

Dynamic Character

Definition of Dynamic Character

Like a round [character](#), a dynamic character also undergoes changes throughout the [narrative](#), due to conflicts he encounters on his journey. A dynamic character faces trials and tribulations, and takes time to learn from his encounters, his experiences, and his mistakes, as well as from other characters. Sometimes a character learns a lesson, and gains maturity, such as Prince Hal in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*.

Some characters discover mistakes in their points of view, and others discover important aspects of their own personalities, such as Neville Longbottom did in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. All of these changes make a character dynamic, but they are implied changes, not stated outright.

Difference between Dynamic and Round Character

Though dynamic and round characters both undergo character development, there is a slight difference between them. The traits of a dynamic character are not described outright. Rather, his traits are referred to as they change over time. On the other hand, a [round character](#)'s traits are complex, and described by the author. Round characters are dynamic as well, such as Hamlet.

Examples of Dynamic Characters in Literature

Example #1: Harry, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (By J. K. Rowling)

The most important [conflict](#) in this novel is the inner conflict of Harry Potter, which makes him a dynamic character. Harry perceives that he shares some abilities similar to Tom [Riddle](#), who becomes the evil Lord

Voldemort, and this makes him worry that he might also turn out to be an evil character.

Dumbledore mentions Harry's presence in Gryffindor House, and Tom Riddle's in Slytherin House. Harry, in a defeated tone, says, "It only puts me in Gryffindor" because Harry did not want to go in Slytherin. Beaming again, Dumbledore says, "exactly ... Which makes you very different from Tom Riddle. It is our choices, Harry ... far more than our abilities." Harry learns this lesson about the importance of the choices one makes. It resolves his inner conflict, making him a good example of a dynamic character.

Example #2: Hamlet, *Hamlet* (by William Shakespeare)

Throughout the play, Hamlet is worried about life and death, and it is this apprehension that makes him a dynamic character. The greatest fear of Hamlet is the afterlife, which is quite understandable, because his father's Ghost comes out of purgatory and tells him about the horror and terror awaiting there.

Because of his preoccupation with this fear, Hamlet does not act out on his desire to take vengeance on Claudius. Nevertheless, when he visits the graveyard, and holds Yorick's dead skull, he becomes apprehensive of the inevitability of death. Hamlet thinks that even great men, such as Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar, could not escape it. This philosophical change in his [perspective](#) about death lets him finally take revenge on King Claudius.

Example #3: Jack, *Lord of the Flies* (by William Golding)

There are four dynamic characters in this novel: Jack, Ralph, Simon, and Piggy. Jack is the most prominent among them – an important dynamic character who goes through a lot of changes during the course of the novel. On the island, Jack encounters life-changing experiences that develop and change the character forever. He has never thought that he would live the way he lives on the island. His authoritative nature, violence, and instinctual behavior make him a dynamic character.

Example #4: Sydney Carton, *A Tale of Two Cities* (by Charles Dickens)

Sydney Carton is another good example of a dynamic character. At the very beginning of the story, Carton describes himself as he states, “I am a disappointed drudge, sir. I care for no man on earth, and no man on earth cares for me.” He throws himself in a depressed state – digging a hole from which he is sure he could never escape.

Sydney is frustrated, and thinks his purpose in life is only to serve C. J. Stryver. The only beautiful part of his life is his love for Lucie Manette. When he hears the news that she will marry Charles Darnay, Sydney is heartbroken, which drives him to reveal his feelings to her. This conversation brings a turning point in Sydney’s life, which causes him to begin taking better care of himself and people around him.

Function of Dynamic Character

A dynamic character plays an important role in a narrative. Often it is the main character of the story, which helps to build a compelling and convincing story. By going through an important [transition](#), having a coming-of-age experience, pulling through trials, gaining maturity, feeling a change of the heart, and developing likable qualities, a dynamic character shows he has made a full transformation. All these changes bring a flavor to the story line and an element of surprise to the readers.