

Teacher Notes

Subject: Language arts

Topic: Story characters

Title: Characters and Characterization

Grade(s): 6, 7, 8

Cross-curricular link(s): Non specific

Intended learning outcome(s)

- Students will achieve a better understanding of the types of characters found in stories
- Students will gain insight into methods authors use to build characters
- Students will identify the types of characters found in the story they are reading
- Students will identify the type of characterization used by the author to develop each character
- Students will complete a chart identifying the types of characters and types of characterization used to develop character in story

Recommended usage: Whole group instruction to introduce kinds of characters and how authors develop characterization in stories

**[How to use Notebook\(TM\) software](#)**

Learn helpful tips and tricks for developing and presenting lesson activities.

© 2004 SMART Technologies Inc. All rights reserved.

For further information, please see [copyright notice](#).

[See standards for this lesson linked here](#)

Characters and Characterization

Windows(R) operating system and Mac OS X
operating system software

Submitted by Marilyn Baker

In this lesson you will learn about the kinds of characters found in stories and how authors develop these characters to make a story interesting.

First, however, you must know what a character is.

What are characters?

All stories have **characters** who are affected by the plot or setting of a story. They can be...

people



taken from
<http://www.clipart.com>

animals



taken from
<http://www.clipart.com>

or even things that have

been human qualities



taken from
<http://www.clipart.com>

Types of characters

- * Round
- * Flat
- * Dynamic
- * Static

Round Characters

These characters are considered "round" because

- * His or her traits are fully described, are true-to-life and have a convincing personality
- * His or her motives are understood by the reader

Round Characters

usually main character(s)



taken from
<http://www.clipart.com>

Round Characters

Other characteristics of round characters

- ✓ Described like real, living men or women
- ✓ Display many different aspects to his or her character and can't be described in a few phrases or sentences
- ✓ Main characters usually round characters
- ✓ Also known as dynamic characters
- ✓ Often have hidden qualities that surprise the reader
- ✓ Usually go through a noticeable change from the beginning of the story to the end

Flat Characters



Flat characters are considered "flat" because

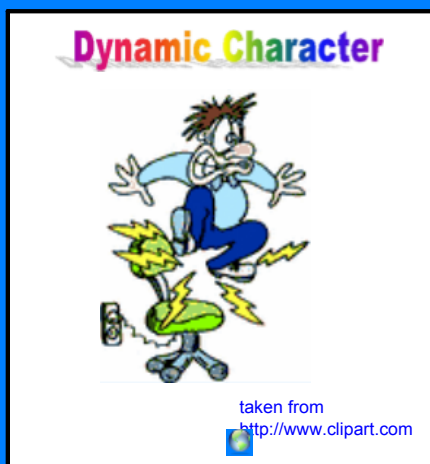
- * Their personalities never fully develop
- * The purpose of flat characters is to highlight the development of round characters

Flat Characters

Characteristics of flat characters

- ✓ Characterized by an easily identifiable single dominant trait such as "honest" or "side kick"
- ✓ Completely predictable and remain same throughout story
- ✓ Reader seldom knows about their feelings or motives
- ✓ Tend to be static since their personalities do not develop
- ✓ Things may happen to a static character, but nothing happens *within* the character

Dynamic Character



Dynamic characters are considered "dynamic" because

* They undergo some type of important change in personality or attitude during the course of the story

* This change takes place within the character

Static Character

Static characters are considered "static" because they do not change or develop beyond the way in which he or she was first presented in the story.



Characters can also be a/an

Protagonist - a hero or heroine who is the central character and who engages the reader's interest

Antagonist - the character that stands directly opposed to the protagonist and gives rise to the conflict of the story

Characterization

Characterization is the method used by the author to make a character come alive in a story or to reveal the character's personality.

Two ways to show characterization

1. direct
2. indirect

Direct characterization

Direct characterization is the method in which the author directly states what a character is like

Example: "Mr. Thomas is a very grumpy person when he first gets up in the morning until he gets a cup of coffee."



taken from
<http://www.clipart.com>

Indirect characterization

The method in which the author shows or dramatizes a character's personality indirectly by

- * Showing the character acting and speaking
- * Revealing the character's inner thoughts
- * Giving a physical description of the character
- * Revealing what other characters think about the character or relate to him or her

The author allows you, the reader, to draw your own conclusions about the character.

Read the following examples of characterization.

Decide which one is an example of direct characterization and which one is an example of indirect characterization.

Move each box to see if you are right.

(A) Jamie is one of those people who is constantly cheerful. Her eyes twinkle and a smile is always on her face. She is always bubbling over with happiness and laughing, and she makes everyone around her happy too.

(B) Ashley watched Jamie from across the cafeteria. She began to smile as she watched Jamie walk in her direction. She moved aside as Jamie walked past her. "Just look how everyone smiles and laughs when Jamie comes near them or joins their group," Ashley whispered to Thomas. "Her personality stands out in a room. If I were unhappy, I would try to find Jamie!"

★ Your turn

Fill a chart for each of the characters in your story. Add more pages like this one as needed.

name of character	
Characterization	
Method:	Example:
Physical description	
Character's thoughts	
What others think of the character	
Direct comments about the character	

Fill a chart for each of the characters in your story.

name of character	
Characterization	
Method:	Example:
Physical description	
Character's thoughts	
What others think of the character	
Direct comments about the character	

Fill a chart for each of the characters in your story.

name of character	
Characterization	
Method:	Example:
Physical description	
Character's thoughts	
What others think of the character	
Direct comments about the character	

Fill a chart for each of the characters in your story.

name of character	
Characterization	
Method:	Example:
Physical description	
Character's thoughts	
What others think of the character	
Direct comments about the character	

Fill a chart for each of the characters in your story.

name of character	
Characterization	
Method:	Example:
Physical description	
Character's thoughts	
What others think of the character	
Direct comments about the character	

★ Your turn

Fill in the following chart using the characters from the story we are reading. Place each character in the correct column.

Round Character(s)	Flat Character(s)	Dynamic Character(s)	Static Character(s)	Direct Characterization	Indirect Characterization