

8. TITLE:

O. (I.)

SENTENCES

EXAMPLES:

- a. He laughed heartily at the joke he had just been told. (At the same time it would be true to say he was quite embarrassed.)
- b. She told the little girl not to be so naughty. (Inside, however, she was secretly amused by what she had done.)
- c. Jonathan said how pleased he was to be at the party. (It wasn't the truth — he longed to be elsewhere.)

EXPLANATION:

O. (I.) sentences are an abbreviation of Outside:Inside sentences. They are made up of two related sentences. The first tells the reader what a character is supposedly thinking, e.g.

He smiled and shook the man's hand warmly.

This is what is happening on the OUTSIDE, the character's outward actions.

The second, related sentence, which is always placed in brackets, lets the reader know the character's true INNER feelings. Hence:

He smiled and shook the man's hand warmly. (Inside, however, he was more angry than he had ever been.)

The bracketed sentence is also an example of the omniscient, all knowing author. It allows the reader a glimpse of a character's inner thoughts and feelings. It is therefore an authorial intrusion which functions as a disruption of plot for a specific reason—as a hint of future plot development.

TEACHING TIPS:

O. (I.) sentences help pupils to develop more rounded characterisation. I often discuss useful phrases and words which could be used in the second, bracketed sentence:

However

In truth

Secretly etc.

It would also be helpful to discuss the language of opposites, e.g

Happy / sad

Brave / terrified

Calm / angry

Disappointed / elated