



How to write a characterization

What is a characterization?

A characterization is a written portrait of a person from a book that aims at drawing a complete picture of how this person is, behaves, acts, looks and thinks. In order to do this, we have to look at different aspects:

- **appearance and physical aspects:** What does the character look like? What are the character's physical attributes?
- **social background, family and friends:** How is the character's relationship to other characters in the story? What kinds of friends does he/she have? How does he/she treat other people? What is his/her family background?
- **behaviour:** How does the character behave? How does he/she act and react in certain situations? How does the character's behaviour change throughout the story?
- **feelings and thoughts:** What does the character think or feel most of the time? How do his/her feelings change? How does the character deal with his/her own feelings? What is the character's attitude towards other characters?

Most of the time, the narrator does not tell us all of these things directly. Instead, we have to draw conclusions about the character's personality traits ourselves by interpreting his/her actions and thoughts.

Tips for writing your characterization

Your characterization should not just be a simple list of character traits. Instead, you should show and make clear how all of the different characteristics relate to one another and work together to create this character.

Before you start writing your characterization, take notes and collect examples and evidence from the text. Make sure to focus on the most important facts and character traits. It is not necessary to mention every single detail.

Use connectors (*at first, moreover, finally, etc.*) to structure your text.

How to structure your characterization

1. Introduction

In the introduction, you should mention all of the important facts about a person that need to be known (name, age, hometown, etc.).

2. Main part:

In the main part, you present all the important character traits by giving examples and showing how these are related to each other. One character trait should be presented in one paragraph.

3. Conclusion:

The conclusion should round off your findings by giving a short summary of the things mentioned earlier (Be careful to not just repeat what you've already said!).