

Character Types



The Good Friend



The Slow One



The Pimp



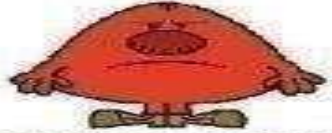
The Good Little Church Girl



The Shy One



The One That Always Swears



The Grumpy One



The One That Always Gets Hurt



The One That's Up To No Good



The Jock



The One With The Bad Memory



The Geek



The Innocent One



The Goodie Two Shoes



The Drama Queen



The Lazy One



The Gangster



The Stylish One



The Flirt



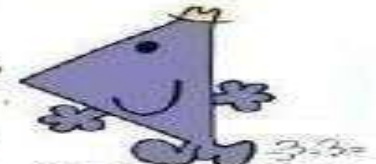
The Tiny Dangerous One



The Tower



The One With All The Gossip



The Ladies Man



The One You Can Depend On



The Annoying One



The Cutie Pie



The Princess



The Funny Guy



The One That Always Hungry

Overview

A character can either be...

Protagonist or **Antagonist**

Dynamic or **Static**

Round or **Flat**

We will examine each of these terms.

Protagonist

The main character in a story

Example

The boy in "The Boy Who Cried Wolf"

Cinderella in "Cinderella"

The **protagonist** can be a "good" character, but does not always have to be. Can you think of a story where the main character is not necessarily "good"?

Antagonist

The character or group of characters that stands against the **protagonist**.

Example

The Wolf from "The Boy Who Cried Wolf"

Cinderella's wicked stepmother from "Cinderella"

The **antagonist** is usually considered to be "bad," but this is not always true. Sometimes he or she may just have something to learn.

Dynamic Character

A character who has an important inner change

Example

At the beginning of the story, Jenny does not appreciate the life that she has until a family emergency causes her to stay at her aunt's house. Things are much different at her aunt's house and everyone who lives there appreciates everything that they get, since they don't get very much. When Jenny is finally able to return home, she has a new perspective and a more appreciative attitude.

Notice that Jenny didn't just change her shoes or something little? She underwent a serious and important change in the course of the story; therefore, she is a **dynamic** character.

Static Character

A character that does not change significantly.

Example

Mr. Hero was defending the streets of Urbanity City during one of Despair-O's attacks. Despair-O built an army of robot ninjas and was using them to steal money and valuables. Mr. Hero fell for one of Despair-O's tricks and was captured; however, he soon devised a clever escape trick, shut down Despair-O's robot army, and captured the villain.

Did you notice that neither Mr. Hero nor Despair-O make any significant character changes throughout the course of the text? This makes them **static** characters.

Round Character

A well-developed, lifelike character with realistic emotions, conflicting feelings, and multiple traits.

Example

Carrie doesn't know what to do. She thinks that her friend Veronica may be getting abused. Carrie keeps finding large bruises and marks on her legs and arms. When she tries to talk to Veronica about this, Veronica covers the marks and tells Carrie that she can't talk about it. Carrie is concerned that if she doesn't do anything, it might get worse, but she also doesn't want to do anything to threaten her friendship with Veronica.

Carrie demonstrates multiple, realistic sides to her personality. She is emotionally conflicted. This makes her a **round** character.

Flat Character

An one-dimensional character that does not display emotional depth and has a single set of traits.

Example

Vince was exhausted from doing laps. His throat was dry and scratchy and the summer sun pounded down on him. He finally summoned the courage to ask Coach Lewis if he could get a drink of water and Coach Lewis laughed, "You can get everyone some water, water boy." Coach Lewis had a reputation for winning, but he also had a reputation for doing *whatever* it took to win.

Coach Lewis is not a warm guy. We know that he is tough, but we do not learn why. No internal struggle with his feelings is revealed; therefore, he is a **flat** character.

Review

- All characters are either **dynamic** or **static**, depending on whether they make important changes.
- All characters are either **round** or **flat**, depending on how emotionally developed each is.
- A character can be *either* a **protagonist**, an **antagonist**, or **neither**, depending on whether they are the main character, against the main character, or neither.

Practice

Read each short story, analyze the characters, and then answer the questions.

Juan wasn't technically supposed to be in this country. He was considered by law to be an illegal immigrant, but Juan didn't look at it that way. He wanted a better life for his family, no matter what it took, so he worked three hard jobs for minimum wage. He sent what money he could back to his family. It was a hard and lonely life for Juan, and it was only made harder by one of his bosses, Rick. "Hey, Pablo, I need you to clean the toilets again." Juan did not like that Rick called him Pablo, which was not his name, but he had little choice but to accept this treatment. "Andale amigo!" Rick shouted at Juan while clapping. After hurrying to the washroom with the janitorial supplies, he noticed that the toilets were, in fact, still clean. Juan, however, did not bother raising the argument with Rick, who would only find a different way to make his life harder. While further cleaning the already clean toilets, Juan wondered what had happened in Rick's life to make him so hateful.

1

Who is the protagonist and who is the antagonist?

Answer

Antagonist: Rick

Protagonist: Juan

2

Is Rick a dynamic character or a static character?

Answer

Rick is a static character because he does not make any significant changes in the course of the story.

3

Is Juan a dynamic character or a static character?

Answer

Juan is a static character because he does not make any significant changes in the course of the story.

4

Is Rick a flat character or a round character?

Answer

Rick is a flat character because he appears as a single-sided bully who shows little depth.

5

Is Juan a round character or a flat character?

Answer

Juan is a round character because of the conflicts within his character: while Juan is breaking the law, many readers would be sympathetic to his reasons for doing so. Also, instead of just hating Rick for bullying him, Juan considers the causes of Rick's feelings, which shows some emotional depth on Juan's part.