

## Comment

This paper was awarded a "5". Although it contains a thesis, the introduction is somewhat awkward. However, through well-integrated quotations and proficient explanations which convincingly answer the question, it is deserving of a "5".

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In the story "Rite of Passage," by Doug Beardsley, character development is an important attribute. The characters of Scratch, Mr. Ratchford, and the narrator are prominently seen. The reader feels acquainted with each, and thus character development is important to the overall effect of the story.

Scratch has a strong, tough personality which becomes evident in the story. At the beginning he is described as "a strong fierce-checking defenceman", who could "stop the swiftest skater cold in his tracks" (4). It is clear that the narrator admires his status. Later, Scratch is the one who checks his father, taking him out of the game. The other boys are impressed by his feat: "We all stood about, our mouths hanging open" (13). Scratch seems to be a well-admired hockey player. He is described as "what all good hockey players are to fourteen-year-olds" (4). Throughout the story the reader gains an understanding of Scratch's fearless personality.

Mr. Ratchford also has a dominant personality. Early in the story, the reader imagines him to be a gawky, foolish old man. His attire seems ridiculous to the boys: "grey flannels", "battered skates". (5) He is described as being built like a goal post: Yet later one discovers he is an amazing hockey player: "I'd never seen anyone skate as fast or handle the puck as well as Mr. Ratchford" (8). The boys are powerless to him, as he scores goal after goal. Even when checked, this man "seemed to glide into the snowbank" (12). Mr. Ratchford's character is quite prominent and developed.

The character of the narrator is also developed. He has respect and admiration for other players: "My brother was an excellent skater" (8). His determination is also an important quality. The narrator describes himself chopping up the ice, when he is faced with his brother. The narrator wants to score the goal; obvious by his strategizing. When he does score, he is full of pride, and feels "transformed, [his] blood altered" (16). He has "come of age on the ice" and the reader sees his happiness and pride. The narrator's character is essential in the story.

Beardsley has done an excellent job in conveying his characters. The reader sees the strong personality of Scratch; the "amazing" hockey player Mr. Ratchford; and the triumph felt by the narrator after scoring his goal.