

Mastering Character Description

Learning objective: To develop descriptive writing skills by using expanded noun phrases, powerful adjectives, and sensory imagery to create vivid characters.

Read each flashcard to learn key techniques for character description. Use these methods to transform simple descriptions into captivating, detailed portraits of your own characters.

What is an expanded noun phrase?

A phrase that adds detail to a noun using adjectives and prepositional phrases, for example: 'The clever monkey with the bright, inquisitive eyes.'

Define 'Sensory Imagery' in character writing.

Using words that appeal to the five senses (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste) to help the reader imagine the character vividly.

How can you show a character's personality without just 'telling' the reader?

Use 'show, don't tell'. Instead of saying 'Max is energetic', describe him bouncing on his toes and rapidly solving a puzzle.

What is a simile? Provide an example related to Pip the caterpillar.

A comparison using 'like' or 'as'. Example: 'Pip curled up on the leaf like a tiny, emerald comma.'

Why are strong verbs more effective than basic ones?

Strong verbs create a more dynamic image. For example, instead of 'walked', use 'sauntered', 'dashed', or 'trudged' to show how a character moves.

Explain the difference between physical appearance and personality traits.

Physical appearance is what a character looks like (e.g., golden mane); personality traits are how they act or feel (e.g., brave, gentle).

What is a metaphor? Provide an example related to Nova the owl.

A direct comparison saying one thing **IS** another. Example: 'Nova's eyes were two glowing amber lanterns in the dark forest.'

How does using a character's name in a description help the reader?

It anchors the reader's focus and helps build a relationship between the reader and the character.

Why might an author choose to focus on a character's clothing or accessories?

It gives clues about the character's hobbies, history, or status, such as Kit the fox wearing a scarf filled with clever gadgets.

Justify why we should avoid repeating the same adjectives.

Using a wide range of vocabulary keeps the reader engaged and creates a more precise and sophisticated image of the character.