

Crafting Compelling Characters: The Writer's Workshop

Learning objective: To use expanded noun phrases and precise adjectives to create vivid, layered character descriptions that show rather than tell.

In this activity, you will act as a 'Character Architect'. Use the provided character profiles as your base, then enhance their descriptions using the vocabulary in the word bank. Instead of stating traits directly, use the 'Show, Don't Tell' technique. For example, instead of saying 'Kit is clever', describe how 'Kit's eyes dart across the glowing screen as he rapidly untangles the knot of code'.

Word bank: meticulous · vibrant · resilient · enigmatic · glistening · dexterous · determined · shimmering · weather-beaten · effervescent

1. Nova is an owl who loves stargazing. Write two sentences describing her appearance using at least two words from the bank. Focus on her eyes and feathers. (2 marks)

2. Max loves maths. Explain why describing his 'calloused, ink-stained fingers' helps the reader understand his personality better than simply saying he is a hard worker. (2 marks)

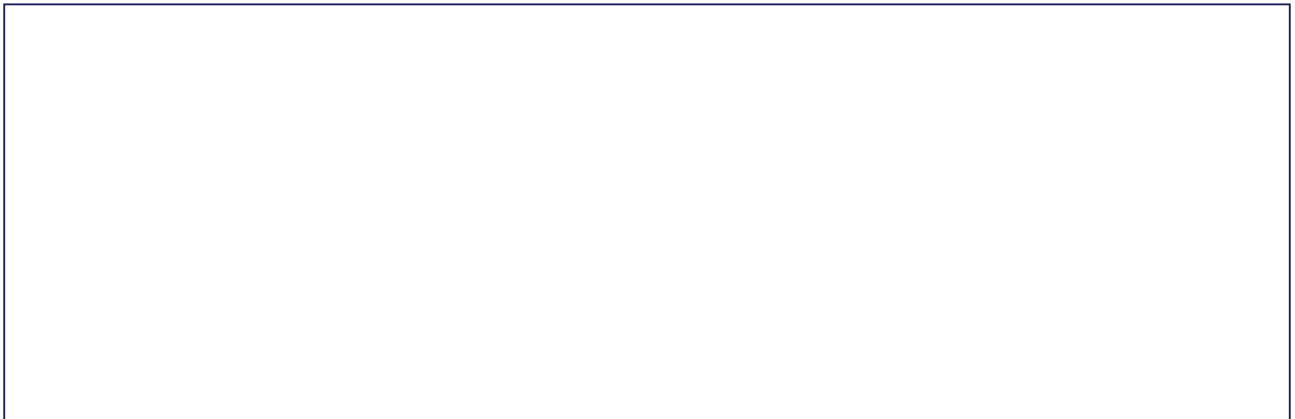
3. Choose a character from the BookFlik list (e.g., Ellie or Zara). Describe their movement using an adverb and an expanded noun phrase. (2 marks)

4. Compare and contrast: How would you describe Pip's home compared to Leo's den? Use descriptive adjectives to highlight the difference in atmosphere. (3 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Why is it more effective for a writer to describe a character's actions rather than just listing their personality traits? (2 marks)

6. What might happen if you changed the setting of Bea's story from a sunny meadow to a bustling city street? How would her description need to adapt to fit this new environment? (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a portrait of a new character you have invented. Surround them with five labels that describe their personality through their physical objects (e.g., a notebook, a telescope, or a worn-out map).



Extension challenge: Write a short paragraph (50-80 words) introducing your own original character. You must include one metaphor to describe their personality and one expanded noun phrase to describe their favourite possession. Ensure you do not use the word 'is' or 'was' to describe their traits; focus entirely on their actions and environment.