

Character Traits (Personality Traits)

Characters do things. They feel things. They hear things. They say things. They think things. They go places. They can walk, run, leap, and jump. They may sit and rock in a rocking chair. They may just lie in bed, sleep, and dream. But the important thing is that characters **act**. These actions show us the character's personality ("personality" means what kind of person someone is based on their thoughts, feelings and actions): friendly, sad, nosey, happy, lovestruck, confused, angry, etc.

When we talk about a character, we often describe that character in terms of character traits, descriptive adjectives like "happy" or "sad" that tell us the specific qualities of the character.

They're the same kinds of words that we might use to describe ourselves or others, but we're using them to describe fictional characters in something we've read.

The author may tell us these traits directly, but more often the author will show us these traits in action. Our job as readers is to draw a conclusion about the character's traits (to infer them) from what the character says, thinks, and does.

We might infer a character trait from something a character does only once, or we might draw our conclusions from a series of things the character says and does.

The above was modified slightly by Mr. C from: <http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson175/RWT186-1.pdf>

To help identify a character's personality traits, look at Look at the main character's personality:

- Look at the choices the character has to make and how those choices affect the character and other characters in the story.
- Look at the character's motives (reason for doing or not doing things).
- Look for changes in the character's thinking, behaving or feelings.
- Think about how you relate to the character(s)—the feelings you get about the character, such as: "She's a real jerk," or "I'm sad because of the way he was treated," etc.

Examples of Personality Traits

adventurous

afraid

ambitious

angry

annoyed

anxious

arrogant

bad

bossy

brave

busy

calm

careful

careless

cautious

cheerful

childish

clever

clumsy

confident

confused
cooperative
courageous
cruel
curious
daring
demanding
dependable

depressed
determined
dishonest
disrespectful
doubtful
eager
easygoing
embarrassed

energetic
evil
excited
fearless
foolish
friendly
frustrated
funny

gentle
grateful
greedy
grouchy
guilty
happy
hard-working
helpful

honest

hopeful

imaginative

impatient

impolite

independent

intelligent

jealous

kind

lazy

lonely

loving

loyal

mean

messy

mischievous

mysterious

naughty

nervous

nice

obnoxious

polite

proud

quiet

responsible

rowdy

rude

sad

scared

selfish

serious

shy

silly

smart

sneaky

sorry

spoiled

stubborn

sweet

talented

thankful

thoughtful

trustworthy

unhappy

upset

weak

worried