The Character Detective Academy

The Art of Really LOOKING at People

Detective: _____

Date: _____

🔍 **DETECTIVE TRAINING BEGINS!** Welcome to the Character Detective Academy! Your special mission: learn to REALLY LOOK at people in stories. Some people (like Elsie's parents) don't truly SEE the amazing person right in front of them. But YOU will be different! You'll learn to spot clues about who people REALLY are - not just what they look like, but their habits, their feelings, and what makes them special. Complete all 6 training levels to earn your Master Detective Badge!

ACT 1: LEARNING TO LOOK (18 minutes)

Training Level 1 - Reading the Case File

Detective Vocabulary - Learn These First:

brilliant - extremely clever and talented

admire - to respect and look up to someone

ignore - to pay no attention to something or someone

advanced - more developed than others of the same age

fluently - smoothly and easily, without difficulty

disciplined - showing control and good habits

Read this passage carefully TWICE! Use your detective eyes to spot clues about each character. The bold words are the ones you just learned!

Case File: The Pemberley Family

An original ClassAce detective story

Many grown-ups believe they know exactly what their children are like, even when the evidence says otherwise. Teachers see this often. A parent announces that a child is careless, or shy, or ordinary, and decides the matter is closed. It is one thing to **admire** a child. It is another thing to actually **ignore** who that child is.

In the town of Marshdale lived a family called Pemberley. Mr and Mrs Pemberley were busy people — busy with their shop, their phones, and their own plans. They had a son, Sam, and a daughter, Elsie. Sam liked football and was very good at it, so everyone noticed Sam. Elsie was quieter. She was quick, curious, and bright in a way that should have been obvious to anyone paying attention. Her mind moved fast. Her questions were thoughtful. Her language was unusually rich for her age.

Yet at home she was barely noticed. If Elsie spoke clearly, she was told to hurry up. If she asked a sensible question, she was teased for being a know-it-all. By one and a half, her speech was already **advanced**. By three, she had taught herself the names of every bird in the garden from a folded poster on the wall. By four she was reading **fluently**, sounding out the shop signs on the walk to school.

So she asked her father for a library card. He stared at her as if she had requested a golden bicycle. "What do you want to go looking at dusty books for?" he said. "We have a telly." In his view, pictures on a screen were enough for any child. In her view, they were not. She wanted stories, language, and ideas.

Most afternoons Elsie was left to her own devices. Her brother was at practice. Her father was in the shop. Her mother was at her club. So one Saturday she set off by herself for the little library on Wren Street. She met the librarian, Mrs Bell, and asked politely if she could sit and read. Mrs Bell was surprised to see such a young child arrive alone, but she welcomed her warmly.

At first Mrs Bell offered picture books. Elsie politely declined and chose for herself. Day after day she returned, reading through the children's section at remarkable speed. After a while she asked a bigger question: what should she read next? She had already finished everything on the lower shelves.

Mrs Bell watched this small reader with growing astonishment. She did not shout about Elsie's talent. She did not call the local paper. She simply guided her, one careful suggestion at a time. Soon Elsie was trying longer books. She read with complete focus, curled in the big chair by the window, the heavy book resting on her

knees. She turned each page slowly, as if opening a door into another room of a very large house.

When Elsie admitted there were parts she did not fully understand, Mrs Bell gave her advice she would never forget: keep reading anyway, and let the language flow around you. Good writing works on the mind before every detail is clear. Reading, for Elsie, became more than a hobby. It became transport. She could sit in a small room and still travel across oceans, cities, and centuries.

In time the library let her borrow books and take them home. She read for hours in her bedroom, a warm drink beside her. While the house around her stayed careless and noisy, her reading life grew calm, **disciplined**, and huge. Books gave her what home did not: attention, challenge, and possibility.

1. WARM-UP

How many people are in the Pemberley family?

- **A** 3 people
- **B** 2 people
- **C** 5 people
- **D** 4 people
- **E** 47 people (it's a VERY big family with pet elephants!)

2. EVIDENCE HUNT

Name all FOUR family members:

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....
4. .....

3. LOOKING CLOSELY

The passage describes Elsie in many ways. Find and write down THREE words or phrases that show she is special:

> **DETECTIVE TIP:** Look in paragraph 2! The text says "She was quick, curious, and..."

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....

4. INFERENCE

What does it tell us about Mr Pemberley when he says "We have a telly"?

- **A** He thinks TV is all children need and doesn't value books
- **B** He is saving money to buy books later
- **C** He loves reading and wants to share books with Elsie
- **D** He thinks books and TV are equally valuable
- **E** He's allergic to paper and breaks out in purple spots when near books

5. CHARACTER CLUES

Who is Mrs Bell and what does she do that shows she is kind?

.....

.....

Training Level 2 - Spotting the Difference

6. COMPARE & CONTRAST

Compare the adults in paragraph 1 with Mrs Bell. How do their approaches to understanding a child differ? Use evidence from the passage.

Adults	How they act	Evidence from the text
Adults who make assumptions (paragraph 1)		
Mrs Bell		

7. DETECTIVE SKILLS

Which detail BEST shows that Elsie is independent (can do things by herself)?

A She had a warm drink beside her

B She went to school every day

C She went to the library by herself.

D She read picture books

E She built her own rocket ship and flew to the moon for snacks

8. DEEPER LOOKING

Mrs Bell notices Elsie's ability and guides her quietly. What does this show about her character? Support your answer with evidence from the passage.

ACT 1 COMPLETE! You're learning to spot character clues! Take a 2-minute break, then continue training!

ACT 2: BUILDING CHARACTER PROFILES (24 minutes)

Training Level 3 - Creating Detailed Profiles

Now it's time to build complete character profiles! A good detective looks for FOUR types of clues:

- **APPEARANCE:** What they look like (though the text doesn't always tell us!)
- **ACTIONS:** What they DO
- **WORDS:** What they SAY
- **FEELINGS/PERSONALITY:** What they're like inside

🔍 CHARACTER FILE: ELSIE PEMBERLEY

9. APPEARANCE

The passage doesn't tell us what Elsie LOOKS like. But it tells us something about her size. What clue can you find?

> **HINT:** Look at paragraph 7. It mentions "this _____ reader" and talks about how she sits in a chair.

.....

10. ACTIONS

List FOUR things Elsie DOES that show she loves reading:

1. .....
2. .....
3. .....
4. .....

11. WORDS

Find one request Elsie makes. Explain it in your own words:

Elsie's request:

.....

12. PERSONALITY

Based on ALL the evidence, tick the words that describe Elsie's personality:

- [ ] Intelligent
- [ ] Lazy
- [ ] Curious
- [ ] Mean
- [ ] Determined
- [ ] Rude
- [ ] Polite
- [ ] Independent

🔍 CHARACTER FILE: MR PEMBERLEY (ELSIE'S FATHER)

13. ACTIONS & HABITS

What does Mr Pemberley do during the day? What is he busy with?

> HINT: Look at paragraphs 2 and 5!

During the day: .....

He is busy with: .....

14. WORDS

What does Mr Pemberley say when Elsie asks for a library card? Write his exact words:

Mr Pemberley's Quote:

.....

15. PERSONALITY INFERENCE

Based on his actions and words, what kind of person is Mr Pemberley?

- (A) Thoughtful and caring
- (B) Dismissive and doesn't value education
- (C) Supportive and encouraging
- (D) Shy and quiet
- (E) A secret superhero who fights crime at night wearing a sparkly cape

16. EVIDENCE

Elsie is "teased for being a know-it-all" when she asks a sensible question. What does "teased" mean here?

A Praised and celebrated

B Agreed with

C Listened carefully to

D Made fun of and laughed at in an unkind way

E Gave her a trophy made of cheese and sang silly songs

🔍 CHARACTER FILE: MRS PEMBERLEY (ELSIE'S MOTHER)

17. ACTIONS & HABITS

What does Mrs Pemberley do most afternoons?

> **HINT:** Paragraph 5 tells us!

18. INFERENCE

Mrs Pemberley goes out and leaves Elsie alone most afternoons. What does this suggest about how much attention she pays to her daughter?

19. COMPARE

Who ignores Elsie at home? Give one detail showing how they treat her.

🔍 CHARACTER FILE: SAM PEMBERLEY (ELSIE'S BROTHER)

20. EVIDENCE HUNT

What sport does Sam enjoy, and how does his family respond to his ability?

> HINT: Look at Sam's interest and the attention he receives in paragraph 2.

.....

21. INFERENCE

Where is Sam during most afternoons when Elsie is alone?

.....

22. CRITICAL THINKING

Why do you think the author tells us so little about Sam compared to Elsie?

- **A** To show how her love of reading grows despite being ignored
- **B** Because Sam is hiding
- **C** Because the author forgot about Sam
- **D** Because Sam is not important to the story
- **E** Because Sam is actually invisible and only appears on Tuesdays

ACT 2 COMPLETE! You've gathered evidence about each character. The final act is coming up!

ACT 3: MASTER DETECTIVE CHALLENGE (18 minutes)

Training Level 4 - Visual Character Profiles

Now use ALL the evidence you've collected to create visual character profiles! Draw each character and add labels showing what you've discovered about them.

23. CREATIVE PROFILE

Draw ELSIE. Even though the text doesn't describe her appearance in detail, you can use your imagination! Add at least FOUR labels showing:

- One physical detail (remember: she's small/tiny!)
- One thing she's holding or doing (related to reading?)
- Two personality words

ELSIE PEMBERLEY - Character Portrait

24. CREATIVE PROFILE

Draw MR PEMBERLEY. Add at least THREE labels showing:

- One thing related to his work
- One thing showing what he values (TV!)
- One personality word that describes him

MR PEMBERLEY - Character Portrait

25. CREATIVE PROFILE

Draw MRS PEMBERLEY. Add at least THREE labels showing:

- One thing related to her club
- One detail showing she doesn't pay attention to Elsie
- One personality word

MRS PEMBERLEY - Character Portrait

26. BONUS CHALLENGE

Draw SAM PEMBERLEY (optional). Use the evidence: he enjoys football, is good at it, and receives attention from his family.

SAM PEMBERLEY - Character Portrait (BONUS)

Training Level 5 - The Big Question

27. CRITICAL THINKING

The title of this lesson is "The Art of Really LOOKING at People." The Pemberleys don't really LOOK at Elsie - they don't see how special she is. Why is it important to really LOOK at people and see who they truly are?

28. PERSONAL REFLECTION

Think of someone in YOUR life who really SEES you and pays attention to you (like Mrs Bell does for Elsie). Who is it and what do they do that makes you feel seen?

29. COMPARISON

Fill in this comparison chart:

What Elsie WANTS	What Her Parents Give Her
Books: _____	Television: _____
Stories: _____	Being left alone: _____
Attention: _____	Being ignored/mocked: _____

Training Level 6 - Master Detective Badge

Congratulations, Detective! You've completed all the training. Now design your Master Character Detective badge!

Draw your MASTER CHARACTER DETECTIVE badge here!

Include:
✓ Your name
✓ "Master Character Detective"
✓ A magnifying glass or book symbol
✓ A cool border or design!

DETECTIVE SKILLS CHECKLIST:

- [ ] I can find evidence about characters in a text
- [ ] I can identify character actions, words, and personality traits
- [ ] I can make inferences about what characters are like
- [ ] I can compare and contrast different characters
- [ ] I can create detailed character profiles
- [ ] I understand the importance of really LOOKING at people
- [ ] I can use vocabulary words like "brilliant," "admire," and "fluently"
- [ ] I completed ALL 3 Acts of training!

CONGRATULATIONS, DETECTIVE!

You've mastered the art of really LOOKING at people in stories!

You discovered that Elsie is brilliant but ignored, that her parents don't see her,

and that sometimes the most important thing is to truly SEE who someone really is!

YOU ARE A MASTER CHARACTER DETECTIVE!

Parent/Teacher Notes

This activity pack develops character analysis, inference, evidence retrieval, vocabulary, comparison and visual representation. Select activities to suit the pupil and spread the pack across lessons where helpful. The three acts contain six training levels.