

Building a Character File

Here are some things you might like to consider when you are creating a character file. Use as many or as few of these items as you wish.

On the first two pages, you will find some suggestions to help fire your imagination.

On the second page there is a blank character file ready for you to fill out or copy.

Name	
Age	
Overall Impression	(Lively? Likeable? Tall and energetic? Short? Slow? A whirlwind of activity? Quiet and thoughtful? Intelligent? Stupid?)
General Physical Appearance	Coloring of eyes and hair? Usual expression? Body type? Athletic? Tanned? Any physical handicaps? Type of clothes preferred? (Trendy, old but clean, dirty and torn, exclusive brands, anything that fits, anything whether it fits or not).
Character Traits	Happy? Sad? Awkward in social situations? An only child who finds it hard to socialize? Outgoing and popular? A worrier? Any mental or psychological problems? Happy-go-lucky child who always expects things to work out? Note: A well-rounded character in a longer children's story should have several character traits.
Family Members	Single parent or two parent family? Any other relatives living with them? If so, does this cause any problems? How many siblings? How old are the siblings? How does the character get on with the rest of the family? Happy family life? Any problems of any kind within the family? Which person in the family is this character closest to?
Friends	Does this person have any friends? One special friend? Lots of friends? Two or three close friends? Are they part of a gang or clique? Names and basic character traits of close friend(s)? Who does Character sit with at school? Does Character meet with friends after school and at weekends?

Enemies	Any known enemies? Has anyone got a grudge against Character? Is Character in danger because of personal enemies, or enemies of the family? Why does this person have enemies? Can the rift be mended? Does Character want to be friends with the enemy, or is he/she scared of the enemy?
Hobbies	Does Character have any particular hobbies or interests? Is this hobby or interest vitally important to Character or the story? Does Character have an after-school job (if old enough)? If yes, how does this affect him/her?
Pets	Cats? Dogs? Spiders? Birds? Unusual pets? Are pets loyal? Does Character like his/her pets, or just put up with them because the rest of the family likes them? Does looking after the pet make up a large part of Character's life? Is a loving pet the only thing that makes life worthwhile? Is the pet going to save the day in any way?
Socio-Economic Group	Rich? Poor? Middle class? Poor background but now comfortable? Was rich but parents fell on hard times, so now poor?
Setting: house or dwelling; country, state; planet, or fantasy setting	<p>Where does Character live? A small house? An apartment? A mansion? A caravan or mobile home? Somewhere more exotic or interesting like a houseboat? Does Character like his/her living arrangements?</p> <p>Does Character have to share a room with anyone? If so, does he/she resent this? What does that bedroom look like? Does the room (furnishings, decorations, posters, paintings, objects strewn around, neat cupboards, messy cupboards, collections of things, trophies etc.) give any clues about the type of person who lives in this room?</p> <p>Does the story take place mostly at home? At school? In friends' homes or after-school play areas? In a holiday area? What details are important about the various settings that appear in the story?</p>
Secrets	Does Character have any secrets that he/she would prefer people didn't know about? If yes, does the secret concern something within the family? Is it something Character is hiding from his/her family? Is it something Character is ashamed of, or is he/she hiding this because they've been threatened? Does the whole plot revolve around keeping that secret hidden?
Miscellaneous	Is there anything else about your character that has a bearing on the plot? What is it? Why is it important?

Character File for:

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Character Traits	
Family Members	
Friends	
Enemies	

Hobbies	
Pets	
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Setting: house or dwelling; country, state; planet, or fantasy setting	
Secrets	
Miscellaneous	