

Writing a Character Analysis

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The Character of James in “The Scribe”

INTRODUCTION

Author and title

Character and setting

Summary statement

Thesis

BODY

Character trait #1

Evidence (actions and thoughts)

The main character in the short story “The Scribe,” written by Kristin Hunter, is a thirteen-year-old boy named James. This strong character tries to change a big problem in his neighborhood. The problem involves the Silver Dollar Check Cashing Service. He feels that it is unfair for the owners to take money from people who can’t fill out information on forms because they can’t read. He is determined to change this, but a couple of things get in his way. James helps many people because of his outstanding traits, such as being observant, creative, and caring.

James is a very observant young boy. When he goes to the Check Cashing Service, he begins to notice things that he knows he could do because he can read and write, but that others could not. James also observes that the customers of the Silver Dollar are not treated well. It seems to James that they

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are looked down on because of their disadvantage. So James goes home to explain everything to his mother. His mother tells him that at one time many people couldn't read or write, only the scribes. She explains that the scribes were a special class of people.

Character trait #2

Throughout the story, James is a creative young boy.

Evidence (actions)

After his mother tells him about the scribes, he decides to become one. He sets up a stand right outside the Check Cashing Service. People begin to line up, and he helps all the people at no charge. People are very happy that he is there doing this for them. Then a police officer comes and tells James to go because he is taking over the Cashing Service. I

Evidence (thoughts)

think James is also very creative when he considers applying for a license to become a scribe. I think most kids his age wouldn't even think about applying to be a scribe.

Character trait #3

Evidence (actions)

James is also very caring in this story. With the law getting in his way, he searches for a better way to help these people. Then his parents tell him that if people put their money in the bank, the bank would cash all of their checks for free, but

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Evidence (words and actions)

that many older people don't trust banks. But James is determined! He goes outside near the Check Cashing Service and starts to tell people, "I know where you can cash checks *free*." Everybody wonders where, so he takes some of them to the bank. Some of the people don't like the idea of the bank, but some do. He doesn't convince all of them, but he helps all of the people by guiding the way to the bank. That takes a lot of courage! I think the fact that James doesn't give up on the people is very caring. It is considerate, and that shows a lot about his overall character.

CONCLUSION

Restatement of main idea

All those traits—being observant, creative, and caring—describe James. After noticing the problem and helping the people by telling them about the bank, James thinks that maybe he should apply for a license to become a scribe. James helps many people throughout this story. If you ask me, I think James is already a scribe.