

Character Development

Getting to know your main character



Characters!

- * Why do stories have characters?
- * Characters do things. They feel things. They hear things. They say things. They think things. They go places. They can walk, run, leap, and jump. They may sit and rock in a rocking chair. They may just lie in bed, sleep, and dream.
- * In a story, a character is the principle actor. We follow their story and get into their lives.
- * And these actions show us what kind of people these characters are: friendly, sad, nosey, happy, lovestruck, confused, angry, or inventive.



Character Traits



- * When we talk about a character, we often describe that character in terms of **character traits**
- * **Character Traits:** Descriptive adjectives like happy or sad that tell us the specific qualities of the character. They're the same kinds of words that we might use to describe ourselves or others, but we're using them to describe fictional characters in something we've read.

How do we find Character Traits?



- * The author may tell us these traits directly, but more often the author will show us these traits in action.
- * Our job as readers is to draw a conclusion about the character's traits (to *infer them*) from what the character says, thinks, and does. We might infer a character trait from something a character does only once, or we might draw our conclusions from a series of things the character says and does

Parts of a Character

- * Physical Appearance – clothing, height, weight, sex, hair and eye colour, ethnicity
- * Background – marital status, child/adult, profession
- * Personality – hopes, dreams, fears
- * Other details – hopes, dreams, fears

Character 1 – Jane

Jane is the youngest of five siblings and the only girl. Her only friends are her brothers, and she acts just like them. She climbs trees, digs deep holes, plays any sport they play, and makes fun of girls when they try to hang around. Jane has never cut her hair, and it trails down her back in a braid that looks like a python. As much as she tries to hide her beautiful hair, her eyes give away her real beauty. They match the blue zircon of her birthstone. Jane loves her parents, but she can't seem to make her mom happy. She would rather go to a demolition derby race with her dad and brothers than shopping with her mom. She wishes she could for once be who she is AND make her mom happy at the same time.

Small Dog #1

- Brown
- Cute
- Small
- Puppy



Small Dog #2

- Brown
- Cute
- Small
- Puppy



Small Dog #3

- Brown
- Cute
- Small
- Puppy



Who is this?

What do we know about him?

Harry Potter



Descriptive Words

- * Orphan
- * Child
- * Wizard
- * Glasses
- * Magical
- * Mysterious
- * Slender
- * Tall
- * Kind

A last thought...

- * Characters do things. They feel things. They hear things. They say things. They think things. They go places. They can walk, run, leap, and jump. They may sit and rock in a rocking chair. They may just lie in bed, sleep, and dream. But the important thing is that characters act.

Character Sketch

- * When you write a character sketch, you are trying to introduce the reader to someone.
- * You want the reader to have a strong mental image of the person, to know how the person talks, to know the person's characteristic ways of doing things, to know something about the person's value system.
- * Character sketches only give snap shots of people; therefore, you should not try to write a history of the person.