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Introduction

This resource is intended to provide inspiration for character creation and development. Different characters in different stories require different amounts of depth. Some characters will come more readily to life with one method rather than another. Some characters might benefit from using several methods to really find out what is going on beneath their skin. This resource is intended as a springboard for ideas and doesn't look to cover every conceivable angle or approach. It might be used before sitting down to write or to develop a character following a first draft. I often find that right until the final word of the final draft characters continue to change and reveal new facets of their personality.

CHARACTER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Where would they go...

- a. for dinner...
 - i. with their parents?
 - ii. with a friend?
 - iii. with a romantic interest?
- b. on a date?
- c. to buy...
 - i. clothes?
 - ii. food?
 - iii. furniture?
 - iv. items associated with their hobbies?
 - v. presents for (their) children / relatives / friends?
- d. to hide from the world?
- e. on holiday?
- f. if they wanted to learn a new skill?
- g. to unwind?

2. What would they wear...

- a. at the beach?
- b. in bed?
- c. to a disco?
- d. to play sport?
- e. on a rainy day?
- f. at a religious event?
- g. at a funeral?
- h. at a restaurant?
- i. for an appearance on TV?
- j. at a wedding?
- k. in the winter?
- to work?
- m. to the supermarket?

3. What would they eat...

- a. for breakfast?
- b. for lunch?
- c. for dinner?
- d. as a snack?
- e. for pudding / dessert?
- f. at religious celebrations?
- g. at their grandmother's house?
- h. in an ice cream parlour? i. as a cinema snack?
- j. when they are...
 - - i. ill?
 - ii. in a rush?
 - iii. sad?
 - iv. tired?
- k. as their last meal?

4. What would you find...

- a. on their bookshelves?
- b. on their Christmas list...
 - i. now?
 - ii. when they were a child?
- c. in their DNA?
- d. in their fridge?
- e. in their garage?
- f. in their handbag / briefcase / rucksack / satchel?
- g. in their phone apps?
- h. in their pockets?
- i. in the search history on their computer?
- i. in their stomach?

5. Who would they turn to...

- a. for advice about...
 - i. their career?

- ii. their faith?
- iii. their (mental) health?
- iv. money?
- v. relationships?
- vi. what to wear?
- b. if they needed a loan?
- c. it they wanted to gossip?
- d. if they needed to rant about something?
- e. when they needed help with a problem?

6. How would they act...

- a. if they were on an aeroplane?
- b. if they were arrested for a crime they hadn't committed?
- c. if they were in a car accident?
- d. if they saw a celebrity?
- e. if they were in a confined space (i.e. a lift)?
- f. if they'd just learned they had six months to live?
- g. if they were robbed?
- h. if they were on the rooftop of a tall building?
- i. if they discovered a secret portal?
- j. if they found a spider in their home?
- k. if they were wolf-whistled?
- I. if they'd just won the lottery?
- m. if they discovered that the world was about to end?

7. When did they last...

- a. cry?
- b. go on holiday?
- c. laugh?
- d. tell a lie?
- e. have a lie-in?
- f. have sex?
- g. shout?
- h. spend the night alone?

8. Have they ever...

- a. broken a bone?
- b. committed a crime?
- c. tried an extreme sport?
- d. been in a fight?

- e. had a near-death experience?
- f. gone skinny dipping?
- g. spent the night under the stars?
- h. taken credit for something they didn't do?
- i. been on TV?
- j. been unfaithful to their partner?
- k. won an award?

9. Do they believe in...

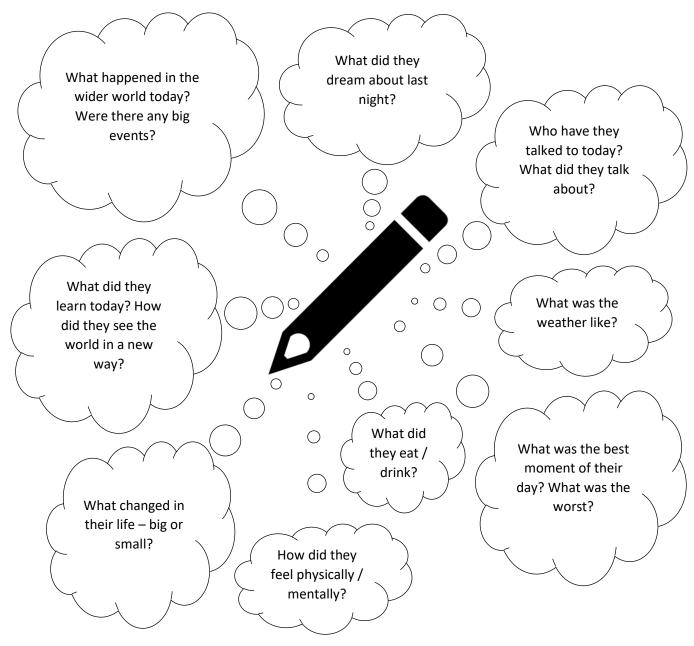
- a. astrology?
- b. a cause (political or otherwise)?
- c. free will?
- d. ghosts?
- e. karma?
- f. life after death?
- g. magic?
- h. religion?
- i. science?

10. What is their attitude towards...

- a. their appearance?
- b. crime / justice?
- c. the death penalty?
- d. drugs?
- e. education?
- f. global warming?
- g. health / fitness?
- h. inequality?
- i. money?
- j. sex?
- k. technology?
- I. work?

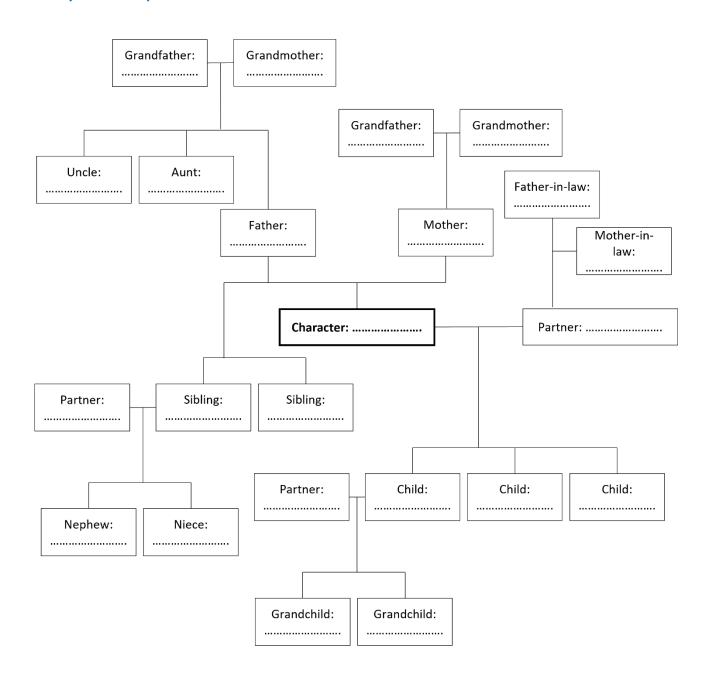
CHARACTER DIARY

Imagine your character has always kept a diary. Write a diary entry from their early childhood, another from their teenage years, another from their early twenties. Keep going with one entry for each decade of their life – some of which might be a long way in the future from the age they are in your story. What do you learn about your character? How do their priorities, their perspectives, their likes and dislikes shift over time?

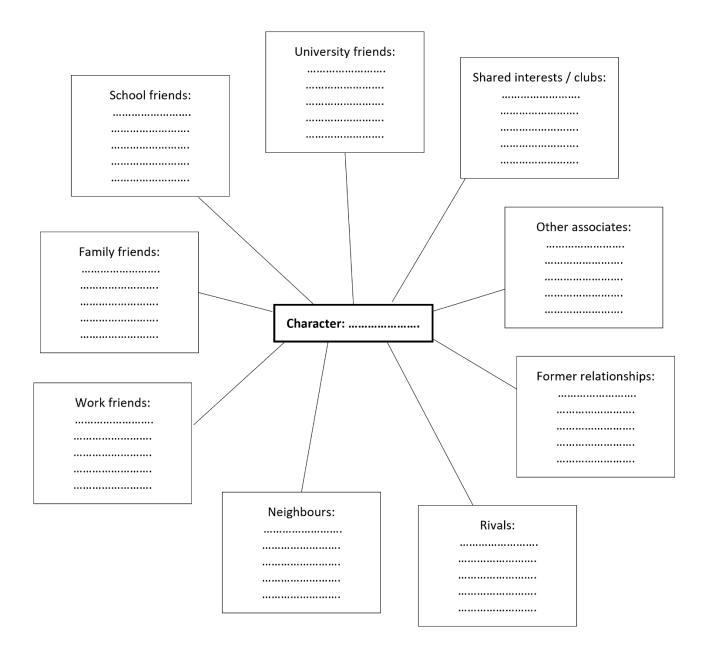




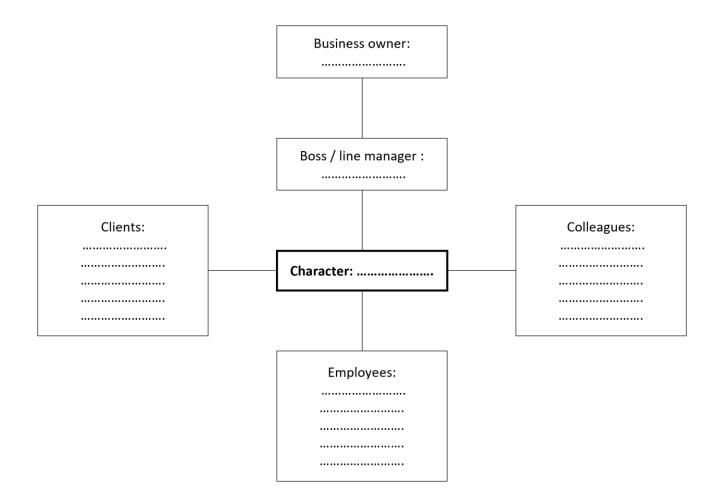
Family Relationships



Friends and Rivals



Work Relationships



Important figures



.....

Historical figures they would invite to a dinner party:	Celebrity crushes:



<i></i>
Role models:
Speed-dial contacts:



Where does your character's personality fall on the following scales? How brave are they? How forgiving? How worldly? To create complex characters, consider their negative traits as well as their more positive ones.

Ambitious	<u> </u>		———		———		———	———	———		—	Unambitious
Brave	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Cowardly
Calm	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Excitable
Cheerful	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Morose
Confident	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Unconfident
Daydreamer	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———					—	Realist
Efficient	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———				———	—	Inefficient
Eloquent	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———				———	—	Ineloquent
Fair	\bigcirc	———	———	———		———	———				—	Biased
Flexible	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———				———	—	Stubborn
Forgiving	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———				———	—	Unforgiving
Forthright	\bigcirc	———	———	———		———	———				—	Timid
Generous	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———				———	—	Miserly
Gentle	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———				———	—	Rough
Kind	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———				———	—	Mean
Hard-working		———	———	———	———	———				———	—	Lazy
Honest	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———					—	Dishonest
Humble	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———				———	—	Proud
Intelligent	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———					—	Unintelligent
Interesting	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———					—	Dull
Introvert	<u> </u>	———	———	———	———	———				———	—	Extrovert
Leader	<u> </u>	———	———	———	———	———					—	Follower
Loyal	<u> </u>	———	———	———	———	———					—	Disloyal

Lucky	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———	———	———	—	Unlucky
Mature	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———			—	Immature
Modest	<u> </u>	———	———			———	———	———			—	Boastful
Neat	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———	———		—	Messy
Observant	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———	———		—	Inattentive
Open-minded	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———			—	Close-minded
Optimist	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———	———		—	Pessimist
Organised	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———	———		—	Chaotic
Passionate	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———			—	Apathetic
Peaceful	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———			—	Antagonistic
Perfectionist	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———			—	Sloppy
Playful	O—					———	———	———		———	—	Solemn
Popular	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———			—	Unpopular
Practical	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———			—	Impractical
Prudent	O—					———	———	———		———	—	Careless
Punctual	O—					———	———	———		———	—	Not punctual
Quiet	\bigcirc	———	———			———	———	———			—	Loud
Rational	O—					———	———	———		———	—	Irrational
Relaxed	O—					———	———	———		———	—	Up-tight
Responsible	\bigcirc					———	———	———		———	—	Irresponsible
Romantic	\bigcirc	———	———		———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Unromantic
Selfless	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Selfish
Serious	\bigcirc	———	———		———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Frivolous
Sociable	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Loner
Spontaneous	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Planner
Tolerant	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Intolerant
Trusting	\bigcirc	———	———		———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Suspicious
Warm	<u> </u>	———	———		———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Cold
Worldly	<u> </u>	———	———		———	———	———	———	———	———	—	Naive



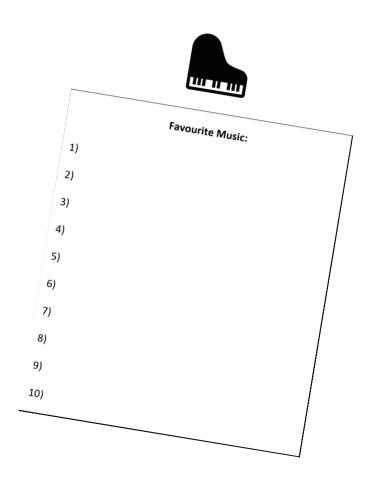
Imagine the school report your character would have received when they were a specific age. Which subjects did they do well in? What was their behaviour like? Did they participate in class? Were they popular, chatty, hard-working? What grades did they get?

Pupil Name:			
Year:		Class:	
	Comments:		
Form Tutor:			
English:			
Maths:			
Humanities:			
Sciences:			
Languages:			
Arts:			
Sport:			

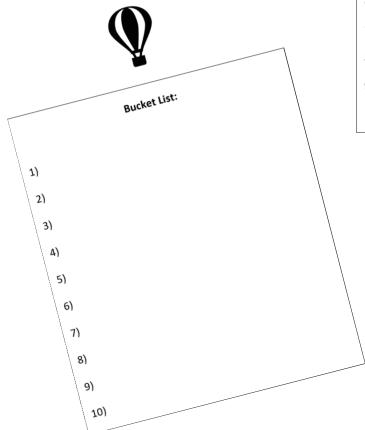


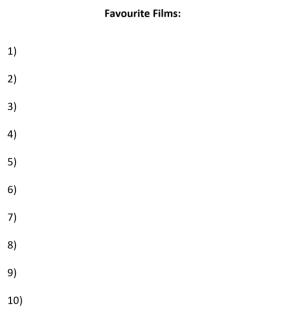
What is currently on your character's to-do list? What do they need to buy from the shops? What are their favourite films or pieces of music? What is on their bucket list?











SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILE

me\space	Profile Friends Messages
Photo:	about me
	Name: Birthday:
	Location:
	School: University:
	Job:
likes	Films: Hobbies:
Music:	
	Causes:
activity	
Current Status:	Recent Events:
Recent Posts:	
	Upcoming Events:



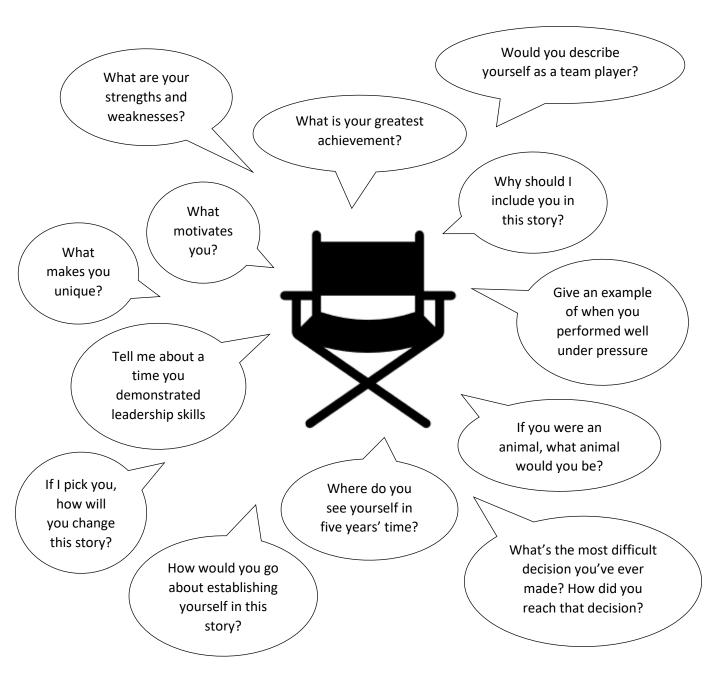
Answer the following questions as if you are your character to see what you can discover about them.

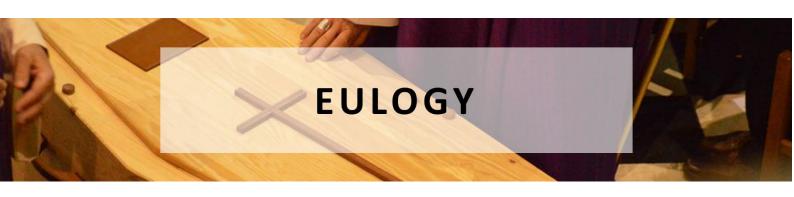
	Strongly agree	Ag	gree		Neutral		Disag		Strongly disagree		
I have a vivid imagination	0)———	———	<u> </u>	<u> </u>				<u> </u>	—	
I am quick to anger	0)———	———	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	———		———	<u> </u>	—	
I love classical music	\bigcirc — \bigcirc)———	———	<u> </u>	<u> </u>			———	<u> </u>	—	
I make friends easily	\bigcirc — \bigcirc)———	———	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	———		———	<u> </u>	—	
I am good at keeping secrets	\bigcirc — \bigcirc)———	———	— <u> </u>	<u> </u>	——		———	<u> </u>	—	
I like to complete a task before moving on to the next	re 🔾 —)———	——	<u> </u>	——				<u> </u>	—	
I experience emotional peaks and troughs	0—0)———			<u> </u>					—	
I stay calm under pressure	\bigcirc — \bigcirc)———	———	<u> </u>	<u> </u>					—	
I am a social butterfly	\bigcirc — \bigcirc)———	———	<u> </u>	<u> </u>			———	<u> </u>	—	
I usually listen to my head rather than my heart	OC)———	<u> </u>							—	
I enjoy group activities	\bigcirc — \bigcirc)———	———	<u> </u>	<u> </u>					—	
I often stay awake at night worrying about things	0)———	<u> </u>		<u> </u>					—	
I stick to a routine	0)———	———	———	———					—	
I understand that rest is important	0—0)———	<u> </u>		———					—	
I am the first person on the dancefloor at a party	0—0)———		——		———	———			—	
I am always prepared	\bigcirc — \bigcirc)———	———	———	———					—	
I see the world in black and white	0—0)———	———		———	———				—	

I enjoy working in a group	\bigcirc	———	———	———	— <u> </u>	———	———	———	— <u> </u>	———	—
I get a sense of satisfaction from giving presents	<u> </u>										—
I see the worst in people	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———		———	———	———	———	—
I take short cuts where possible	<u> </u>			———							—
I fear spending time alone	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———		———	———		———	—
I am very active	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———		———	———		———	—
I seek out adventure	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—
I sometimes leap before I look	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—
I am a daydreamer	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—
I think the end always justifies the means	<u> </u>	———	———	———	———	———	——	———		———	—
I like to be in control of a situation	<u> </u>	———	———	———	———	———	——	———		———	—
I am not afraid of making enemies	<u> </u>	———	———	———	———	———	———	———		———	—
I feel confident in my own abilities	<u> </u>						———				—
I get stressed easily	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—
I have a short fuse	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———			———	———	———	—
I am a rule-breaker	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—
I go out of my way to make others feel comfortable	<u> </u>	———	———	———	———	———	———	———		———	—
I have an addictive personality	<u> </u>	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—
I don't always follow through with my intentions	<u> </u>	———	———	———	———	———	———	———		———	—
I am easily distracted	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—
I do not trust easily	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	—
I am a jack of all trades	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	— <u> </u>	———	—
I put business before pleasure	\bigcirc	———	———	———	———	———	———	———	— <u> </u>	———	—
I have traditional values	<u> </u>	- O-		 O	 O	<u> </u>	———			- O-	—



Imagine your character is coming to you see you to interview for a role in your story. What questions would you ask them to see if they are right for the role?



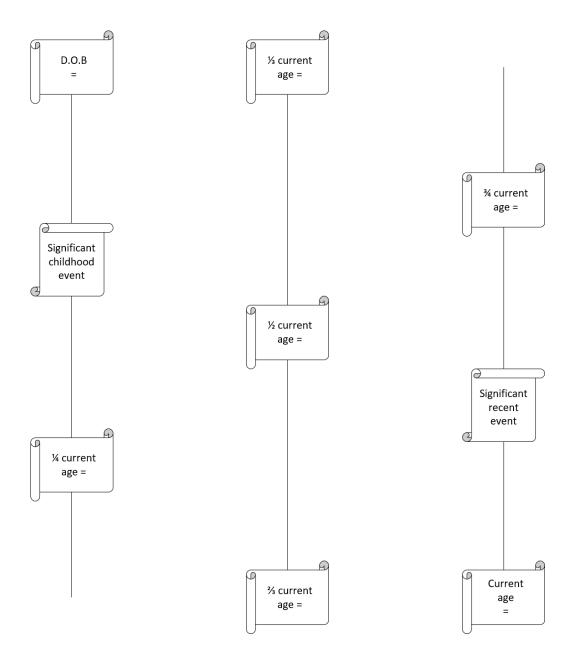


Who would deliver the eulogy for your character if they were to die tomorrow? What would that person say?



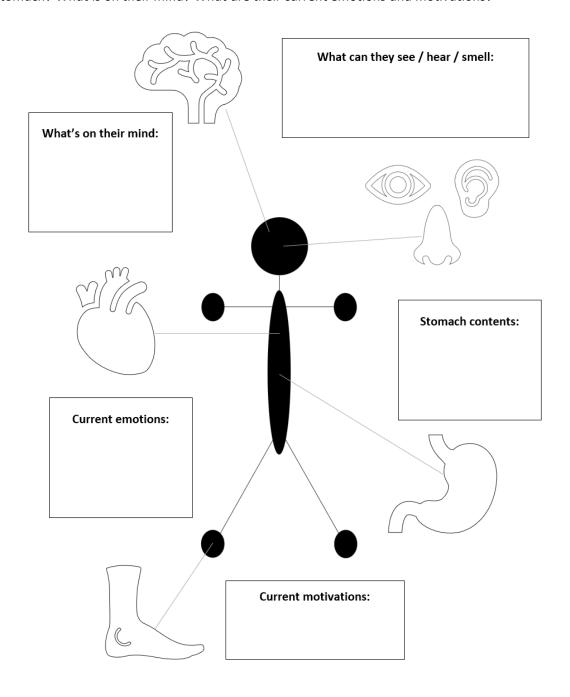


What age is your character? Work out their date of birth – what was happening in the world at that time? What is half their current age? A third? Three quarters? etc. What was going on in their life on each of those dates? What year did they turn eighteen? Are they married – when? Think up one significant childhood event and one event from their recent past and add those to your timeline.





Draw a stick person and add the clothes / jewellery your character is wearing, draw in their hair, any facial hair, any prominent features. Then, think about what is going on inside their body. What are the contents of their stomach? What is on their mind? What are their current emotions and motivations?





Bio:

This resource has been created by Matt Kendrick. Matt is a writer, editor and teacher based in the East Midlands, UK. His short fiction has been widely published both online and in print. He has been placed or listed in various writing competitions including Bath, Flash 500, the Oxford Flash Fiction Prize, Reflex and Leicester Writes. His work has been included on the Biffy 50 list for 2019-20, in Best Microfiction 2021, Best Small Fictions 2022 and the Wigleaf Top 50 list for 2022. He has also been nominated for Best of the Net and the Pushcart Prize.

Other Resources:

For links to other free resources, please visit my website: https://www.mattkendrick.co.uk/resources

Services and Courses:

Information about my courses and editorial services can also be found on my website.



As a workshop facilitator, I am committed to opening up writing opportunities to people from all backgrounds based on ability to write rather than ability to pay. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to finance pay-what-you-can and free spots exclusively from my own pocket. So, if you've downloaded this resource and are in a position to support narrowing the access gap to creative writing opportunities, I would be very grateful if you would consider buying me a virtual coffee*.

*Any money donated to my <u>Ko-fi page</u> will be used to fund free and reduced-price places for my Write Beyond The Lightbulb courses, as well as to provide free editing and mentoring opportunities for low-income writers, and to support other opportunities that seek to level the playing field.