

Understanding the character's goals and motivations

by Johnny Ray

While it is often easy to give a physical description to most characters in a novel, this often requires a second look. Good authors will often use this as a way of telling the reader so much more. Getting a picture in the readers head of what a character looks like is important, but giving the reader an insight into their soul is a totally different skill.



Still, every reader will come away with a different image of what the character looks like and what kind of person they really are. This is not necessarily a bad thing, since it helps all readers relate to a story on a more personal level. It is important, however, for any misconceptions to be avoided, if possible.

Almost every character has a goal, and a reason for advancing the story. Generally the person whose point of view is being presented is usually the one with the most to lose, or has the strongest goal. Learning exactly what that is usually requires the reader to place themselves in the place of that character. Becoming that person can do so much to see the story better. If you were that person, that character in a book, and based on the information available, what would you do, and how would you proceed?



There will be times when you agree with the character, and other times you might totally disagree. What is important, however, is attempting to understand why the character thinks such. Don't be surprised if the character himself is confused. Just like many real life situation, life is never all white and black, but shades of conflict, always looking for a solution.

Much can be learned about a character by his actions, which most writers go to big pains to make sure they have it right, some of them are very obvious, but others are so subtle you might miss it the first time.

Another important aspect of knowing the character is understanding the growth of the character during the novel. Fully expecting the character to change is why readers keep reading. A good character is one that the reader can pull for and hold their breath until he/she does.

The driving point of many novels is the conflict involved. This naturally means that once you figure out one character's motive, the reader now has to work on the next character. Every reader will relate to the characters differently, and this what makes the stories so personal to so many readers who all take



away something different from the same novel.

I hope this is something all readers consider as they read their next novel.

Johnny Ray

Johnny Ray has a passion for life and adventure that he loves to share with his readers. As an avid traveler and professional businessman conducting business worldwide for years he has made many interesting contacts and received numerous awards for top production. He has owned and operated several real estate companies, several insurance companies, and a stock brokerage company. He loves radio and TV talk shows, as well as speaking in front of various audiences. Feel free to contact him if you need a guest speaker. Johnny lives in Clearwater, Florida where he works full time as a writer.

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