

Grade 7 Literacy  
Week of October 12 – October 16

**Lesson 3: Writer's Workshop – Short Stories**

**Choose Your Characters**

Characters are an important part of any story. They act out the events and keep things moving along. They are the people, animals, and objects that take part in a story.

Good characters have strengths and weaknesses, just like characters in real life. They are believable and interesting, so we want to keep reading about them. Watch the following video on all the different types of characters found in a story.



Types of Characters: <https://youtu.be/PlzuOCnh2vM>

There are several ways you can develop good characters. You can describe

**1. What your characters look like**

- e.g., Rita was small and fragile but had immense courage.

**2. What your characters do (how they behave and perform)**

- e.g., With a determined effort, Rita managed to get the rowboat into the lake and clamber aboard.

**3. What your characters say**

- e.g., "I'm afraid but I'll do it anyway!" Rita shouted.

**4. What your characters think or say about each other**

- e.g., Polly watched from shore, knowing it was impossible to stop Rita once she decided to do something.



## TIPS FOR CREATING GOOD STORY CHARACTERS

- Keep a “character notebook” and write down details you notice about interesting people you see in stores, on the bus, in the news, etc.
- Look in magazines, newspapers, etc. for pictures of interesting people. Perhaps it is a young woman hiking up Mt. Kilimanjaro or an old man feeding bread crumbs to pigeons in the park.
- Interview someone you think would make a great character. This guarantees your characters are realistic and accurate.
- Decide on the facts about your characters—name, age, family background, occupation, etc. Stick to facts you can easily imagine and that fit with the setting of your story.
- Decide what and who is important to your characters. What are their likes and dislikes, beliefs, dreams, and fears? What do they think about?
- Decide what your characters look like, how they act, and what kind of clothing they wear. What do they talk about and how do their voices sound?
- Decide how your character will change during the story. Figure out what your main character wants and why he or she wants it. What problem(s) does he or she face? How does your character overcome those problems?
- Make sure your character acts and reacts in a believable way. If you don’t think he or she is credible, neither will your audience.
- Reveal new information about your character as the story progresses, not all at once. This will help the audience better understand your character’s actions and motives.
- After you complete your character descriptions, ask a friend or family member to draw a picture of or describe your main characters. This picture or description might give clues about what is missing from your description.

## 1.3 Characters

Think of three main characters for your story. Describe how each of your characters looks, what their likes and dislikes are, and any strange or special behaviours they might have. An example is provided for you.

Example:

Character:	<i>Sarah Mulligan</i>
Description:	<i>Sarah is a fourteen-year-old girl from Alberta. She has straight brown hair and brown eyes, and is very strong and fit. She likes mountain climbing and trekking and travels a lot with her parents to do this. Sarah likes the adventure but sometimes wishes she could stay in one place and be a normal kid who just hangs out with her friends.</i>

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