

# Character Sketch



Levels 3-12

## Instructions

Use this guide as an aid in creating well-rounded, three-dimensional, and complete fictional characters for stories. The categories are provided so you can jot down notes to yourself and then round them out in prose on a separate sheet of paper.

## Personal Characteristics

- \* Describe your character's age:
  - How old will your character be when the story opens?
  - How much will he age during it?
  - Will you need an epilogue to explain the rest of his life after the story ends?
- \* What does he look like? Note these things to start, then fill in details as he grows clearer in your mind:
  - Hair color, length, and general appearance?
  - Skin color, especially any distinguishing marks?
  - Eye color and details about their overall look: innocent, crafty, sinister, lovely?
  - General height, build, figure (girls), overall presence?
  - How does this person move? Graceful, cloddish, lithe, bent with age?
  - What kinds of general fashions does this person wear?
  - Does this character use anything that you need to know more about: foods, clothing pieces, brands of cigarettes or cars, certain machines, etc.?

## Details of Plot

- \* Outline this character's part in the story:
  - What is his role in the story? Hero, antagonist, minor character?
  - Is this character essential to the plot, or could you do without him? Could another character undertake his role as you had first conceived it?
  - Draw a plot line that illustrates this character's role in the story. Where is the rising action? What is the crisis point? The denouement?
  - Now, on that same plot line, indicate intersections with other characters (as you develop them).
- \* Add this character's plot line to a master story board as you develop it.

## Background Adds Depth of Character

- \* Outline details that will never enter this story:
  - Who were this person's parents and grandparents?
  - Where was this person born? Country, city/town, house (or hospital), etc. Get specific.
  - How many siblings did he have? Are they all living at the time of the story?
  - Were there any shaping events in this person's childhood or formative years?
  - What friends did this character have growing up?
  - What happens to this character after the story ends?
- \* As you finish this part of the character sketch, look back on the information you recorded above. Is there anything that you need to change or adjust?