Creative Writing

Day 28
November 15th

• Fiction Starter: He turned the key in the lock and opened the door. To his ________, he saw...

• Agenda:
  – Fiction Starter
  – Character
  – Character Questionnaire
  – Pass the Plot
Today’s Objectives

• I will know different types of characters.

• I will be able to write interesting character descriptions.
Characterization

• The main character in a story is called the protagonist.
  – She or he is always involved in the main conflict and its resolution.

• The person or force opposing the protagonist is called the antagonist.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Antagonist</th>
<th>Abstract Antagonist</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A racist or intolerant character</td>
<td>Racism/intolerance in a community or in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A character who is working to make sure your protagonist lives a poverty-stricken life</td>
<td>Poverty or the economy in a community or in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A character who is forcing your character to struggle against nature (e.g. someone who has left your character stranded in Antarctica)</td>
<td>Nature as an entity (e.g. a natural disaster or an extreme climate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A character whose religious beliefs oppress your protagonist</td>
<td>A religion or all religions</td>
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Flat Character

• A character who has one or two sides, representing one or two traits – often a stereotype.

• Flat characters help move the plot along more quickly because the audience immediately understands what the character is about.

• Example: a geeky science professor
Round or Well-Developed Character

• A character who is complex and has many sides or traits with unpredictable behavior and a fully developed personality.

• Antagonists are usually “round characters.”

• Example: The Green Goblin from Spiderman
Flat character: Steve was a good kid. He got good grades and was never late to class.

Original, well-developed character: Steve Goodhold was a good kid. He got good grades and was never late to class. Little did everyone know that he spent his nights working as an internet hacker for a modern Mafioso who he met through his older cousin, Peter.

Steve didn’t need much sleep, which was a good thing. He slept maybe two hours a night, and spent the rest of his time stealing identities, wiring funds, and making more money than both his parents combined. He told himself he was saving for college, but the thrill of his secret life of crime was steadily eroding his interest in an Ivy League education.
## Dynamic vs. Static

<table>
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<th>Static</th>
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<td>• A character who experiences an essential change in personality or attitude.</td>
<td>• A character who does not change or develop beyond the way in which she or he is first presented.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Protagonists (main characters) are almost always dynamic.</td>
<td>• Example: Prince Escalus in <em>Romeo and Juliet</em></td>
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<td>• Example: Stitch from <em>Lilo and Stitch</em></td>
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The Tell Tale Heart
by Edgar Allan Poe

• Listen to this short story and identify the types of characters described in your notes.
Character Questionnaire

- Name:
- Age:
- Height:
- Eye color:
- Physical appearance:
- Strange or unique physical attributes:
- Favorite clothing style
- Where does he/she live? What is it like there?
• Defining gestures or movements (i.e., always keeping his/her eyes on the ground...)
• Things about his or her appearance he/she would like to change.
• Speaking style (fast, monotonous, etc.)
• Pet peeves
• Fondest memory
• Hobbies/interests
• Special skills/abilities
• Insecurities
• Quirks/eccentricities
• Temperament (easygoing, easily angered, etc.)
• Negative traits:
• Things that upset him/her
• Things that embarrass him or her
• This character is highly opinionated about ___
• Any phobias?
• Things that make him or her happy
• Describe his/her family
• Deepest, darkest secret.
• Reason he/she kept this secret for so long
• Other people’s opinions about this character
  – (what do they like and dislike about this character?)
• Favorite bands/songs/types of music
• Favorite movies
• Favorite tv shows
• Favorite books
• Favorite foods
• Favorite sports teams
• Political views
• Religion/philosophy of life
• Physical health
• Dream vacation
• Description of his or her house
• Description of his or her bedroom
• Any pets?
• Best thing that has ever happened to this character
• Worst thing that has ever happened to this character
• Superstitions
• Three words to describe this character
Write about the character you’ve just described in a story that starts with one of the following:

• The wind whipped around the corner, moaning and warning him/her that...
• There is nothing better than...
• They were in the grocery store, in the freezer section, when it happened.
• This was it. The moment he/she had dreaded for two weeks. The moment when....
• Three seconds left on the scoreboard clock -- only three seconds before....
Pass the Plot

• Directions:
  – Write down the first line of the story from the board. Then take the time I give you to write more to the story.
  – When I call time fold the paper down, so only the final line of the story is showing.
  – After passing the story, read only the line that is uncovered and continue on from that point.
Opening Sentences

• I knew I should not have had that third hamburger.
• I hurried into the alley to escape them, but I was not alone for long.
• As the moon rose, the wolf scanned the outskirts of the forest.
• “But, why?” whined Sally.