

Characterforge — Activity Book

A Spark & Anvil activity book — puzzles, questions, and fun from Characterforge.

Write in the book, circle your answers, and check the Answer Key at the back.

1. What Is a Character?

Circle the correct answer

1. A 'character' in a story is —
(A) the lesson of a story (B) a person, animal, or being who takes part in the story
(C) the place a story happens (D) the problem in a story
2. The MAIN character a story follows is called the —
(A) antagonist (B) narrator only (C) protagonist (D) setting
3. A character who OPPOSES the main character is the —
(A) antagonist (B) sidekick (C) narrator (D) protagonist
4. A 'minor character' is one who —
(A) never appears (B) appears less and plays a smaller role (C) is the setting (D) is the main hero
5. CharacterForge's big idea is that a character can be —
(A) only the setting (B) unimportant (C) the protagonist you build and follow (D) only a villain
6. Readers care about a story mostly because they care about —
(A) the title only (B) the page numbers (C) the characters (D) the font

Write the answer

7. A 'sidekick' is usually —
Answer: _____
8. A character can be —
Answer: _____
9. The 'cast' of a story means —
Answer: _____

10. Which is NOT a character?

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. A protagonist does NOT have to be — →
2. A story usually needs at least — →
3. An 'ensemble' story has — →
4. The protagonist and antagonist together create — →
5. Which best describes a well-built character? →

- (A) one character to follow
 - (B) several important characters sharing the spotlight
 - (C) the story's main conflict
 - (D) Someone who feels like a real, specific person
 - (E) perfect or always good
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2. Character Traits

Circle the correct answer

11. A 'character trait' is —
(A) the plot (B) a quality that describes a character's personality (C) the place they live (D) a page number
12. Which of these is a character TRAIT?
(A) Tall building (B) Generous (C) Monday (D) The forest
13. The difference between a trait and a feeling is that a trait is —
(A) a lasting quality; a feeling can change quickly (B) the same as a place (C) a page number (D) always temporary
14. Physical description tells you a character's —
(A) goals (B) outside appearance (C) inner personality only (D) backstory
15. Which is an INNER (personality) trait, not a physical one?
(A) Tall (B) Curly hair (C) Freckles (D) Loyal
16. Giving a character SEVERAL traits makes them feel —
(A) confusing always (B) boring (C) flat (D) more real and complex

Write the answer

17. A character who is brave AND stubborn shows that traits can —

Answer: _____

18. Which is the STRONGEST way to reveal a trait?

Answer: _____

19. A 'defining trait' is —

Answer: _____

20. Which pair are OPPOSITE traits?

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. Describing a character only by ONE trait tends to make them — →

2. A trait chart or web helps a writer — →

3. Which sentence SHOWS the trait 'kind' instead of telling it? →

4. Traits can be revealed through — →

5. A character whose traits NEVER show in the story feels — →

(A) flat and simple

(B) actions, words, thoughts, and choices

(C) keep a character's qualities organized

(D) undeveloped

(E) She shared her lunch with the new student.

3. What a Character Wants

Circle the correct answer

21. A character's 'goal' is —

(A) where they live (B) their hair color (C) the title (D) what they are trying to get or achieve

22. 'Motivation' means —

(A) the ending (B) the setting (C) the page count (D) the reason a character wants something

23. A story usually gets moving once the protagonist —

(A) wants something and goes after it (B) sits still (C) leaves the story (D) has no goal

24. An 'external want' is a goal that is —

(A) the setting only (B) a personality trait (C) outside the character (a thing, person, or outcome) (D) a feeling inside

25. Which is an EXTERNAL want?

(A) To feel brave (B) To stop being afraid (C) To be loved (D) To win the science fair

26. A clear goal helps the reader —

(A) know what to root for (B) ignore the character (C) get confused (D) skip the story

Write the answer

27. Obstacles matter because they —

Answer: _____

28. A character with NO wants tends to feel —

Answer: _____

29. The 'stakes' of a goal are —

Answer: _____

30. Higher stakes usually make a story —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. A goal is more compelling when the character — →

2. The FIRST thing to decide when building a character's story is often — →

3. A 'need' can differ from a 'want' because a need is — →

4. A character who WANTS to win but NEEDS to make friends shows — →

5. Motivation makes a character's actions feel — →

(A) what the character truly requires to grow (often unseen)

(B) what they want

(C) wants it badly and it won't be easy

(D) a gap between want and need

(E) believable

4. Character Flaws & Fears

Circle the correct answer

31. A character 'flaw' is —

(A) a goal (B) a weakness or fault in the character (C) a strength (D) the setting

32. Flaws make characters —

(A) flat (B) more relatable and human (C) perfect and boring (D) impossible

33. A character with NO flaws often feels —

(A) unrealistic or dull (B) exciting (C) complex (D) deeply human

34. Which is a character FLAW?

(A) Being too proud to ask for help (B) Being brave (C) Being honest (D) Being kind

35. A character's 'fear' is —

(A) something they are afraid of or want to avoid (B) their goal (C) the setting (D) their name

36. Fears can drive a character to —

(A) have no personality (B) never act (C) avoid situations or act out of anxiety (D) ignore the plot

Write the answer

37. A character's 'inner need' is —

Answer: _____

38. Often a character's flaw is connected to their —

Answer: _____

39. Overcoming a flaw is often the heart of a character's —

Answer: _____

40. A 'fatal flaw' is —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. Which shows a flaw through ACTION (not just telling)? →

2. A character who confronts their fear shows — →

3. A flaw becomes meaningful when it — →

4. Giving a character a fear helps readers — →

5. The gap between a character's WANT and their NEED often comes from — →

- (A) their flaw blinding them
 - (B) creates real problems for the character
 - (C) courage and growth
 - (D) He blamed his teammate instead of admitting his mistake.
 - (E) empathize with them
-

5. Showing Character

Circle the correct answer

41. 'Show, don't tell' means —

(A) never describe anyone (B) reveal a character through actions and details, not just labels (C) avoid all detail (D) only state the trait

42. Which SHOWS that a character is nervous?

(A) The word 'nervous' fits her. (B) Nervousness is a feeling. (C) Her hands trembled as she reached for the door. (D) She was nervous.

43. Telling ('He was brave') is weaker than showing because showing —

(A) is always shorter (B) is against the rules (C) hides the character (D) lets readers experience and believe it

44. Actions reveal character because —

(A) only words matter (B) only the setting matters (C) what people DO shows who they are (D) actions mean nothing

45. A character's choices under pressure reveal —

(A) only their appearance (B) their true character (C) the setting (D) nothing

46. Which detail SHOWS generosity?

(A) He had generosity. (B) He was generous. (C) He gave his umbrella to the shivering stranger. (D) Generosity is nice.

Write the answer

47. Dialogue can reveal character through —

Answer: _____

48. A character's surroundings (their room, belongings) can —

Answer: _____

49. Which is TELLING, not showing?

Answer: _____

50. Body language (a clenched fist, a slumped posture) shows —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. Overusing 'telling' can make writing feel — →
2. Some telling is fine when you need to — →
3. Which reveals a character is IMPATIENT by showing? →
4. A reaction to an event reveals character because — →
5. Showing a character's thoughts (interior monologue) reveals — →

- (A) their inner feelings and reasoning
 - (B) move quickly through unimportant details
 - (C) He tapped his foot and checked the clock three times.
 - (D) how someone responds shows who they are
 - (E) flat and distant
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6. Character Voice & Dialogue

Circle the correct answer

51. A character's 'voice' is —

- (A) how loud they are only (B) their distinct way of speaking and thinking (C) the page count (D) the setting

52. Dialogue is —

- (A) the words characters say to each other (B) the plot outline (C) the setting (D) the narrator's description

53. Good dialogue can reveal a character's —

- (A) font (B) page number (C) personality, mood, and background (D) shoe size

54. Two characters should ideally —

- (A) sound different from each other (B) use the same words always (C) never speak (D) sound identical

55. A character who uses short, blunt sentences might seem —

- (A) timid always (B) identical to everyone (C) dreamy and poetic (D) tough or impatient

56. A character who uses long, flowery sentences might seem —

- (A) identical to a blunt character (B) blunt and impatient (C) thoughtful or dramatic (D) silent

Write the answer

57. Realistic dialogue usually —

Answer: _____

58. A 'speech tag' (like 'she said') tells the reader —

Answer: _____

59. Overusing fancy speech tags ('he exclaimed loudly') can —

Answer: _____

60. Dialogue that reveals conflict between characters adds —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. A character's unique word or catchphrase can make them — →

2. Dialogue should usually — →

3. A formal character and a casual character talking shows — →

4. Which line best shows an EXCITED character's voice? →

5. A character's voice should stay — →

(A) contrast through voice

(B) "No way — this is the best day ever!"

(C) move the story or reveal character (not just fill space)

(D) consistent (unless they change)

(E) memorable

7. Backstory

Circle the correct answer

61. 'Backstory' is —

(A) a character's history before the story begins (B) the story's ending (C) the plot outline (D) the setting only

62. Backstory helps explain a character's —

(A) the page count (B) traits, flaws, fears, and motivations (C) shoe size only (D) the font

63. A 'formative event' is —

(A) a random detail (B) an experience that shaped who the character became (C) the setting (D) the title

64. You should reveal backstory —

- (A) gradually, when it matters (B) all at once at the start (C) only in the last line
(D) never

65. A big block of backstory dumped early is called an —

- (A) climax (B) foil (C) info-dump (usually a mistake) (D) arc

66. A character's 'wound' is a —

- (A) the setting (B) a strength (C) painful past event that still affects them (D)
future goal

Write the answer

67. Backstory should serve the STORY by —

Answer: _____

68. Not every detail of a character's past —

Answer: _____

69. A character shaped by a loss might —

Answer: _____

70. Revealing backstory through a small object or memory is often better than —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. Backstory can create — →

2. A 'flashback' is — →

3. Flashbacks should be used — →

4. A believable character's present actions should — →

5. Two characters with different pasts will likely — →

- (A) a scene showing an earlier event
(B) sparingly and with purpose
(C) empathy for a character's flaws
(D) make sense given their backstory
(E) react to the same event differently
-

8. The Character Arc

Circle the correct answer

71. A 'character arc' is —

(A) the way a character changes over the course of a story (B) the setting (C) the page count (D) the plot outline

72. A 'dynamic' character is one who —

(A) changes or grows during the story (B) only appears once (C) never changes (D) is the setting

73. A 'static' character is one who —

(A) leaves the story (B) changes the most (C) stays essentially the same (D) has the biggest arc

74. A 'positive arc' shows a character —

(A) growing or improving (B) disappearing (C) getting worse (D) staying flat

75. A 'negative arc' shows a character —

(A) staying the same (B) improving (C) having no change (D) declining or falling

76. The engine of most arcs is the character —

(A) the setting (B) avoiding all change (C) having no goal (D) facing their flaw or need

Write the answer

77. A character usually changes because of —

Answer: _____

78. The clearest arc shows a difference between the character at the —

Answer: _____

79. A believable arc changes a character —

Answer: _____

80. A character who learns to trust others after starting out guarded has a —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. A 'flat arc' character — →

2. The 'turning point' of an arc is — →

3. A satisfying arc usually ends with the character — →

4. An arc connects to the plot because — →

5. A character who resists change until forced shows — →

- (A) external events force inner change
 - (B) a key moment that shifts the character
 - (C) stays true to a belief and changes the world around them instead
 - (D) a realistic arc
 - (E) changed in a meaningful, earned way
-

9. Round vs Flat Characters

Circle the correct answer

81. A 'round' character is —

- (A) the setting (B) never in the story (C) complex, with many traits and depth (D) simple with one trait

82. A 'flat' character is —

- (A) complex and deep (B) the protagonist always (C) the setting (D) simple, defined by one or two traits

83. Round characters feel —

- (A) like the setting (B) like real, believable people (C) like cardboard cutouts (D) like the title

84. Flat characters are USEFUL for —

- (A) nothing (B) every main character (C) minor roles that don't need depth (D) the protagonist

85. The PROTAGONIST should usually be —

- (A) flat (B) round (complex) (C) absent (D) the setting

86. What makes a character round is —

- (A) no personality (B) a mix of traits, wants, flaws, and contradictions (C) a single trait (D) only appearance

Write the answer

87. A flat character with only 'evil' as a trait is called a —

Answer: _____

88. Adding a surprising trait to a tough character (e.g., loves poetry) makes them —

Answer: _____

89. Round characters can —

Answer: _____

90. Too many round characters at once can —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. A 'stock character' is — →

2. You can deepen a flat character by giving them — →

3. The DIFFERENCE between round and flat is mostly about — →

4. A round ANTAGONIST (complex villain) makes a story — →

5. Consistency in a round character means — →

(A) their many traits still form one believable person

(B) richer and more believable

(C) depth and complexity

(D) a want, a flaw, or a surprising trait

(E) a familiar flat type (like 'the wise old mentor')

10. Relationships & Foils

Circle the correct answer

91. Character 'relationships' are —

(A) the page count (B) the plot outline (C) the connections and dynamics between characters (D) the setting

92. A 'foil' is a character who —

(A) never appears (B) is the setting (C) is identical to the hero (D) contrasts with another to highlight their traits

93. Relationships reveal character because —

(A) the setting reveals it (B) how someone treats others shows who they are (C) only actions alone matter (D) relationships hide character

94. A calm character paired with a hot-headed one is an example of —

(A) identical characters (B) the setting (C) no relationship (D) a foil relationship

95. Conflict between characters can come from —

(A) the font (B) different goals, values, or personalities (C) being identical (D) the setting only

96. A strong RELATIONSHIP arc shows the connection —

(A) never appearing (B) being the setting (C) changing over the story (D) staying identical

Write the answer

97. A mentor character usually —

Answer: _____

98. A rival differs from an enemy because a rival —

Answer: _____

99. A foil works best when the two characters —

Answer: _____

100. Relationships give a story —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. A character defined only by their relationship to the hero (e.g., 'the hero's friend') risks being — →

2. A 'love interest' or close friend should have — →

3. Contrast between a brave hero and a cautious friend can — →

4. Family relationships can shape a character's — →

5. A shifting alliance (a friend who becomes a rival) adds — →

(A) flat

(B) their own personality and goals

(C) values and flaws

(D) highlight both characters' traits

(E) tension and complexity

11. Motivation & Believable Choices

Circle the correct answer

101. A character's choices should be driven by their —

(A) random chance (B) the author's convenience (C) motivation (their reasons and goals) (D) the setting

102. A choice that has NO believable motivation feels —

(A) forced or fake (B) deep (C) satisfying (D) realistic

103. A 'plot-driven' character (doing what the plot needs, not what they'd do) feels —

(A) deeply real (B) well-motivated (C) unconvincing (D) consistent

104. Consistency means a character's actions —

(A) contradict everything (B) are random (C) make sense given their established traits (D) ignore their traits

105. A character CAN act surprisingly if —

(A) it never fits (B) there is no reason (C) the surprise still fits deeper truths about them (D) it contradicts everything

106. The strongest motivation combines —

(A) an external want with an inner need (B) the page count (C) no wants at all (D) only the setting

Write the answer

107. A 'dilemma' is a choice between —

Answer: _____

108. Hard choices reveal a character's —

Answer: _____

109. A believable villain acts from —

Answer: _____

110. If readers ask 'Why would they do that?', the writer probably needs —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. A character changing their mind is believable when — →

2. Motivation should be — →

3. A choice that costs the character something feels — →

4. Which is the most believable motivation for a character to help a rival? →

5. Contradictory motivations (wanting two opposing things) can create — →

(A) compelling inner conflict

(B) more meaningful and revealing

(C) They value fairness more than winning

(D) something happens to change it

(E) consistent with the character's traits and backstory

12. Antagonists & Conflict

Circle the correct answer

111. An 'antagonist' is —

(A) the main hero (B) the character or force opposing the protagonist (C) the setting (D) the narrator only

112. 'Conflict' in a story is —

(A) the struggle between opposing forces (B) the setting (C) the page count (D) the font

113. 'Character vs character' conflict is —

(A) a struggle inside oneself (B) a struggle with nature (C) the setting (D) a struggle between two characters

114. 'Character vs self' conflict is —

(A) a storm (B) an inner struggle within the character (C) the setting (D) a fight with another person

115. 'Character vs nature' conflict is a struggle against —

(A) society (B) natural forces (storms, wilderness) (C) themselves (D) another person

116. 'Character vs society' conflict is a struggle against —

(A) rules, customs, or systems (B) a storm (C) themselves (D) one person only

Write the answer

117. An antagonist does NOT have to be —

Answer: _____

118. A strong antagonist makes the protagonist —

Answer: _____

119. The best antagonists are —

Answer: _____

120. Inner conflict (character vs self) often comes from the character's —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. Conflict is important because it — →

2. A story can have — →

3. A protagonist facing BOTH an outer enemy and an inner flaw shows — →

4. A 'sympathetic' antagonist is one whose motives readers — →

5. Conflict should escalate toward — →

- (A) creates tension and drives the plot
 - (B) a climax (the peak of tension)
 - (C) more than one kind of conflict at once
 - (D) can understand or even relate to
 - (E) layered conflict
-

13. Character in Different Media

Circle the correct answer

121. Characters appear in —

- (A) novels, films, comics, games, plays, and more (B) only novels (C) only films (D) only the setting

122. In a NOVEL, we often learn a character's inner thoughts through —

- (A) narration (B) camera angles (C) background music (D) controller input

123. In a FILM, character is often shown through —

- (A) long inner monologue text (B) page numbers (C) acting, expression, and action (not narration) (D) footnotes

124. A key rule that carries across ALL media is —

- (A) always use narration (B) avoid all conflict (C) ignore motivation (D) show character through action and choice

125. In a VIDEO GAME, players often experience character through —

- (A) the page count (B) making the character's choices themselves (C) watching only (D) reading only

126. In a COMIC, character is shown through —

- (A) art, expressions, and speech bubbles (B) only prose paragraphs (C) camera angles (D) background music

Write the answer

127. A strong character concept usually —

Answer: _____

128. When a book becomes a film, the character's inner thoughts must often be —

Answer: _____

129. What stays the SAME about a character across media is their —

Answer: _____

130. A play reveals character mainly through —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. Different media are BETTER or WORSE at showing — →
2. A character's VOICE in a novel becomes, in film, their — →
3. The reason to study character across media is to — →
4. A well-designed game character often has — →
5. Adapting a character faithfully means keeping their — →

- (A) learn techniques that make characters work anywhere
 - (B) clear traits players can quickly grasp
 - (C) certain aspects of character (like inner thoughts)
 - (D) way of speaking and acting on screen
 - (E) essential personality and motivations
-

14. Believable & Consistent Characters

Circle the correct answer

131. A believable character is one who —

(A) is the setting (B) acts randomly (C) has no traits (D) feels like a real, consistent person

132. Consistency means a character's behavior —

(A) is the setting (B) changes randomly (C) matches their established traits and motivations (D) ignores their traits

133. A 'stereotype' harms a character because it —

(A) makes them realistic (B) is required (C) adds depth (D) replaces a real person with a flat cliché

134. To avoid a stereotype, give a character —

(A) no traits (B) only expected traits (C) the group's traits only (D) specific, individual traits

135. A believable character can be complex, meaning they have —

(A) strengths, flaws, and even contradictions (B) no flaws (C) no personality (D) only one trait

136. A character acting 'out of character' with no reason breaks —

(A) only the setting (B) believability (C) the font (D) nothing

Write the answer

137. A character CAN change believably if the change is —

Answer: _____

138. Giving a stereotyped role an unexpected depth makes them —

Answer: _____

139. The 'consistency' rule does NOT mean a character must be —

Answer: _____

140. Complex characters are believable because real people are —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. A useful test of believability is asking — →

2. Avoiding stereotypes especially matters for — →

3. A believable character's flaws should be — →

4. When a character surprises us believably, it's because the surprise — →

5. A common cause of an unbelievable character is — →

(A) representing real groups of people respectfully

(B) reveals something true that was there all along

(C) the plot forcing them to act unnaturally

(D) consistent with their overall personality

(E) 'Would this specific character really do this?'

15. Revising a Character

Circle the correct answer

141. Revising a character means —

(A) improving them by changing and refining (B) never changing them (C) deleting the story (D) copying another character

142. A good FIRST revision question is —

(A) 'Does this character feel real and specific?' (B) 'How many pages?' (C) 'Is the font nice?' (D) 'What color is the cover?'

143. If a character feels FLAT, a revision fix is to —

(A) remove all traits (B) add a want, a flaw, or a contradiction (C) delete them (D) make them perfect

144. If two characters feel too SIMILAR, a fix is to —

(A) make them identical (B) delete one always (C) ignore it (D) sharpen their differences (voice, goals, traits)

145. Cutting a character who doesn't serve the story is —

(A) a valid revision choice (B) impossible (C) never allowed (D) always wrong

146. Combining two minor characters into one can —

(A) confuse the plot (B) always weaken it (C) strengthen and simplify the cast (D) add nothing

Write the answer

147. If a character's actions feel unmotivated, revise by —

Answer: _____

148. Revising for CONSISTENCY means checking that —

Answer: _____

149. Reading a character's scenes ALOUD helps check their —

Answer: _____

150. A character who is TOO perfect should be revised to —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. Getting feedback from a reader helps revision by — →

2. If a character's arc feels unearned, revise by — →

3. Revision may reveal that a character needs — →

4. Keeping a 'character bible' (notes on each character) helps — →

5. A sign a character is working after revision is that — →

(A) their actions consistently feel true to them

(B) maintain consistency while revising

(C) showing how the character actually comes across

(D) a clearer want or a sharper flaw

(E) adding the events and choices that cause the change

16. Capstone: Building a Whole Character

Circle the correct answer

151. A whole, believable character combines —

(A) traits, a want, a flaw, a voice, and (often) an arc (B) a single trait (C) only a name (D) only appearance

152. The FIRST building block many writers choose is the character's —

(A) shoe size (B) want (goal) (C) font (D) page count

153. A character's flaw usually connects to their —

(A) shoe size (B) the setting (C) fear, wound, or inner need (D) the font

154. A character's VOICE should match their —

(A) the narrator's voice (B) personality and background (C) the font (D) everyone else's voice

155. The character's ARC shows how they —

(A) change (or hold firm) across the story (B) stay identical always (C) leave the story (D) become the setting

156. A believable character's actions should flow from their —

(A) random chance (B) the plot's convenience (C) the setting (D) traits, wants, and motivations

Write the answer

157. To make a character SPECIFIC (not generic), give them —

Answer: _____

158. A whole character's want and flaw often create their —

Answer: _____

159. If a character feels flat, the quickest deepening move is to —

Answer: _____

160. A character's relationships should reveal —

Answer: _____

Match each question to its answer

1. Showing (not just telling) a character's traits makes them — →

2. A character's choices at the CLIMAX should reflect — →

3. The DEEPEST test of a whole character is — →

4. A whole character should be — →

5. Building a character is worth the effort because — →

- (A) everything the story has built about them
 - (B) consistent yet capable of surprising us believably
 - (C) vivid and believable
 - (D) whether they feel like a real, specific person
 - (E) readers connect with story through character
-

Riddle & Joke Break

Guess the answer, then check the key!

- 161.** What do we call the way a character changes from the beginning of a story to the end?
- 162.** A "round" character is complex and can surprise you; a "flat" one is simple and predictable. Which kind is usually the main character?
- 163.** Why do the best heroes have flaws?
- 164.** A character WANTS to win the contest but NEEDS to learn to trust their friends. What's the difference between a want and a need in a story?
- 165.** Which is "showing" and which is "telling": (A) "Maya was furious." (B) "Maya slammed the door so hard the pictures rattled." A is telling; B is showing! Showing lets readers FEEL the emotion through action.
- 166.** What is the "conflict" of a story?
- 167.** Why does a good antagonist (the "bad guy") believe they're doing the right thing?
- 168.** Which detail tells you more about a character: "he was messy" or "his backpack had a two-week-old sandwich in it"?
- 169.** Why did the character go to the gym?
- 170.** Why did the flat character feel invisible?
- 171.** Why did the hero need a flaw?
- 172.** Why did the writer ask "what does my character WANT?" Because desire is the engine of every story!
- 173.** Why did "show, don't tell" win the writing award?
- 174.** Why did the backstory stay mostly offstage?

Fun Facts

- Did you know? The word "protagonist" comes from ancient Greek theater -- it meant the FIRST actor, the one who played the leading role. Your main character is literally the "first" of your story!
 - Did you know? The most memorable characters usually have a clear FLAW. A hero who's afraid, stubborn, or proud has somewhere to grow -- and watching them change is why we keep reading!
 - Did you know? "Show, don't tell" is the most famous writing advice there is. Instead of "he was nervous," show "his hands wouldn't stop shaking" -- and let the reader feel it themselves!
 - Did you know? Writers often talk about a character's "want" versus their "need." The want is the outer goal (win the game); the need is the inner lesson (learn teamwork). The best stories deliver the need!
 - Did you know? Every story needs conflict -- and there are classic types: person vs. person, person vs. nature, person vs. society, and person vs. self. The struggle is what makes a story worth telling!
 - Did you know? The most convincing villains believe they're the HERO of their own story. Giving your antagonist real reasons and goals makes them far scarier than plain "evil"!
 - Did you know? First drafts are meant to be messy! Famous authors rewrite their books many times. The trick is to get the story DOWN first, then make it good in revision -- one job at a time!
 - Did you know? A single specific detail can bring a character to life faster than a paragraph of description. "She kept a lucky rock in her pocket" tells you more than "she was superstitious"!
-

Answer Key

1. B — a person, animal, or being who takes part in the story
2. C — protagonist
3. A — antagonist
4. B — appears less and plays a smaller role
5. C — the protagonist you build and follow
6. C — the characters
7. a companion who helps the main character
8. a person, an animal, a robot, or even an object brought to life

9. all the characters in it
10. The forest where the story takes place
- Matching (What Is a Character?): 1→E, 2→A, 3→B, 4→C, 5→D

11. B — a quality that describes a character's personality
12. B — Generous
13. A — a lasting quality; a feeling can change quickly
14. B — outside appearance
15. D — Loyal
16. D — more real and complex
17. sometimes pull in different directions
18. Show the character acting on it
19. the trait most central to who a character is
20. Generous and selfish

Matching (Character Traits): 1→A, 2→C, 3→E, 4→B, 5→D

21. D — what they are trying to get or achieve
22. D — the reason a character wants something
23. A — wants something and goes after it
24. C — outside the character (a thing, person, or outcome)
25. D — To win the science fair
26. A — know what to root for
27. make reaching the goal harder (creating conflict)
28. passive and boring
29. what the character will gain or lose
30. more tense and gripping

Matching (What a Character Wants): 1→C, 2→B, 3→A, 4→D, 5→E

31. B — a weakness or fault in the character
32. B — more relatable and human
33. A — unrealistic or dull

- 34. A — Being too proud to ask for help
- 35. A — something they are afraid of or want to avoid
- 36. C — avoid situations or act out of anxiety
- 37. the deeper thing they must learn or change to grow
- 38. fear or wound
- 39. arc (change)
- 40. a weakness serious enough to cause major trouble

Matching (Character Flaws & Fears): 1→D, 2→C, 3→B, 4→E, 5→A

- 41. B — reveal a character through actions and details, not just labels
- 42. C — Her hands trembled as she reached for the door.
- 43. D — lets readers experience and believe it
- 44. C — what people DO shows who they are
- 45. B — their true character
- 46. C — He gave his umbrella to the shivering stranger.
- 47. how a character speaks and what they say
- 48. hint at who they are
- 49. She was a hard worker.
- 50. emotion and character

Matching (Showing Character): 1→E, 2→B, 3→C, 4→D, 5→A

- 51. B — their distinct way of speaking and thinking
- 52. A — the words characters say to each other
- 53. C — personality, mood, and background
- 54. A — sound different from each other
- 55. D — tough or impatient
- 56. C — thoughtful or dramatic
- 57. sounds natural, not like a textbook
- 58. who is speaking
- 59. distract from the dialogue

60. tension and interest

Matching (Character Voice & Dialogue): 1→E, 2→C, 3→A, 4→B, 5→D

61. A — a character's history before the story begins

62. B — traits, flaws, fears, and motivations

63. B — an experience that shaped who the character became

64. A — gradually, when it matters

65. C — info-dump (usually a mistake)

66. C — painful past event that still affects them

67. explaining present behavior and choices

68. needs to appear in the story

69. fear losing things again

70. a long explanation

Matching (Backstory): 1→C, 2→A, 3→B, 4→D, 5→E

71. A — the way a character changes over the course of a story

72. A — changes or grows during the story

73. C — stays essentially the same

74. A — growing or improving

75. D — declining or falling

76. D — facing their flaw or need

77. the events and choices they experience

78. beginning and the end

79. gradually, through the story's events

80. positive arc

Matching (The Character Arc): 1→C, 2→B, 3→E, 4→A, 5→D

81. C — complex, with many traits and depth

82. D — simple, defined by one or two traits

83. B — like real, believable people

84. C — minor roles that don't need depth

- 85. B — round (complex)
- 86. B — a mix of traits, wants, flaws, and contradictions
- 87. one-dimensional villain
- 88. rounder
- 89. surprise the reader while still being believable
- 90. overwhelm the reader

Matching (Round vs Flat Characters): 1→E, 2→D, 3→C, 4→B, 5→A

- 91. C — the connections and dynamics between characters
- 92. D — contrasts with another to highlight their traits
- 93. B — how someone treats others shows who they are
- 94. D — a foil relationship
- 95. B — different goals, values, or personalities
- 96. C — changing over the story
- 97. guides or teaches the protagonist
- 98. competes with, but may still respect, the character
- 99. share a situation but respond differently

- 100. emotional stakes

Matching (Relationships & Foils): 1→A, 2→B, 3→D, 4→C, 5→E

- 101. C — motivation (their reasons and goals)
- 102. A — forced or fake
- 103. C — unconvincing
- 104. C — make sense given their established traits
- 105. C — the surprise still fits deeper truths about them
- 106. A — an external want with an inner need
- 107. two difficult or undesirable options
- 108. values and priorities
- 109. their own understandable motivation
- 110. clearer motivation

Matching (Motivation & Believable Choices): 1→D, 2→E, 3→B, 4→C, 5→A

- 111. B — the character or force opposing the protagonist
- 112. A — the struggle between opposing forces
- 113. D — a struggle between two characters
- 114. B — an inner struggle within the character
- 115. B — natural forces (storms, wilderness)
- 116. A — rules, customs, or systems
- 117. a person; it can be a force or situation
- 118. work harder and reveal more of themselves
- 119. as strong and motivated as the protagonist
- 120. flaw or competing desires

Matching (Antagonists & Conflict): 1→A, 2→C, 3→E, 4→D, 5→B

- 121. A — novels, films, comics, games, plays, and more
- 122. A — narration
- 123. C — acting, expression, and action (not narration)
- 124. D — show character through action and choice
- 125. B — making the character's choices themselves
- 126. A — art, expressions, and speech bubbles
- 127. works across different media
- 128. shown through action or dialogue instead
- 129. core identity, want, and flaw
- 130. dialogue and stage action

Matching (Character in Different Media): 1→C, 2→D, 3→A, 4→B, 5→E

- 131. D — feels like a real, consistent person
- 132. C — matches their established traits and motivations
- 133. D — replaces a real person with a flat cliché
- 134. D — specific, individual traits
- 135. A — strengths, flaws, and even contradictions

- 136. B — believability
- 137. gradual and caused by the story
- 138. a fresh, believable character
- 139. predictable and boring
- 140. complicated, with mixed motives
- Matching (Believable & Consistent Characters): 1→E, 2→A, 3→D, 4→B, 5→C

- 141. A — improving them by changing and refining
- 142. A — 'Does this character feel real and specific?'
- 143. B — add a want, a flaw, or a contradiction
- 144. D — sharpen their differences (voice, goals, traits)
- 145. A — a valid revision choice
- 146. C — strengthen and simplify the cast
- 147. clarifying their motivation
- 148. the character behaves like themselves throughout
- 149. voice

- 150. add a real flaw or struggle
- Matching (Revising a Character): 1→C, 2→E, 3→D, 4→B, 5→A

- 151. A — traits, a want, a flaw, a voice, and (often) an arc
- 152. B — want (goal)
- 153. C — fear, wound, or inner need
- 154. B — personality and background
- 155. A — change (or hold firm) across the story
- 156. D — traits, wants, and motivations
- 157. particular, individual details
- 158. central inner conflict
- 159. add a meaningful flaw and a real want

- 160. different sides of who they are
- Matching (Capstone: Building a Whole Character): 1→C, 2→A, 3→D, 4→B, 5→E

161. A character arc! A great story shows a hero who grows, learns, or transforms.
162. Round! Main characters need depth so readers can care about them.
163. Because a flaw gives them somewhere to grow -- a perfect character has no room to change or learn!
164. The "want" is the outer goal; the "need" is the deeper lesson -- and stories often deliver the need instead of the want!
165. Which is "showing" and which is "telling": (A) "Maya was furious." (B) "Maya slammed the door so hard the pictures rattled." A is telling; B is showing! Showing lets readers FEEL the emotion through action.
166. The problem or struggle the character faces! Without conflict -- against another person, nature, society, or themselves -- there's no story to tell.
167. Because the most convincing villains have their own logic and goals -- they're the hero of their own story!
168. The sandwich! Specific, concrete details reveal character far better than labels.
169. To develop a strong arc!
170. Because they had no depth for readers to hold on to!
171. Because a perfect character has nowhere left to grow!
172. Why did the writer ask "what does my character WANT?" Because desire is the engine of every story!
173. Because a scene beats a summary every time!
174. Because a little hint of the past goes a long way!

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