

# Character

## Definition of Character

All stories need certain necessary elements. Without these elements, literary works often fail to make sense. For instance, one of the essential elements of every story is a plot with a series of events. Another important element is a character. A character can be any person, a figure, an inanimate object, or animal. There are different types of characters, and each serves its unique function in a story or a piece of literature.

## Types of Character

There are many types of the characters which include:

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### Confidante

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A confidante is someone in whom the main character confides. He reveals the central character's thoughts, intentions, and personality traits. However, a confidante need not necessarily be a person. An animal can also be a confidante.

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### Dynamic Character

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A [dynamic character](#) changes during the course of a novel or a story. This change in character or his/her outlook is permanent. That is why sometimes a dynamic character is also called a “developing character.”

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### Static Character

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A [static character](#) remains the same throughout the whole story. Even the events in a story or novel do not change character's outlook, perceptions,

habits, personality, or motivations.

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## Antagonist

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An [antagonist](#) is a bad guy, or an opponent of the [protagonist](#) or the main character. The action in the story arises from a [conflict](#) between the protagonist and the antagonist. The antagonist can be a person, an inanimate object, an animal, or nature itself.

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## Protagonist

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Every story has a protagonist, the main character, who creates the action of the plot and engages readers, arousing their empathy and interest. The protagonist is often a hero or heroine of the story, as the whole plot moves around him or her.

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## Round Character

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The round characters are well-developed and complex figures in a story. They are more realistic, and demonstrate more depth in their personalities. They can make surprising or puzzling decisions, and attract readers' attention. There are many factors that may affect them, and round characters react to such factors realistically.

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## Flat Character

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A [flat character](#) does not change during a story. Also, he or she usually only reveals one or two personality traits.

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## Stock Character

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A stock character is a flat character that is instantly recognizable by readers. Like a flat character, the stock character does not undergo any development throughout the story.

## Examples of Character in Literature

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**Example #1: *The Lord of the Rings trilogy* (By J. R. R.)**

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In *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy*, Frodo and his friend Sam discover their unexpected personal commitment, emotional and physical strength, and dedication to the cause. Gandalf discovers that his trust was broken by his fellow wizards, thus he transforms into a magician with a stronger character. Aragorn, an heir to line of kings, gives up his title; however, over the period of time he discovers his leadership skills, and decides to regain his crown. All of these characters provide us with good examples of round characters, each having depth of personality, and abilities to surprise the readers.

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**Example #2: *A Christmas Carol* (by Charles Dickens)**

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In Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge is a tightfisted person. He forces his workers to work hard, but gives them peanuts in return. However, after undergoing some very strange and disturbing experiences with the ghosts, he changes his ways – paying his employees more than their fair wages, giving them days off work, and even gives gifts. This transformation makes him fit into the role of a dynamic character.

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**Example #3: *Hedda Gabler* (by Henrik Ibsen)**

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Hedda Gabler is manipulative, cold, and “demonic,” even though she is the title character – the focus of the play. She is the most complex and psychologically compelling character, the reason that she is a dynamic character.

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**Example #4: *Othello* (by William Shakespeare)**

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At some points, it seems that Iago is the protagonist, since he dominates the entire play and delivers soliloquies. However, he does not change at all, and most of the protagonists undergo some sort of change during a play. Also, in the opening lines, Iago describes himself as someone who wishes to destroy Othello. Thus, his actions transform him into a tragic antagonistic type of character, though he is the central character of the play.

## Function of Character

The main function of a character in a story is to extend or prolong the plot, make it readable and interesting. Many stories use multiple characters, and every story has a main character that affects the plot a great deal. The main character could be a protagonist, an antagonist, a dynamic, a static, a flat, or a [round character](#). Readers feel that the characters given in the literary pieces exist, and they enjoy reading their real and lifelike figures and actions.