in which the struggle is an internal one between the competing desires of the protagonist.

Your job is to figure out how the structure of Stargirl works. First identify what the main conflict is – Human vs. Human, Human vs. Nature, or Human vs. Self. Be sure to explain your choice. Afterwards, determine how this conflict is developed in terms of Freytag's Pyramid by placing quotes and page numbers on the model below.

Central Conflict - _____

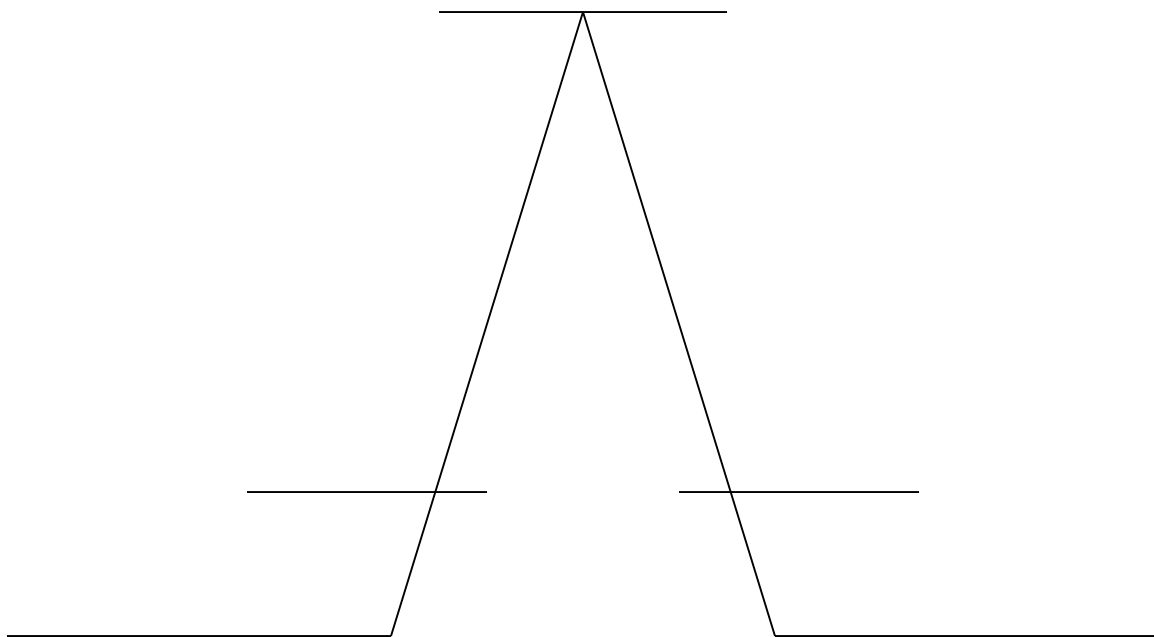
Explain Your Choice _____

Minor Conflict - _____

Explain Your Choice _____

Minor Conflict - _____

Explain Your Choice _____



Understanding *Stargirl*

Character – Indirect Revelation

There are two ways that authors reveal information about their characters. The first way is called direct revelation; it is called direct because the author reveals the information just by telling the reader. For instance, we know what Stargirl wears on the first day of school because the author tells us, “She wore an off-white dress so long it covered her shoes. It had ruffles around the neck and cuffs and looked like could have been her great-grandmother’s wedding gown.” On the other hand, an author may choose to reveal information by giving the audience clues and expecting them to draw conclusions. This is called indirect revelation, because the author only gives the information indirectly. For example, we are never specifically told why Stargirl chooses the names she does, whether she decides to be normal for Leo or for others, or even much about her childhood. Instead of telling us everything about her, Spinelli uses indirect revelation to create a sense of mystery and spontaneity around Stargirl.

Find five quotes that are examples of indirect revelation. Write the quotes with the page numbers on the left. On the right, identify what information the quote reveals about the character, without directly saying it.

Quotes	Thoughts
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)
4)	4)
5)	5)

Understanding Stargirl

Theme – Popularity

One of the important themes in the novel is popularity – how it is obtained, how it is maintained, and how long it lasts. In the beginning, it is clear that Hillari Kimble and Wayne Parr are the popular students at school, but a careful examination of the novel shows how shallow their popularity is. It is based on the other students’ fear of them and Hillari and Wayne’s attempt to live up to a generic standard of “cool” that their peers can easily recognize. As Stargirl’s popularity begins to increase, despite her lack of “cool” and her unconventional personality (or maybe because of them), Hillari’s hatred for her becomes more focused and intense. Ultimately, the students are forced to choose between two different reasons for popularity – either Hillari’s bullying and conformity or Stargirl’s kindness and individuality.

Find five quotes that discuss popularity, its causes, and its effects. Write the quotes with the page numbers on the left. On the right, explain what the quote reveals about popularity.

Quotes	Thoughts
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)
4)	4)
5)	5)

Understanding Stargirl Structure – Point of View

The point of view of a story is the perspective from which the story is told. The point of view makes a real difference in how a story is revealed to the reader for two reasons. First, the type and amount of information revealed to the reader depends on the point of view. In first person, the reader can only be told what one character knows, but in third person, the reader can be told what many characters know. The other reason point of view has such an effect on storytelling is because it is a filter for our understanding of the novel. We see the events through the eyes of the narrator, and that vantage point affects our perception of them. In Stargirl, the story is told in first person by Leo and limited to his perspective, but the main character is clearly Stargirl. This means that we see her the way he sees her.

Find five quotes that demonstrate the point of view. Look for quotes that indicate whose perspective is being used to see or hear the events of the story. Write the quotes with the page numbers on the left. On the right, explain how the quote proves that the novel is first person.

Quotes	Thoughts
1)	1)
2)	2)
3)	3)
4)	4)
5)	5)

