Character Development Worksheet

*To be used in conjunction with “How to Develop a Character”*

1. Background

How old is your character?

Where does your character live?

What is the race/ethnicity and gender of your character?

Does your character have any close living relatives?

Has your character been affected by the death of a close relative?

Is your character in a romantic relationship? If so, with who? Describe the relationship.

What is your character’s occupation? Does he or she enjoy this occupation? How long has he or she been working there?

What is your character’s average income? How much money does your character have in savings?

What is the highest level of education that your character has completed?

1. Appearance

Draw your character as he or she would look on an average day in his or her favorite outfit.

Now that you have drawn your character, use the space below to write as many descriptive adjectives as possible based on your depiction.

Now that you have drawn your character, use the space below to write as many descriptive adjectives and general observations as possible based on your depiction.

1. Philosophy

Does your character subscribe to a particular theology? If so, why and for how long? Has your character experimented with any other religions?

Does your character believe in absolute truth or relative truth? Is this belief in accordance with your character’s religious beliefs or are these two beliefs at odds?

What is your character’s opinion on morality?

Where does your character stand on the relationship between faith and reason? Is your character more likely to take actions based on belief or on logical conclusions?

Does your character believe in fate or destiny?

What does your character believe occurs after death?

Does your character subscribe to any particular philosophies of great importance to his or her life? (Ex: Solipsism, skepticism, nihilism, determinism, fallibilism, etc.)

1. Hardships & Victories

What is your character’s most devastating hardship? What is your character’s greatest accomplishment? How do these events compare? (Does the hardship severely outweigh the accomplishment or vice-versa? How does this affect your character?)

Describe your character’s childhood. Was it governed more by hardships or victories? Why?

Has your character ever battled addiction? If so, what was your character addicted to, and for how long? Did your character ever become clean? If so, how long did it take, and how long has your character been clean? Has your character ever relapsed?

1. Health

Does your character have any mental disorders? If pre-existing, did your character’s parents suffer from the same condition? If so, how did they deal with it? If caused by a particular event, describe the event and how your character has handled the issue.

Does your character have any physical or mental/intellectual disabilities? If pre-existing, did your character’s parents suffer from the same condition? If so, how did they deal with it? If caused by a particular event, describe the event and how your character has handled the issue.

Does your character suffer from any physical conditions such as diseases, cancers, or recurring illnesses? If so, how do these conditions affect your character?

Does your character have any learning disabilities? If so, how does the character face these challenges?

Does your character have any undiagnosed medical conditions? If so, how do they affect the character’s life and why have they gone undiagnosed?

How physically fit is your character? How does his or her appearance affect his or her self-image?

What is your character’s workout regime? Why?

What is your character’s diet? Why?

1. Demeanor

Would your character identify him/herself as an introvert or an extrovert? Why?

Would your character identify him/herself as anxious or assured? Why?

Would your character identify him/herself as friendly or hostile? Why?

Would your character identify him/herself as narcissistic, self-hating, or somewhere in between? Why?

Would your character identify him/herself as a pushover or fast-standing? Why?

Would your character identify him/herself as trustworthy or dishonest? Why?

Would your character identify him/herself as proud or generally ashamed? Why?

When scheduled for a meeting at a certain time, is your character likely to be early, on-time, or late? Why?

Does your character seem approachable to other characters? Why?

1. Archetype

Of the twelve Jungian Archetypes, which do you think your character most resembles? Why?

Would your character identify him/herself as the archetype you chose? Why or why not?

Of the twelve Jungian Archetypes, which would other characters identify your primary character as? Why?

How does your character detract from his or her archetype? Why?

1. Hamartia

What is your character’s fatal flaw?

Does this flaw play a large role in your story’s greater plot? How? If not, how does this flaw affect your character?

Is this flaw inherent in your character? If so, how has the flaw revealed itself throughout your character’s life? If not, what event resulted in this flaw?

Is your character aware of this flaw? If so, how has he/she combated this flaw? If not, why is the character unaware?

1. Situations

If your character were to step on chewed gum, how would he/she react? Why?

If your character were to encounter a person begging for money, how would he/she react? Why?

If your character were faced with an armed mugger, how would he/she react? Why?

If your character were engaged by a missionary of a different religion, how would he/she react? Why?

If your character were faced with a situation where he/she could steal without being caught, how would he/she react? Why?

If your character were faced with a military draft, how would he/she react? Why?

If your character were about to park in a parking space but another driver stole the spot, how would he/she react? Why?

If your character were to be challenged to a fight, how would he/she react? Why?

1. Myers-Briggs Personality Test

Take the Myers-Briggs Personality Test that is linked in the instructable. Once you have completed the test, list the possible five-letter personality type of your character here:

List some aspects of the personality type that was assigned to your character. Do you think that these characteristics line up with how your see your character? Why or why not?

Which of the personality types do you feel best embodies your character? Why?

Are there any aspects of this personality type that do not line up with the characteristics you created for your character? How will you address this conflict in your writing?

Take the personality test one more time. Do you get the same results? If your results are different, does one of these new personalities better embody your character? Why or why not?

How will you utilize the personality results to expand your character’s traits within the context of your story’s plot?