

RW question 10

The following text is from Herman Melville's 1854 short story "The Lightning-Rod Man."

The stranger still stood in the exact middle of the cottage, where he had first planted himself. His singularity impelled a closer scrutiny. A lean, gloomy figure. Hair dark and lank, mattedly streaked over his brow. His sunken pitfalls of eyes were ringed by indigo halos, and played with an innocuous sort of lightning: the gleam without the bolt. The whole man was dripping. He stood in a puddle on the bare oak floor: his strange walking-stick vertically resting at his side.

Which choice best states the function of the underlined sentence in the text as a whole?

- A) It sets up the character description presented in the sentences that follow.
- B) It establishes a contrast with the description in the previous sentence.
- C) It elaborates on the previous sentence's description of the character.
- D) It introduces the setting that is described in the sentences that follow.

Key	A
Domain	Craft and Structure
Skill	Text Structure and Purpose

Key Explanation: **Choice A** is the best answer. The underlined sentence, which asserts that the uniqueness of the stranger's physical appearance invited careful examination, sets up the following sentences' description of the stranger's distinctive physical features and stance.

Distractor Explanations: **Choice B** is incorrect because the underlined sentence has no direct logical relationship to the previous sentence. **Choice C** is incorrect because the previous sentence does not describe the stranger, so the underlined sentence cannot build on it in this way.

Choice D is incorrect because the underlined sentence offers a general sense of the stranger's physical appearance and does not introduce a setting, nor is the main purpose of the following sentences to describe a setting.