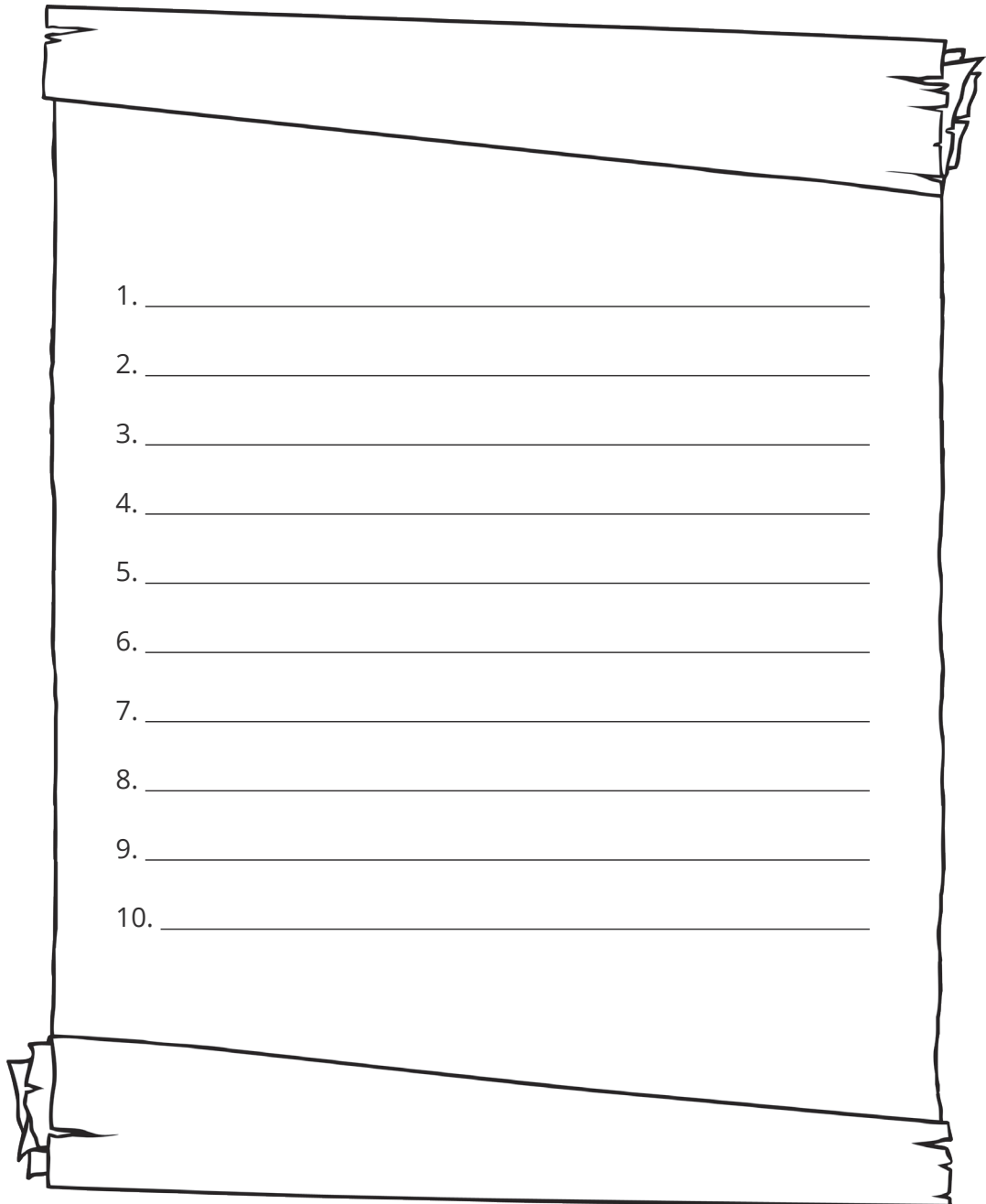


English Language Fiction Writing

Creating a Character List

What makes an effective character description? Make a list here.

Remember: make your list as comprehensive as possible, as you'll be using it again!



A hand-drawn scroll with ten numbered lines for a character list. The scroll is drawn with a simple black outline and has a slightly wavy, torn edge effect. The lines are numbered 1 through 10, and each number is followed by a horizontal line for writing.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

KS3 English Language Fiction Writing

Creating a Character Reference Mat

<p>What is your character's background? Where do they come from? How old are they? What were their parents like?</p>	<p>What challenges has your character faced?</p>	<p>What are your character's strengths?</p>
<p>How does your character speak? Think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do they use certain words or phrases?• Do they have a formal or informal tone?• Do they have an accent or dialect?• Do they say what they mean?	<p>Show us what your character is like through their actions and how other people react to them – don't just tell us.</p>	<p>What are your character's weaknesses?</p>
	<p>What does your character look like? How could you show us their appearance?</p>	<p>What are your character's quirks? What makes them different?</p>

KS3 English Language Fiction Writing

Favourite Character

Think of your favourite character from film, TV or books. What do you know about them?

What do they look like?

What is their backstory (how have they got to where they are today)?

What are their weaknesses?

How would you describe their personality?

What are their strengths?

Character name:

What makes them interesting to you?

English Language Fiction Writing

roducing Characters

Read these character descriptions from works of literature. What do you learn about the characters here? How are the descriptions effective? Clue: don't just look at what is said, but at what is **implied**.

Description	What do we learn?
<p>'Tomes was a small man, thin as a stick and with the complexion of a tallow candle, and a permanent cold, which caused him to sniff every twenty seconds, for which reason he was confined to a cubby hole in an outer lobby, where he kept ledgers and received visitors, with an air of suffering and melancholy that put them in mind of Last Wills and Testaments'</p> <p>The Woman in Black by Susan Hill</p>	
<p>'I thought he was dead. He was sitting with his legs stretched out, and his head tipped back against the wall. He was covered in dust and webs like everything else and his face was thin and pale. Dead bluebottles were scattered on his hair and shoulders.</p> <p>I shone the torch on his white face and black suit.'</p> <p>Skellig by David Almond</p>	
<p>'She was Mother's aunt, but always insisted we call her "Grandma" because she thought Great Aunt made her sound old and crotchety, which she always was. We hadn't liked her before she moved in – as much on account of her moustache as anything else – and we liked her even less now that she had. We all knew her story: how she'd worked up at the Big House for the Colonel for years as a housekeeper, and how, for some reason, the Colonel's wife couldn't stand her.'</p> <p>Private Peaceful by Michael Morpurgo</p>	

English Language Fiction Writing

Make It Better

Read these character descriptions. Can you improve on them?

Description	Your improved version - show, don't tell!
<p>He was tall and had dark, wavy hair. When he smiled, he had lots of perfect white teeth. He seemed perfect in every way, but in fact he was a hard-hearted killer.</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>The woman strode into the room, commanding everyone's attention. She was confident and strong, with hair swept back from her face to show steely, determined eyes. Everyone knew instantly that she was the expert on astrophysics that they had been waiting for.</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>The boy was clearly terrified. His hands were shaking and his eyes were dark with fear. He was wearing tatty clothes and had dirty fingernails. He looked like he hadn't eaten in a long time.</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



KS3 English Language Writing – Lesson Characters Teaching Ideas

Learning Objective:

To create a detailed and convincing character description.

Success Criteria:

- To consider what makes a rounded character.
- To analyse how character introductions from literature are effective.
- To write my own character introduction.

Context

This is the second lesson in a KS3 unit of work focussing on KS4 English Language writing assessment objectives. In this lesson, students consider what makes a detailed and interesting character description, and apply it to their own work.

The focus for this lesson is AO5: **Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively**, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences; organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts.

Starter

Favourite Characters

You could start by asking students to think about their favourite character in literature or film. What do they know about them? They could fill in the **Favourite Character Worksheet**, and then share as a class discussion. What makes a character believable? How does a character become 3D rather than 2D?

Main Activities

Famous Characters

Now, you could explain that this lesson we will be looking at how to create a fully-rounded character in our writing. The **Introducing Characters Worksheet** has some examples of characters from literature. What do students learn about the characters from these descriptions? Discuss **showing not telling** – showing a character's attributes through their actions, rather than just by telling us.

Make It Better!

Students could now try to rewrite the character descriptions on the **Make It Better Worksheet**, trying to show, not tell. For lower-ability students, the **Creating a Character Mat** will help to support their work.

Write Your Own!

Next, students could pick one of the **Character Cards** as a writing prompt to create their own character descriptions. Again, lower-ability students could use the **Creating a Character Mat** to support their work.

Plenary

Make a List!

Finally, can students create a list of techniques for creating a character using the **Creating a Character List**? This will be a useful revision resource for a writing task at the end of the unit.