

Character Creation Guide

It's important to have a solid idea of who your characters are before jumping into writing a novel. This will make it easier for your reader to become invested in them as the character will be well rounded!

Here are some questions to ask yourself when creating your characters (Protagonist, antagonist, secondary characters, etc.):

- 1) What is my characters goal? Them trying to achieve their goal will help drive the plot forward
 - a. What is their motivation to achieve this goal? Why do they want to achieve the goal? Is it revenge? Are they going on an adventure!?
 - b. What are they willing to risk to achieve their goal?
 - c. What would they do if they fail to achieve their goal?
- 2) What is my characters internal or external conflict? A conflict in the story keeps things interesting, and it also necessary (Can you think of any story that doesn't have a conflict?!)
There are 6 types of conflicts:
 - a. Character vs. Character
 - b. Character vs. Society
 - c. Character vs. Nature
 - d. Character vs. Technology
 - e. Character vs. Supernatural
 - f. Character vs. Self
- 3) Is my character going to remain the same throughout the story or will they change by the end of it? There is no right or wrong answer here, you just have to pick one that suits your story!
 - a. Static character – a character who does not change at all because that is who they are! These characters are usually pretty rigid in their beliefs, good or bad, and will stick to them. Think Sherlock Holmes or Captain America as good guys or pretty much any villain.
 - b. Dynamic character – This is a character who will go through a substantial change throughout the story. This could be for the worse or for the better! This change could be a subconscious, and the character is changing without knowing it from everything that is happening to them. OR it could be a conscious decision and the character is making an effort to change.
 - c. A combination of both! Doesn't make a whole lot of sense right off the bat, but there are characters who for the most part remain true to themselves throughout, with a few minor changes. Usually these characters will be the bringers of change to their surroundings. Think Katniss Everdeen in the Hunger Games, she remains true to her values in order to take down a corrupt government! However, she does change a little on the way.
 - d. You can also reinforce your protagonist with secondary characters. An easy way to do this is to have a "foil" character; this is a character who is opposite in nearly all ways to another. This helps to emphasize the character traits you want in a certain character. Think Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy!
- 4) What is my characters past? Super important!! Everyone has a past. And the reader may not be reading about your characters past, but its good for you to know it. Why? WELL.

- a. Our past shapes who we are, how we act, and how we react to certain things. You character is the same way. Knowing their past will help you write them into more believable characters!
 - b. Questions to ask yourself:
 - i. What moments from their past have played a pivotal role in who they are now?
 - ii. Do they have any suppressed memories?
 - iii. What are some of their happiest, saddest, memories?
 - iv. How were they raised?
 - v. Where did they grow up?
- 5) Now. The fun part! Developing their external characteristics – What do they look like?
- a. What is their communication style? Do they talk a lot with their hands, do they shout or are they usually quiet?
 - b. What do they physically look like? Does that play a roll in the story?
 - c. Do they have any mannerisms? How do they walk?
 - d. What is their style? What kinds of clothes do they wear and how do they present themselves to the world?

There ya go! You have yourself a well-rounded ready to go character! This may seem like a frivolous step, but it will make the actual writing of the story so much easier. Trust me. Also, don't feel the need to do this for every single character in your story, unless it's a two character kind of thing. Or else you will be creating characters for the rest of your days, unless that is what you want to do... then go ahead, you do you!

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