

Character Portrait Text

Introduction to a Character Portrait.

We all love having our curiosity tickled. When someone or something grabs our attention, we like to talk about it.

The best way of writing a description of someone or a group of people is to identify what got your interest in the first place and then tell someone about it. When you do this, you give details to the listener to make sure they get pictures in their mind about your story. You are **SHOWING in DETAIL**. It's like painting a picture with words instead of paint.

First framework (lesson)

1. Title and first paragraph - physical Description

Tasks

- **Choose a character** you know or holds a strong interest for you. Someone you respect, fear, admire, or think would give you strong pictures to Show in Detail in your writing.
- **Write an opening statement** - one sentence that sums up the person or group of people you will be writing about. For example, "My dad is a crumpled acorn on the outside but an ant nest in the inside." Everything you write after that in your character description will add to this opening statement.
- **Describe this** person or group of people, how they look, sound like, smell, etc.
- **Draw a picture** of your character or group and provide a list of details that tell you about this character or group. Include absolutely everything you noticed! You will be surprised how much you get to tell about their personality, environment, how they influence others, their dialect, how they talk, their behaviour and their emotional states, quirks, etc. It's fun when you relax and trust your inner thoughts.
- **Show, in Detail.** Be specific; this will be your first paragraph.

Your character needs to come alive. The reader needs to be able to picture the character in their mind's eye, feel the way they feel, see the way they see, hear them talk and walk, etc. They need to feel they are getting to understand your character and the essence of who they are.

Second framework (lesson)

2. Second Paragraph – the behaviour of your character

Your second paragraph, you will deal with behaviour - how a character or group speaks and acts. What makes this person unique - a laugh, a way of talking, a way of moving, etc.

Tasks

- **Describe your character's behaviour.**
When you know how they behave you can begin creating predictions on what they might do next. Your reader or listener not only wants to have a physical description of your character or group but also wants to know about how they behave. Do they get angry easily? Do they speak in a strange way? Is there something funny about the way they move their body, etc.
- **Find examples** of other authors and find out how they provide interesting and engaging descriptions of a person's behaviour.
- **Spend time finding out** why these authors are so good at what they do. Use the same strategies in your writing.

Third framework (lesson)

3. In your third paragraph – How does your character/s affect other people?

Tasks

- Discuss with someone how your character/s affect other people. How do they make you feel, how do they make other people feel? When you can describe how your character makes others feel, you are writing about their reputation.
- Think about how they make people feel, what are the most obvious and less obvious character traits of this person
- Write about your character/s' reputation.

Writing about the reputation of a person makes the character come alive.

SHOW in DETAIL. Be specific.

Fourth framework (lesson)

4. In your fourth paragraph – Describe your character's environment and belongings

Tasks

- **Describe the character's environment and belongings.**
- **Make a list** of the things your character/s have around them.
By looking at a person's environment and belongings, we get some insight into the type of things that are helpful or important to them. Are they tidy, messy, dirty, cluttered, bare, smelly, etc.?
- **Describe what you can see in your minds' eye.**
All these things tell us more about the character. The things you choose to focus on may not be inside but also the things that are outside. It all depends on the character you are trying to describe.

Fifth framework (lesson)

5. In your fifth paragraph – write about what your character/s says and how they say it.

Tasks

- **Write about your character's manner of speech**
- **Use your imagination**

What a character says and how they say it is also an important part of describing your character. The character may be insecure and therefore speaks in a halted manner. Or the opposite may be true, your character may be overconfident and come across as arrogant and bold. An interesting part of the dialogue that you could explore is the internal musing of your character. The things that most people wouldn't hear but the things that are going on in the silence of the mind.

- **Check your work.**

Have you used descriptive language?

Have you used clear and creative information or descriptions?

Have you used proper literacy devices, onomatopoeia, metaphors, similes, etc.?

Key Competencies for reflection, evaluation or assessment

Key Competencies – Thinking

4th Level:

I spent time thinking about a character who could provide a high level of interest to my readers. I focused on the things that got my interest in the first place. I understand that using my personal experiences can create stronger impressions for my readers and give them more enjoyment in my writing.

3rd Level:

I spent some time thinking about a character who could provide a reasonable level of interest to my readers. I focused on the things that got my interest in the first place. I understand that using my personal experiences can create stronger impressions for my readers and give them more enjoyment in my writing.

2nd Level:

I spent little time thinking about a character who could provide a level of interest to my readers. I focused on the things that got my interest in the first place. I understand that using my personal experiences can create stronger impressions for my readers and give them more enjoyment in my writing.

1st Level:

I didn't value the time spent on thinking about a character who could provide a level of interest to my readers. I relied mostly on what others gave me rather than my ideas. I understand that using my personal experiences can create stronger impressions for my readers but tend to use ideas of others to support my work.

Key Competencies – Thinking

4th Level:

I am clear about my purpose in writing and understand what makes a good character portrait. I critically evaluate my responses to the instructions provided and extend my understanding by looking at what other successful authors have done and then apply this to my work.

3rd Level:

I am gaining confidence about my purpose in writing and understand what makes a good character portrait. I critically evaluate my responses to the instructions provided and extend my understanding by looking at what other successful authors have done and then apply this to my work.

2nd Level:

I have some understanding of my purpose in writing and have applied my understanding of what makes a good character portrait by evaluating my responses to the instructions provided. I also sought to extend my understanding by looking at what other successful authors have done and applied this to my work.

1st Level:

I have little understanding of my purpose in writing and struggle to understand what makes a good character portrait. Evaluating my responses to the instructions provided is difficult. I do look at what other authors do and try to use their ideas.

Key Competencies – Relating to others

4th Level:

I can easily recognise important characteristics in a person or group by paying attention to my thoughts and think about how I can use this information in my writing. I have a keen awareness of how people's words, emotions, environments, and actions can help describe my characters in more detail.

3rd Level:

I can recognise important characteristics in a person or group by paying attention to my thoughts and think about how I can use this information in my writing. I am aware of people's words, emotions, environments and actions and how this can help describe my characters in more detail.

2nd Level:

I struggle to recognise important characteristics in a person or group. I pay some attention to my thoughts and think about how I can use this information to improve my writing. I have some awareness of how people's words, emotions, environments, and actions can help describe my characters in more detail.

1st Level:

I can't recognise important characteristics in a person or group. I pay little attention to my thoughts and rely mostly on what other can give me to improve my writing. I have little awareness of how



people's words, emotions, environments, and actions can help describe my characters in more detail.

Key Competencies – Relating to others

4th Level:

My relationship and discussion with others have allowed me to think in new ways, come up with new perspectives, and broaden my understanding of my characters.

3rd Level:

My growing relationship and discussion with others have allowed me to think in new ways, come up with new perspectives, and broaden my understanding of my characters.

2nd Level:

I have a growing awareness of how my relationship and discussion with others allow me to think in new ways, come up with new perspectives, and broaden my understanding of my characters.

1st Level:

I have little awareness of how my relationship and discussion with others allow me to think in new ways, come up with new perspectives, and broaden my understanding of my characters.

Key Competencies – Relating to others

4th Level:

I have strong relationships with others, and I understand how my words and actions affect them. I am aware that my words and actions become part of my reputation which has improved my ability to write authentically about my characters.

3rd Level:

I have healthy relationships with others, and I understand how my words and actions affect them. I have a growing awareness that my words and actions become part of my reputation which has improved my ability to write authentically about my characters.

2nd Level:

I have some healthy interactions with others and understand how my words and actions affect them. I am also becoming more aware that my words and actions become part of my reputation which has improved my ability to write authentically about my characters.

1st Level:

I have little interaction with others but have a growing awareness of how my words and actions affect them. I am aware that my words and actions become part of my reputation and can improve my ability to write authentically about my characters.

Key Competencies – Using language, symbols, and texts

4th Level:

I feel very confident in using language, symbols, and text to support my writing. I have many interesting conversations with my peers to develop ideas for a character portrait. I draw on personal experiences to form ideas and develop my imagination so that I can show in detail who my characters are.

3rd Level:

I feel confident in using language, symbols, and text to support my writing. I have interesting conversations with my peers to develop ideas for a character portrait. I draw on personal experiences to form ideas and develop my imagination so that I can show in detail who my characters are.

2nd Level:

I have some confidence in using language, symbols, and text to support my writing. I have some interesting conversations with my peers to develop ideas for a character portrait. I draw on personal experiences to form ideas and develop my imagination so that I can show in detail who my characters are.

1st Level:

I have little confidence in using language, symbols, and text to support my writing. I have no interesting conversations with my peers to develop ideas for a character portrait. I draw on personal experiences to form ideas and develop my imagination so that I can show in some detail who my characters are.

Key Competencies – Using language, symbols, and texts

4th Level:

I have a strong understanding of how language, symbols, and text can make meaning of my characters' behaviour and reputation. Having a clear understanding of my characters' behaviour and reputation helps me to predict what my characters might do next and how they affect others.

3rd Level:

I have a growing understanding of how language, symbols, and text can make meaning of my characters' behaviour and reputation. Having a clear understanding of my characters' behaviour and reputation and how this helps me to predict what they might do next and how they affect others.

2nd Level:

I have some understanding of how language, symbols, and text can make meaning of my characters' behaviour and reputation. Having some understanding of my characters' behaviour and reputation and how this helps me to predict what they might do next and how they affect others.

1st Level:

I have little understanding of how language, symbols, and text can make meaning of my characters' behaviour and reputation. I have little understanding of how my characters' behaviour and reputation can help me to predict what they might do next and how they affect others.

Key Competencies – Managing self

4th Level:

I understand the importance of quality work and have a 'can-do' attitude towards what I set out to complete. I set high standards for myself and spend considerable time revising my work for the best possible impact for my readers.

3rd Level:

I have a growing understand of the importance of quality work and have a 'can-do' attitude towards what I set out to complete. I set high standards for myself and spend reasonable time revising my work for the best possible impact for my readers.

2nd Level:

I have some understanding of the importance of quality work and have a 'can-do' attitude towards what I set out to complete. I set reasonable standards for myself and spend some time revising my work for impact and overall quality.

1st Level:

I have a poor understanding of the importance of quality work and generally don't have a 'can-do' attitude towards what I set out to complete. I set low standards for myself and spend little time revising my work for impact and overall quality.

Key Competencies – Managing self

4th Level:

I have a high level of motivation and stay authentic to my 'personal' voice in writing. I am flexible enough to take advice from others to help craft my work into something of value and enjoyment for others.

3rd Level:

I have a good level of motivation and stay authentic to my 'personal' voice in writing. I am flexible enough to take advice from others to help craft my work into something of value and enjoyment for others.

2nd Level:

I have a low level of motivation but stay authentic to my 'personal' voice in writing. I am not always flexible enough to take advice from others to help craft my work into something of value and enjoyment for others.

1st Level:

I have a low level of motivation but stay authentic to my 'personal' voice in writing. I am not flexible enough to take advice from others to help craft my work into something of value and enjoyment for others.

Key Competencies – Participating and contributing

4th Level:

I have a keen desire to contribute appropriately as a group member, make connections, and create opportunities for others to join in discussions to improve both personal and group writing outcomes.

3rd Level:

I have a desire to contribute appropriately as a group member, make connections, and create opportunities for others to join in discussions to improve both personal and group writing outcomes.

2nd Level:

I have some desire to contribute appropriately as a group member, I make connections, and sometimes create opportunities for others to join in discussions to improve both personal and group writing outcomes.

1st Level:

I have little desire to contribute appropriately as a group member and don't usually create opportunities for others to join in discussions to improve both personal and group writing outcomes.