



The Crack in the Door

What do we learn about Gregor's perception of the Samsa family?

The Tasks

1) Making sense of what Gregor sees through the crack.

- Read through paragraph 2. Sketch an image of what Gregor sees through the crack in the door.
- Label your image with quotations from the text.
- Label your quotations with explanations of the effects individual words have on our understanding of what Gregor can see.

2) Understanding the importance of viewpoint.

- Read through the extract again. Underline any words or phrases that describe Gregor's view of the family.
- Choose 2 words and explain the impression they give us of how Gregor feels about his family.
- Using evidence from the text, explain why Gregor might feel this way.
- Re-write the description from another character's perspective.

3) Understanding the significance of punctuation.

- Circle all of the full stops and capital letters in the opening paragraph.
- Write down what you notice about the use of punctuation in the opening paragraph.
- Explain how this might affect your reading of Gregor's current situation. What might this tell us
- Re-write the first paragraph using the information from the most important clauses. How is this different from the original?

And if through his wound Gregor had now apparently lost for good his ability to move and for the time being needed many many minutes to crawl across this room, like an aged invalid (so far as creeping up high was concerned, that was unimaginable), nevertheless for this worsening of his condition, in his opinion, he did get completely satisfactory compensation, because every day towards evening the door to the living room, which he was in the habit of keeping a sharp eye on even one or two hours beforehand, was opened, so that he, lying down in the darkness of his room, invisible from the living room, could see the entire family at the illuminated table and listen to their conversation, to a certain extent with their common permission, a situation quite different from what happened before.

Of course, it was no longer the animated social interaction of former times, about which Gregor in small hotel rooms had always thought about with a certain longing, when, tired out, he had to throw himself in the damp bedclothes. For the most part what went on now was very quiet. After the evening meal the father fell asleep quickly in his arm chair; the mother and sister talked guardedly to each other in the stillness. Bent far over, the mother sewed fine undergarments for a fashion shop. The sister, who had taken on a job as a salesgirl, in the evening studied stenography and French, so as perhaps later to obtain a better position. Sometimes the father woke up and, as if he was quite ignorant that he had been asleep, said to the mother 'How long you have been sewing today!' and went right back to sleep, while the mother and the sister smiled tiredly to each other.

With a sort of stubbornness the father refused to take off his servant's uniform even at home, and while his sleeping gown hung unused on the coat hook, the father dozed completely dressed in his place, as if he was always ready for his responsibility and even here was waiting for the voice of his superior. As result, in spite of all the care of the mother and sister, his uniform, which even at the start was not new, grew dirty, and Gregor looked, often for the entire evening, at this clothing, with stains all over it and with its gold buttons always polished, in which the old man, although very uncomfortable, slept peacefully nonetheless.