Developing Memorable Characters: 45 Questions to Create Backstories
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How much about your characters do you really know? Small details might seem superfluous even irrelevant to the story you intend to write, but the smallest detail informs the bigger picture. The more you know about your characters, the better you’ll create believable characters who live and breathe on the page and in their own fictional world.

Take time to answer each of these questions candidly and deeply. Expand your responses to include other questions that may arise.

1. What do you know about this character now that s/he doesn’t yet know?
2. What is this character’s greatest flaw?
3. What do you know about this character that s/he would never admit?
4. What is this character’s greatest asset?
5. If this character could choose a different identity, who would s/he be?
6. What music does this character sing to when no one else is around?
7. In what or whom does this character have the greatest faith?
8. What is this character’s favorite movie?
9. Does this character have a favorite article of clothing? Favorite shoes?
10. Does this character have a vice? Name it.
11. Name this character’s favorite person (living or dead).
12. What is this character’s secret wish?
13. What is this character’s proudest achievement?
14. Describe this character’s most embarrassing moment.
15. What is this character’s deepest regret?
16. What is this character’s greatest fear?
17. Describe this character’s most devastating moment.
18. What is this character’s greatest achievement?
19. What is this character’s greatest hope?
20. Does this character have an obsession? Name it.
21. What is this character’s greatest disappointment?
22. What is this character’s worst nightmare?
23. Whom does this character most wish to please? Why?
24. Describe this character’s mother.
25. Describe this character’s father.
26. If s/he had to choose, with whom would this character prefer to live?
27. Where does this character fall in birth order? What effect does this have?
28. Describe this character’s siblings or other close relatives.
29. Describe this character’s bedroom. Include three cherished items.
30. What is this character’s birth date? How does this character manifest traits of his/her astrological sign?
31. If this character had to live in seclusion for six months, what six items would s/he bring?
32. Why is this character angry?
33. What calms this character?
34. Describe a recurring dream or nightmare this character might have.
35. List the choices (not circumstances) that led this character to his/her current predicament.
36. List the circumstances over which this character has no control.
37. What wakes this character in the middle of the night?
38. How would a stranger describe this character?
39. What does this character resolve to do differently every morning?
40. Who depends on this character? Why?
41. If this character knew s/he had exactly one month to live, what would s/he do?
42. How would a dear friend or relative describe this character?
43. What is this character’s most noticeable physical attribute?
44. What is this character hiding from him/herself?
45. Write one additional thing about your character.

From Suite 101 website:
http://character-development.suite101.com/article.cfm/developing_memorable_characters#ixzz0F8nVQ5Eq&B