



The ability ~~the~~ and technique of telling stories is one that has been around for generations. They are used in many different ways whether it be to entertain, inform or to record as the Aboriginal people have done for many years. There are many techniques in which storytellers use to shape meaning in short stories and ~~the~~ a variety of these can be seen in Henry Lawson's short stories titled "The Drover's Wife" and "In a Dry Season". Other writers who have explored similar techniques include David Lee Caulfield in his piece "The ears have walls" and Shirley Jackson in her <sup>short</sup> story "Charles".

The general formula for a short story is an introduction which sets the scene and pace, the



body which fills out the story and is where most of the plot takes place and the concluding paragraph which can either ~~the~~ ~~sum~~ sum up the story or is often the climax of plot. ~~the~~

But there are many other techniques that writers use to establish meaning in a story. These include humour, paragraph and sentence length, repetition, the use of dialogue, and the tone of piece to name a few.

'The Drovers wife', 'The Ears have walls' and 'Charles' all focus on character presentation, although each are quite different in their writing styles. 'The Drover's Wife' is a story of a family living in the bush who encounter a snake. It then endures the long and tiring wait



for the snake to appear.

Lawson has purposely left 'the Drover's wife' unnamed throughout the whole story. The purpose of this is ~~is~~ because the persona is a representation of all drover's wives. She is not an individual. Through the night the ~~character~~ Drover's wife has flashbacks of ~~many~~ other hardships she has experienced before. This is what gives us the overall character presentation. The audience is made aware of her courage, strength and perseverance as a mother through the listing of these events. The focus on the character is created by the lack of a ~~the~~ complicated plot.

'The Ears have walls' by David Lee Caulfield also focuses primarily



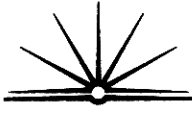
around the character presentation. Like "The Driver's wife", the plot is simple yet Caulfield goes into depth when describing the character. He tells us how she got the name 'Vegas', describes her appearance and informs us of her every move as she enters the bar. The story is about Vegas, an alcoholic who writes poetry. To emphasise the idea of poetry, Caulfield incorporates rhyme and rhythm into the actual ~~story~~ <sup>words</sup> by using rhyming ~~sentences~~ and short sentences and paragraphs. The dialogue is kept to a minimum but although the piece is written in the third person we are made aware of Vegas' thoughts without quotation marks.

"Charles" by Shirley Jackson is



once again a story which focuses on character presentation, except unlike *The Drover's Wife* and *The Ears have walls*, it is done almost entirely by dialogue.

At the beginning of the story we are given almost demanded a view of Laurie - "my sweet-toothed, nursery-school tot". But as we read on this impression is changed and we begin to question by what we experience of Laurie through his dialogue. "Look down", Laurie said, "Look at my thumb. Gee you'r dumb" and "I didn't learn nothing". The audience begins to realise that 'Charles' is someone who Laurie has made up and actually, Laurie is the one who is misbehaving at school. This is finalised in the



final line which is also the climax of the story. The teacher says, "Charles?" ~~we~~ "we don't have any Charles in the kindergarten".

"In A dry Season" is another story by Henry Lawson. This story is a complete contrast to the other three stories mentioned. The story can be considered a sketch of the country and outback and even starts with "Draw a wire fence...." The narrator, written in first person, describes his surroundings and the people he meets on a train ride to Bourke all very briefly. We get the impression that the land is dry, the air is dry, even the humour is dry.