

## Character Sketch

Here is a sampling of deeper questions about what makes your character tick. Don't try to answer all of them - choose two or three, ponder them in light of your character, and then write a scene about it. In other words, write a character sketch! Putting your character into action will develop him/her in a much deeper way than making a list. You'll understand him better, and that understanding will translate into richer, more real characters as you tell your story.

- **What is your character afraid of?** Failure? Abandonment? Spiders? Write a scene showing the origin of this fear, and another showing this fear in recent times.
- **What gives your character joy?** Not the short-lived pleasure of a momentary accomplishment, but joy found deep within. Family? A creative pursuit? Service to others? Finding one's place in the world? Write a scene showing this.
- **How does your character show love?** A hug? A gift? A smile when he/she helps someone? Write a scene with your character expressing his/her love for someone else. Include both large and small actions.
- **What makes your character angry?** How does he/she react? With a verbal tirade? Physical violence? Fuming inside? Write a scene showing him/her dealing with a frustrating situation.
- **How competitive is your character?** What is worth competing for? Job? Sports? Sibling Rivalry? Write a scene where your character loses. Write one where he/she wins.
- **What does your character think about during downtime?** Past experiences? Philosophical questions? Hopes? Disappointments? Put your character on a boring freeway drive and get inside his/her head for a scene or two.
- **What "unreachable" dream does your character have?** Climbing Mt. Everest? Becoming a heart surgeon? Why is this important? Write a scene when your character realizes he/she will never achieve this dream.
- **What would your character have to give up to realize this dream?** Write a scene where your character figures out that the dream is possible. Show him/her choosing to make the sacrifices necessary to achieve the dream. Or write a scene where your character decides that the dream isn't worth sacrificing other things of value.

Once you've written a scene or two, add some personality quirks for your character. Does heavy metal music help her think? Does he always need pizza or chocolate-covered raisins or tangerine Lifesavers to make a long drive? Does his smile turn up at one corner when he thinks of a child? Can she wiggle her ears or do magic tricks or put on a Scottish accent?

Read more at Suite101: [Creating Characters That Live: Write Scenes to Get to Know the People in Your Story](http://www.suite101.com/content/creating-characters-that-live-a21102#ixzz1CGVvBDIT) <http://www.suite101.com/content/creating-characters-that-live-a21102#ixzz1CGVvBDIT>