

Character Analysis Guide

	List the main characters and the important secondary characters.
What does he look like?	What is his appearance? Is he fat, skinny, unkempt, meticulous, hairy, short? What clothes is he wearing? How old is he?
Basic Psychological Characteristics	Psychological characteristics have to do mostly with temperament. Is he basically mean, arrogant, wily, shy, aggressive, kind, a liar, a coward, conniving, angry, morose, depressed, helpful or innocent? Does he value honor, integrity, power, kindness, duty or security? Is he dependent on how other characters think about him? What does he fear?
How does he speak?	Is he intelligent or unintelligent? Is his language simplistic, full of wit, or humorous? Does he use words to hurt other characters or manipulate them? Is his language clear or vague?
What does he want?	Characters pursue an objective, and that objective will vary according to his consciousness of his wants. He might not consciously know what he wants. That objective will also vary according to the strength of his motivation (weak to strong) and according to the source of his desire resulting in spontaneous, deliberate, obstinate, or impulsive decisions.
How does he get what he wants?	Different characters faced with the same situation will respond differently, usually due to psychological characteristics. Does he plead or manipulate to get what he wants? Does he attack, flee, have an "I don't care" attitude, lie, complain, whine, or convince or persuade other characters?
What does he do when faced with problems?	Faced with adversity, a character tends to respond true to himself. If that adversity is truly threatening, then the character is completely revealed. What are the instances when a character is truly threatened? How does he respond? Does he lash out, have a mental breakdown, or withdraw?
What is his emotional state?	Is he melancholy, frustrated, confused, angry, hateful, or compassionate? This closely ties to basic psychological traits. What causes the character's emotional state? This question leads to understanding a character's emotional state that carries from before the play begins to the end and ties to his past.
What do other characters say about him?	Sometimes we can gain insight about a character by what others say about him. However, what others say about a character is not necessarily true.
What does he represent?	One of the most important questions, this leads to an awareness of the relationship between a character and the society of the world of the drama and often links to the playwright's world and need to write.
What is his station in life?	This question ties to the society of the world of the drama, but focuses on class.
What is expected from him?	A character's station in life often promotes certain expectations. What does society as represented by other characters expect from him? Expectations, however, are not always due to a character's station in life. At times, characters simply expect another to behave or believe in certain ways, and sometimes this creates conflict.