

Literary Analysis

Character and Characterization



Objectives:

- To identify literary characters as major, minor, dynamic, round, or flat
- To identify the point of view used by a narrator
- To mark text and analyze reading passages for character and point of view

Question:

- Think about a story you have recently read or watched...
- Who is the story about?
- What makes the characters interesting?
- How would the story be different if the characters never changed?
- Who tells this story?

Literary Terms for Character

A character.	is someone who takes part in the action of a narrative
Major characters	are the most important characters in a narrative.
Minor characters	are less important characters who are not the main focus of the action.
The protagonist	is the main character.
The antagonist	is a character or force that is in conflict with the protagonist.
A dynamic character	is someone who changes and learns something as a result of what happens during the narrative
A static character	does not change or develop
A round character	is a complex, fully developed character with many different personality traits
A flat character	is one-sided-someone with just one or two personality traits

PROTAGONIST

VS

**Antagonist
characters**

Protagonist/Antagonist



- It is easiest to think of the protagonist and antagonist characters as the "good guy" and the "bad guy" respectively.

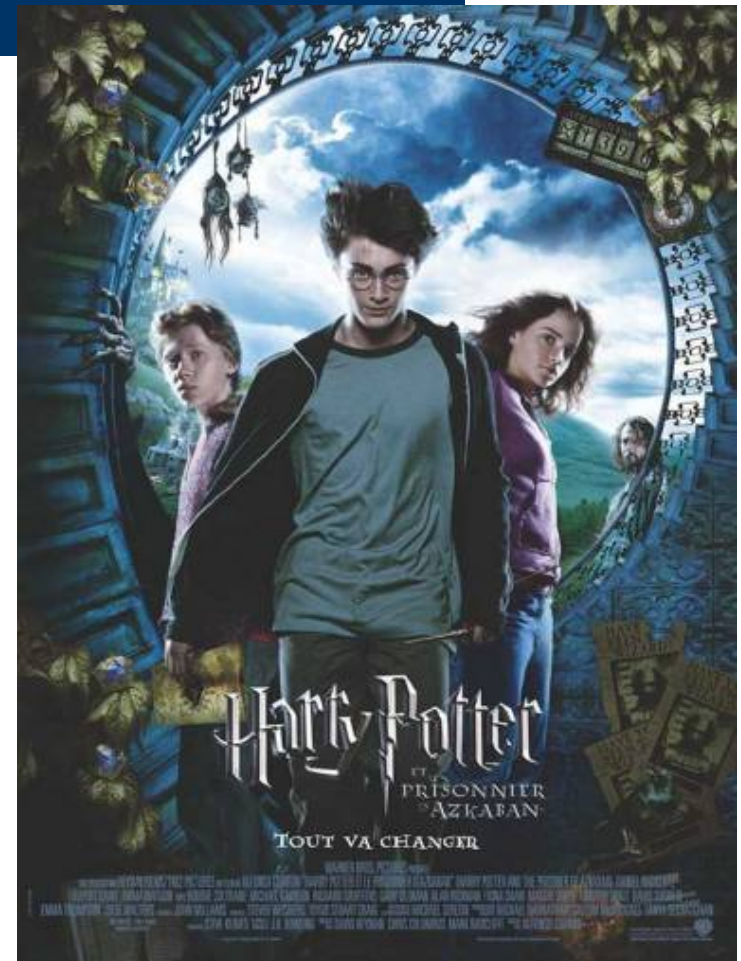
Hero and villain

- In order to understand protagonist and antagonist, you can think of the protagonist as the hero and the antagonist as the villain.



Protagonist

- Central character of story
- Can be male or female
- Written as being "good" most of the time, but in some instances can be "bad."
- Story usually told from protagonist's point of view.



Antagonist

- Causes or leads the conflict against the protagonist
- Not always human, but can be a group or force as well.
- Mirrors protagonist
- Whatever the protagonist does that is good, the antagonist will work to undo.
- Usually the antagonist attempts to disguise him/her/itself.



How to identify

- Think about which character is central to the story. (protagonist)
- Think about which character (or what force) is acting against that central character (antagonist).
- Usually you can consider which character is good and which is bad.
- In most instances, the good character is the protagonist and the bad, or opposing character, is the antagonist.

STATIC

vs

dynamic

characters

dynamic character

- In a story, a **DYNAMIC CHARACTER** is someone who changes in an important and significant way. This internal change happens as a result of events in the plot.
- Ebenezer Scrooge, from Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, is a classic example. When we first meet him, he is mean, bitter, and greedy. Through his experiences with the three ghosts, he becomes generous, kind, & beloved.



static character

- A **static character** is someone whose personality does NOT change significantly throughout the events in the story's plot. Internally, this character is basically the same as he/she was at the story's beginning.
- Disney, as usual, is a great source for an example. Cinderella remains friendly, honorable, and positive despite being orphaned, abused, and taken advantage of by her wicked stepmother and stepsisters.



FLAT

vs.

ROUND

characters

FLAT Characters

- A character whose distinguishing moral qualities or personal traits are summed up in one or two traits. They are not complicated or deep characters.
- For example, Scar, from *The Lion King*, is very much a **FLAT** character. He is **JUST PLAIN EVIL & MEAN!** There is never any point during the movie where he could logically be described any other way. He's not complicated at all; he's easy to predict.



ROUND Characters

- A character whose distinguishing moral qualities or personal traits are complex and many-sided. These characters are complicated and can have both good and bad qualities.
- For example, Woody from *Toy Story*, is definitely a ROUND character. He's an honest, loyal friend and a concerned leader. However, he is not perfect. There are times where his flaws show through; he makes the wrong decisions, gets jealous, and is even selfish at times. He's a complicated guy!



Task:

- Look at the picture
 - Read the caption below the picture
 - Answer the question embedding...
1. What literary terms from your notes could you use to describe what you know about *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*?



Good to Know!

A Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde a book, by Robert Louis Stevenson, features a main character, Dr. Jekyll, who keeps changing into another personality-the violent Mr. Hyde. Written in 1886, it was an instant success, and has been adapted many times for the stage and screen. A “Jekyll and Hyde” has come to mean a person with wildly changeable behaviors.

Task:

Read “from Bronx Masquerade”

I ain't particular about doing homework, you understand. My teachers practically faint whenever I turn something in. Matter of fact, I probably got the longest list of excuses for missing homework of anyone alive. Expect for my homey Tyrone, He tries to act like he's not even interested in school, like there's no point in studying hard, or dreaming about tomorrow, or bothering to graduate. He's got his reasons. I keep on him about going to school, though, saying I need the company. Besides, I tell him, if he drops out and gets a J.O.B., he won't have any time to work on his songs. That always gets to him. Tyrone might convince everybody else that he's all through with dreaming, but I know he wants to be a big hip-hop star. He's just afraid he won't live long enough to do it. ME, I hardly ever thing about checking out. I'm more worried about figuring what I want to do if I live.

- **Answer the questions that follow embedding...**

1. Summarize what this passage reveals about the character of Tyrone.
2. How is the narrator similar to Tyrone? How are these two characters different?
3. Do you think Tyrone will turn out to be a dynamic character-someone who changes? Explain your answer

Literary Term Point of View

● Point of view	is the perspective from which a literary work is told.
● The narrator	is the voice that is telling the narrative
● First person point of view	is when the narrator is telling the story using I, me, and my
● Third person point of view	is when the narrator is someone outside of the action watching the story
● Omniscient third person point of view	is when the narrator is an ALL KNOWING observer who can relate to what every character thinks and feels
● Limited third person point of view	is when the narrator relates to some thoughts and feelings of only one character

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- **Answer the questions that follow embedding...**

What point of view is this told in?

Write in PRETTY FOLDER:

Word	Definition
Characterization	Is the process by which the author reveals the personality of a character.
Direct characterization	TELLS readers what the character's personality IS
Indirect characterization	Shows things that REVEAL the character's personality
	S peech: How does the character speak?
	T houghts: What do the character's thoughts reveal?
	E ffect on Others: How does the character affect other people?
	A ctions: What does the character do? How does the character behave?
	L ook: What does the character look like? How does the character dress?
Dynamic characterization	A character changes; starts one way then ends another
Static characterization	The character stays the same from the beginning to the end

Character Traits

Characters (and real-life people) have unique attributes called traits. Use the following list of character traits as a guideline when writing book reports and essays about the different characters you've read about. Don't stop with this list, though; you can probably think of many more terms to describe your characters.

absent-minded
ambitious
awkward
boastful
bossy
brave
calm
careless
care-free
cautious
changeable
charming
clever
confused
contented
cooperative
courageous
cowardly
cruel

hard-working
curious
daring
demanding
dependable
determined
dreamy
dull
fearful
fierce
forgetful
forgiving
friendly
fussy
generous
gentle
gloomy
greedy

helpful
honest
intelligent
jolly
kind
lazy
loud
loyal
mischievous
nagging
neat
obedient
organized
outspoken
patient
playful
pleasant
polite
quarrelsome

reasonable
reckless
relaxed
restless
rude
self-centered
selfish
sensitive
sentimental
serious
sharp-witted
shiftless
shrewd
shy
sneaky
soft-hearted
quick-tempered
quiet

spunky
stern
stingy
stubborn
superstitious
suspicious
talkative
timid
tough
trusting
understanding
unfriendly
unkind
wise
withdrawn
witty
zany