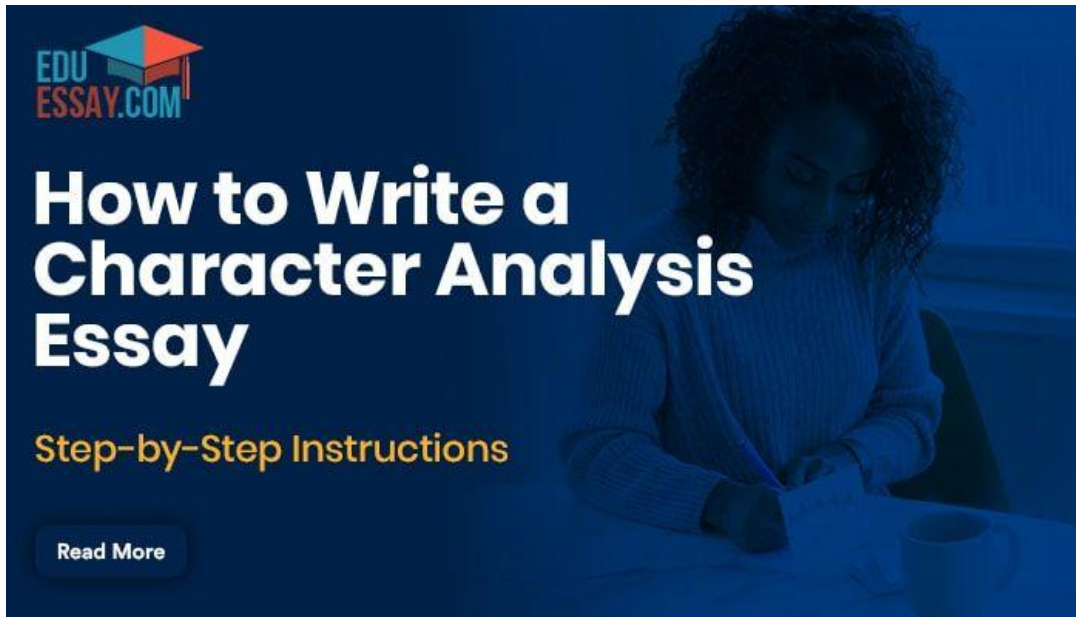


How to Write a Character Analysis Essay: Step-by-Step Instructions



If you've been assigned to write a character analysis essay for the first time, you're probably wondering how to do so. Character analysis essays require more than just describing someone's physical appearance or talking about the things they've done in the story; you have to dig deeper into the text.

Character analysis worksheet is more than just a description of what happens in the book; it requires an understanding of that person's motivations and significance within the context of their relationship with other characters in the story.

In this blog post, we will go over step-by-step instructions on properly writing a character analysis essay!

What is a character analysis essay?

A character analysis essay identifies the qualities and attributes of a specific character. It includes things that the person does in their writing, or occasionally from other types of art like filmography.

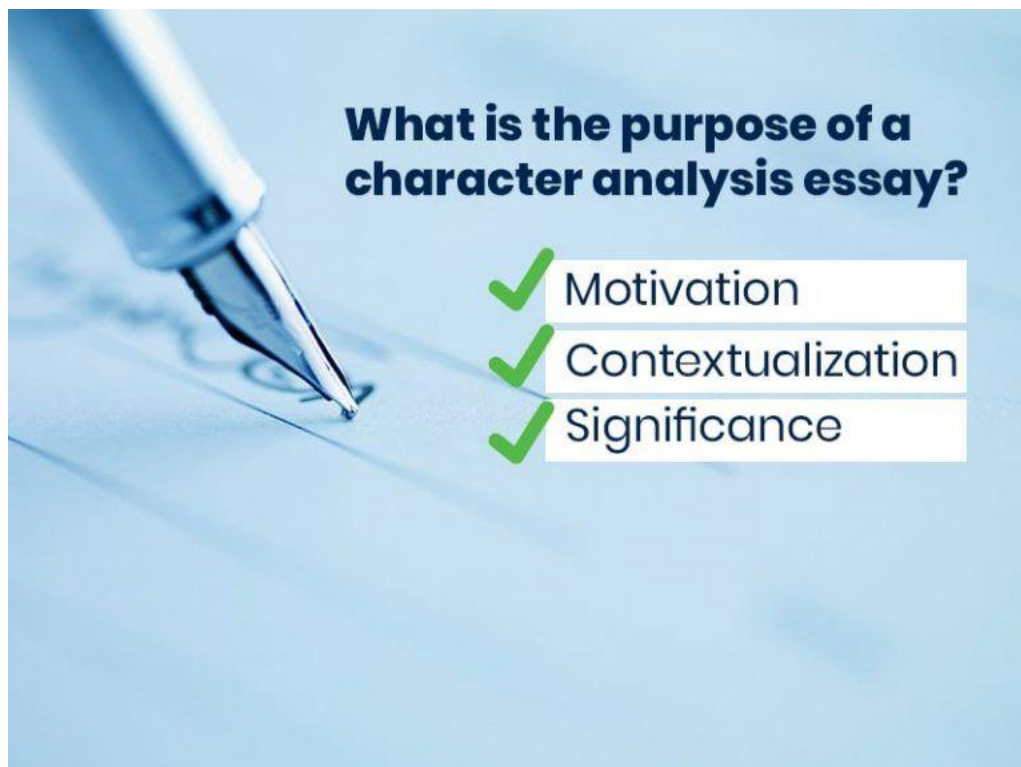
Character analysis essays are written to describe and analyze a character from a novel or play. Character analysis essays can be either positive or negative, with the end goal of revealing how that single person's actions have impacted the story and their significance about other characters.

A character analysis exposition is not enough to properly judge a character's actions.

To accurately understand the value an individual plays in the story, you must analyze more than just their physical appearance and context. You need to also dive into the motivations, the significance of their character and explain how they play a "role."

Throughout a character analysis, writers may discuss the characters' personality traits, perspective on society, and interactions with others.

What is the purpose of a character analysis essay?



Character analysis essays are a great way to analyze the motivations and actions of particular characters within the literature. Character analyses can vary in length, depending on how well-developed the character is or how much context they have for their story, but most commonly contain three paragraphs that cover these elements:

Motivation

What motivates this character? For example, if you're analyzing Hamlet from Shakespeare's play "The Tragedy of Hamlet," it would be motivation might be his desire for revenge because he feels like Claudius' murder of King Hamlet has wronged him.

Contextualization

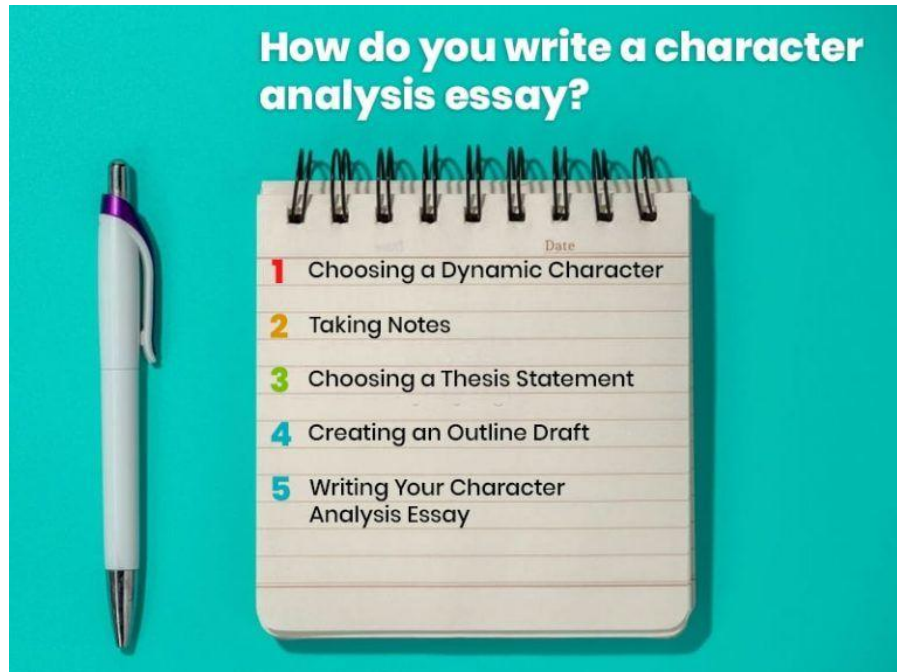
How does this character fit into the larger world around them? If we were looking at Cinderella again, it could be helpful to explore her motivations about the other characters around her. For example, is she motivated by a desire for independence? A need to take care of herself and not rely on anyone else?

Significance

What does this character add to the story as a whole, or how do they impact other characters? So if we were looking at Harry Potter again, it might be helpful to examine his significance regarding Draco Malfoy. How are their motivations similar/different? Do they have any similarities that would make them good friends (or enemies)?

This blog will guide you through all elements to write your own perfect Character Analysis paper!

How do you write a character analysis essay?



Character analysis essays are designed to take the reader through a person's life and explain their relationship, motivations, the context within the story, and significance. Main Character analyses usually start with what is known about this character from the text. Character traits like physical appearance or personality can be included and should not make up most of your essay (you don't want it to read like a list!).

Step 1: Choosing a Dynamic Character

Pick a main character who is dynamic and unique. Character development essays are often written about these characters because you can analyze their story over time.

Choose a person who has changed throughout the book or one whose personality seems conflicted in some way. It will make for an interesting read with many angles to explore. Character analyses usually occur during key personal moments within the text, so you must pick someone crucial to those events!

George (The Catcher in The Rye) changes dramatically from being self-centered at first but realizes he must grow up when his brother dies; Holden Caulfield (The Catcher in The Rye) starts as selfish and ends up more mature.

Step 2: Taking Notes

If you are taking notes on an essay analyzing a personal character, it can be helpful to do some preparation. If you have the opportunity, try to think of your favorite character before reading the text and take notes while reading about them.

Otherwise, work backward by choosing a favorite character after finishing the text and re-reading parts with that focus. It will make note-taking easier as well.

To write a proper character analysis, it's essential to take notes in these areas:

Pertinent Childhood Facts

Gathering background ideas about a character is an important aspect of researching them. A search of such facts as their birthplace, family structure, and any classic childhood moments will be significant to the story.

Before you get into the "core" of your study, you must understand where your character came from.

Note what you can talk about for their place of birth, family structure, or any childhood incidents addressed in the text.

Physical and character traits

Before you can properly delve into the complexities of a character's motivations, context to the story, and significance in the text, you must provide a basic description of who they are to the reader. Character traits such as physical appearance or temperament will help writing the essay.

Listing their general character trait and other distinguishing features (hobbies/interests) should suffice for this step.

Motivation/Explanations

After having provided information about where your character comes from and what their character traits look like. There needs to be support for why they make certain decisions—why do these events happen? What were their motives? To fully understand who your character is, you must know the reasons behind their actions.

Their Context throughout the Story

It is a necessary step because it gives you insight into what might happen if your character were to interact with other characters or objects in the story and react to certain situations. If several plots could have occurred throughout the story on account of them, then explain each one as if this were an alternate timeline.

The plot elements

To display the inherent complexities, you must investigate five plot elements - introduction, rising-action, climax, falling-action, and resolution. What did your character do to help the plot achieve any of these elements? How did they overcome any conflict or struggles? How did they change or grow for the story?

The subject of your paper might depend on where you're in school. For example, if you're at an undergraduate level, there may be more emphasis on specific events during the book; some colleges even ask students to compare two characters' personalities side-by-side.

Step 3: Choosing a Thesis Statement

The last step to complete your character analysis essay is writing your thesis statement. This sentence should summarize and support the entire paper: what you want readers to know about this specific character trait and why they need to know.

Take this for Character Analysis Example: This paper will analyze Gatsby's character from Nick's point of view. It will discuss how Gatsby overcame past struggles to become a wealthy man and why his history is important for readers to understand.

Step 4: Creating an Outline Draft

After your thesis statement, it's time to draft an outline. You'll want the following categories at a bare minimum: introduction, a few paragraphs about the protagonist, and conclusion.

- Introduction
- Character Analysis - How Character Came to Be Significant - Thesis Statement for Essay
- The Character of Gatsby from Nick's Point of View
- Background Information on Character from Book Text/Contextual Clues
- Motivations and Context Behind Actions within Story; Why They are Important?
- Conclusion or Final Thoughts
- Summary of Paper, Reviewing What We Learned About Character From Text/Situation Within Plotline + Importance of Character's Role.
- Suggestions for Further Reading/What We Learned

Step 5: Writing Your Character Analysis Essay

Use your thesis statement, outline, and notes to write a character analysis essay that follows a standard essay format.

Introduction

The beginning of the analysis should answer the question "why?" - who is worth examining and why. Next, highlight something intriguing to the reader about your character before giving a one-sentence thesis statement of what you plan to say in this essay.

Body

Subdivide your body paragraphs into different ideas or areas of the character. Review your professor's rubric page, and ensure that you touch on everything required. It should also provide you with questions to formulate your analysis idea when writing your essay.

Background Information

One way to introduce the character and why their childhood may be related to who they are now is with a paragraph or two about where they were born, how much time they spent growing up in many different places, conflict, and other pertinent information.

Personality and Character traits

Now it's time to dig into your character page and description with a few in-depth examples. Discuss their independence or shyness and the way they interact with conflict and others. Pinpointing these traits will help bring them to life for your reader, pointing out what makes this person special about them.

Personality and character traits are often mistaken for one another, but there is a real distinction. Character traits relate to morality and purpose, whereas personality traits deal with the exterior.

Character Growth

Conflict is an integral part of any story, no matter how it manifests. The most obvious form is through a physical altercation, such as a swordfight on the battlefield; however, other types of conflict delve deeper to complete the character.

Body Summary

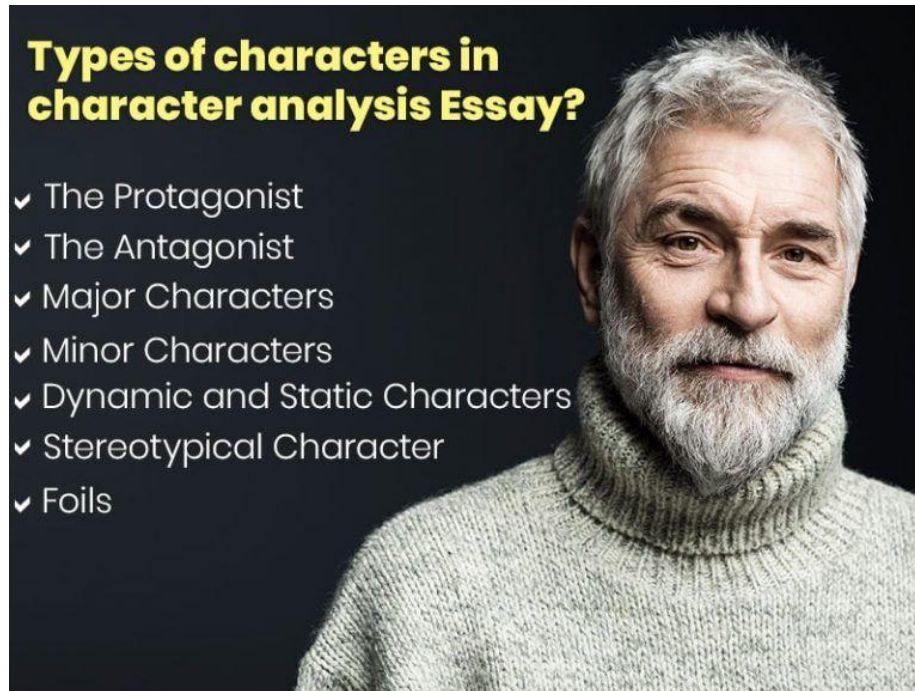
In summary, the body should answer the following questions,

- What are the character's physical appearance, personality, and characteristics?
- How did the character overcome their conflicts?
- How do these details affect our understanding of this character?
- What are the character's actions/motivations?
- What is the character like? How do they treat other people? Are they fair or unfair to people?
- What do they say? How can you tell their choice of words?
- Where does the character stand about other characters? What kind of relationships do they have with them? How significant are these relationships to the story?
- What words do you associate with the protagonist?

Conclusion

You've nearly reached the end of your journey. In this stage, you will be writing a conclusion, and it is time to bring all your thoughts together into one final analysis statement or argument that will summarize what has been said throughout. Mention how conflicts and predicaments in the text can be seen enacted in real life and differences, if any, between what should have happened.

Types of characters in character analysis Essay?



To write a good character analysis essay, you need to know the different types of characters within any given story. The kind of character you choose to read will impact your ability to create a detailed discussion. You should assume what significance they have in the story and decide whether or not it is suitable for your needs.

The following few categories will go into detail on each of these types of characters, but here is some general idea:

The Protagonist

The protagonist is typically the main character of a story. Every story needs a protagonist. Without one, there can't be any major plot points or progression in your story.

Some notable Protagonist include,

- Harry Potter (The Harry Potter Series)

- Ariel (The Little Mermaid)
- Frodo Baggins (The Hobbit Series) etc.

Often a protagonist will be the good guy in a story. However, an anti-hero can also be a protagonist, and this is usually when they get bad things on purpose. However, the audience still cheers them on - sometimes—for instance, Walter White (Breaking Bad), Dexter (Dexter), etc.

The Antagonist

Not always the villain, an antagonist is a character in opposition to the protagonist. The level of apparent opposition varies tremendously and is not necessarily matched by their role in the story. Just because they're at odds with our heroes doesn't automatically make them evil.

Some notable Antagonist include,

- Jaffar (Aladdin)
- Lex Luthor (Superman Series)
- Ursula (Little Mermaid) etc.

Major Characters

A major character plays a prominent role in the story but isn't necessarily the protagonist. It could be a friend of the main character or even simply an involved bystander with minor involvement in the narrative. A love interest can also be classified as a major character if that individual significantly influences either side of the main conflict.

Some notable Major Characters include,

- Professor Dumbledore (Harry Potter Series)

- Lois Lane (Superman)
- Han Solo (Star Wars Series), etc.

Minor Characters

Minor characters are a type of character that may seem to have little importance. Typically, they show up every so often or play an undistinguished role in the story. For example, this can include someone from a supporting character's family or their driver to school on the day the protagonist is telling the story.

Some examples of Minor Characters include,

- Cinna (Hunger Game Series)
- Fleur Delacour (Harry Potter Series)
- Rickon Stark (Game of Thrones), etc.

The significance of minor characters: it's easy to forget how strong your side characters are. A character can be a major player but still have minimal screen time or dialogues, and while this is disappointing at first glance – consider the story as a whole.

For example, when you review your feedback from exams, remember that even when you get a question wrong on an exam example test, you overlooked something helpful to understand the concept better.

Dynamic and Static Characters

These two types of characters exist together and as they mirror each other, one changing gradually while the other remains unchanged. As we said before, a dynamic character is more interesting than a static one.

However, some legend theorists believe static legends cannot be that deep and also have no noticeable changes in their character. Conversely, others claim they can oppose the framework of stirring them up. Regardless, many character investigation models show some striking differences in these types of legends.

Stereotypical Character

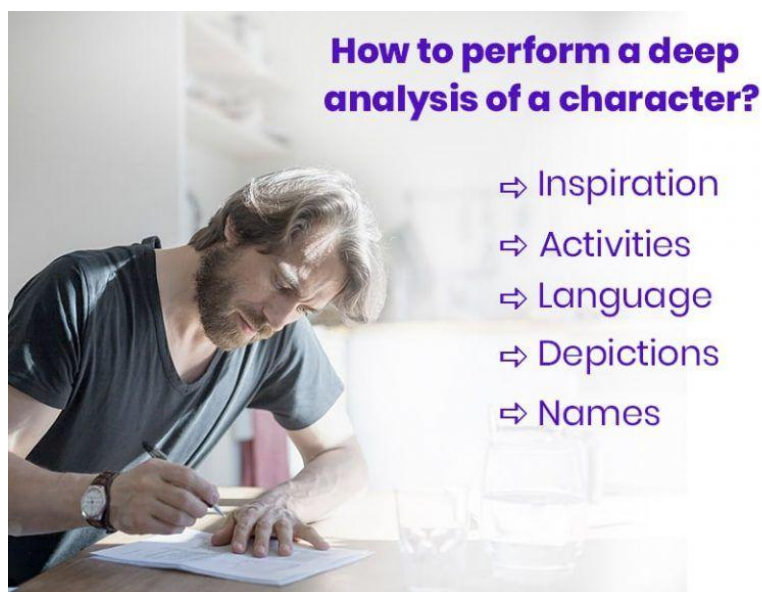
When we speak of a Stereotypical Character, we mean the one that is expected to have certain features and qualities.

For example, an older person will be depicted as someone who likes cats or has grandchildren in many cases. They are also usually considered wise and mild-mannered people with little interest in adventure. This type of character is not unique to folklore tales because you can find it in other areas like movies, television series, or video games.

Foils

They want to be seen differently from the other main characters and highlight the hero's accomplishments.

How to perform a deep analysis of a character?



If you want to give a thorough description of your character, it's wise to focus on aspects that will continue in the essay. Indeed, even with above-average intelligence and simple memory faculties, it would be challenging to compose a whole history of somebody if you don't center each perspective from the start, however good an investigator one is.

So here is a list of significant focuses to describe the hero:

Inspiration

To understand how to construct a character sheet, you should first look at what motivates the person in the story to act as they do. Your assessment should be impartial and should not depend on revealed speeches or deeds to help explain their motives but rather dig deeper. Additionally, while considering what activities are legitimate from an emotional perspective, consider if other factors may have influenced those engagements (e.g., portrayed functions).

Activities

Every act of a hero can speak to their character, so don't skip over details that may not significantly impact the overall storyline but give you helpful information about their disposition and thoughts.

Language

Observing how an individual speaks can help you determine the character attributes. For instance, accents and expressions can suggest a person's upbringing or economic background. However, paying close attention to the words they use is more important.

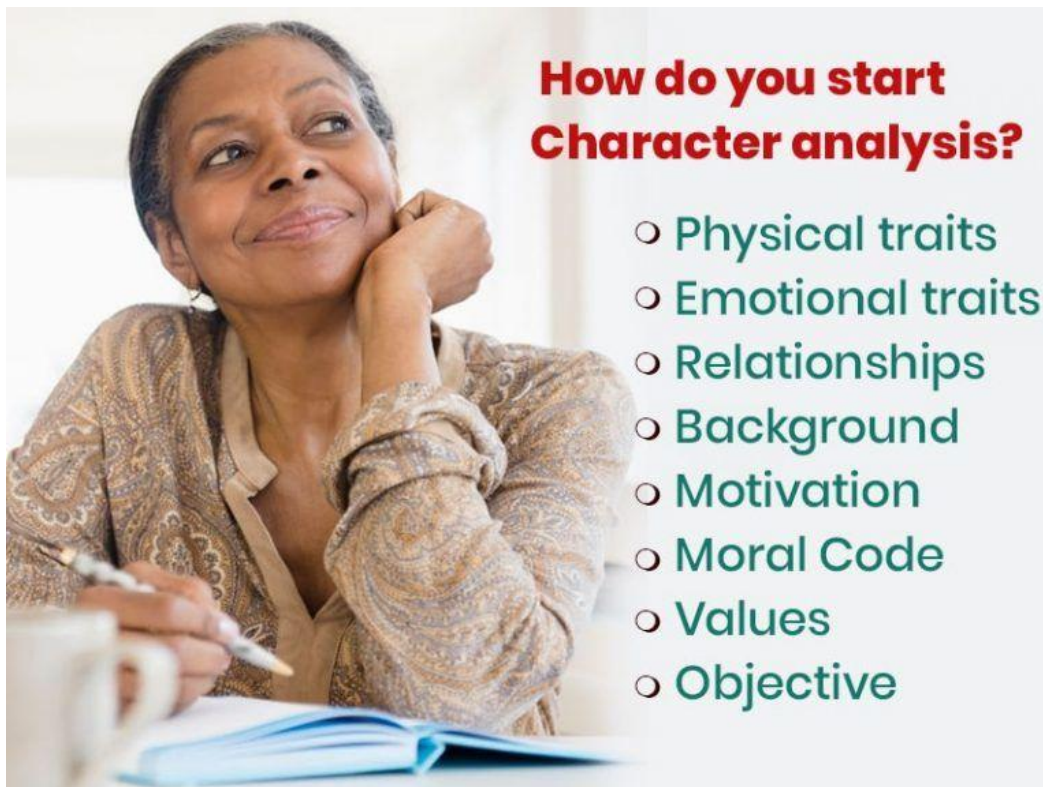
Depictions

Finding suitable sources for a character analysis can be tough. The author and legend of a story may have different viewpoints, impacting both your comprehension of the character and their significance in the story. Authors can establish the reputation and portrayal of characters, and legends may represent them in different ways.

Names

The way people refer to a person can tell you about the character that they show. The name an individual has might indicate what type of characters they have in their past, whereas the different names for someone show how other people see them. You can also learn about someone's personality based on adjectives and other words used to describe them.

How do you start Character analysis?



How do you start Character analysis?

- Physical traits
- Emotional traits
- Relationships
- Background
- Motivation
- Moral Code
- Values
- Objective

Now that you know who you are going to analyze, it's time to get cracking! Go back to your text and make a note of any detail about your character. Here is a list of things to consider when you're getting started:

Physical traits

One way to understand the character is by analyzing what they look like. It will include physical features like hair color and height and more subtle indicators of personality, like their clothing choices.

Emotional traits

What are the character's reactions to emotional situations? For example, is their behavior closed off or open with their feelings?

Relationships

Who are the most essential people in your character's life? Do they have a group of close friends that they spend time with regularly, or are there family members they rely on for support?

Background

It requires a bit of digging to find out who your character is. You'll need to know more than just dialogue; it can be far more complicated than that.

Motivation

Why does your character act the way they do? For example, in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Atticus Finch represents Tom Robinson even though he knows he will be attacked because of his moral code.

Moral Code

Is this character good or evil? What provokes them to act the way they do? For example, Superman and Captain America have strong moral codes that drive their actions.

Values

What are your character's values? Here are some examples of values: loyalty, determination, empathy, kindness, family love, etc.

Objective

What are your character's goals in life? They could be simple, like wanting to become or be wealthy, like Mr. Burns from The Simpsons, or they could wish to free the world from evil, like Sam and Dean Winchester from Supernatural.

What are the four things that you are looking for in a character analysis?

Character analysis essays are all about figuring out the motives, context, and significance of a specific character.

Character

Character is defined as "a person in a story or play." How does this definition affect how you analyze their actions? What other words come to mind for defining characters? Character traits, personality types, motivations, etc.

Context

Context refers to where and when something happened. It also includes who was there with them--was it just one person or an entire group? Why might those people be significant to understanding the character's thoughts/actions? Or why they might not matter at all!

Motivation

What motivates someone to do anything? Do they want money, power over others? Is it revenge on another party that has wronged them in the past? What other motivations can you think of?

Character significance

How does this character affect characters and events around them, or how much do they change what's happening within the story.

What are the 4 major methods of analyzing characters?

The 4 major methods of analyzing characters are:

- What other characters say about the character (Identified by dialogue or description),
- The Individual character dialogues,
- The author and
- How the character performs by their actions.

Don't want to write your essay and need some help? Take our "[Write My Essay](#)" services!

One of the complex parts of writing a character analysis essay is being uncertain about the topic. Fortunately, we have experts on hand, who are very well-read, to help with your report outline or final paper so that you can worry less about it all.

Additionally, you can also take a look at our video tutorials on writing a successful essay.

