Characterization Activity: *Pocahontas*

What is Characterization?

**Characterization is the way in which authors convey information about their characters. Characterization can be direct, as when an author tells readers what a character is like (e.g. "George was cunning and greedy.") or indirect, as when an author shows what a character is like by portraying his or her actions, speech, or thoughts (eg. "On the crowded subway, George slipped his hand into the man's coat pocket and withdrew the wallet, undetected.").**

What do author’s use characterization for?

**Characterization is a crucial part of making a story compelling. In order to interest and move readers, characters need to seem real. Authors achieve this by providing details that make characters individual and particular.**

What do reader’s need characterization?

**Good characterization gives readers a strong sense of characters' personalities and complexities; it makes characters vivid, alive and believable.**

5 Steps for Characterization:

* **Describe a character's appearance and manner**
* **Use a character's actions to reveal his or her personality**
* **Show others' reactions to the character or person you're portraying**
* **Portray a character's inner thoughts and motivations(what they think privately)**
* **Use dialogue to allow a character's words to reveal something important about his or her nature(what they say out loud)**

How can characterization lead to reader bias?

Watch the following scenes from the movie, then record examples of each using the characterization techniques above. Explain what that characteristic infers about the character.

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| *Scene: Sailing to the New World* |
| John Smith (Appearance) | John Smith (Personality) |
| Other English Settlers(Appearance)1.  | Other English Settlers(Personality) |
| *Scene: Steady as the Beating Drum* |
| Native Americans(Appearance) | Native Americans(Personality) |
| Pocahontas(Appearance) | Pocahontas (Personality) |
| *Scene: Colors of the Wind(John Smith meets Pocahontas)* |
| John Smith (Appearance) | John Smith(Personality) |
| Pocahontas(Appearance) | Pocahontas(Personality) |
| *Scene: Savages* |
| Settlers’ Appearance | Settlers’ Personality |
| Native American Appearance | Native American Personality |