

Character Creation Worksheet
Creative Writing
Ms. Burdette (Rev. 9/08)

STEP 1: CREATE A CHARACTER

As the first step in writing a story, you will be creating a character. Think of a character—perhaps based on someone you know, with some fictionalized details; perhaps two people you know merged into one; perhaps a friend, sibling, acquaintance, or even yourself envisioned in 5, 10, 20, or 40 years. Write a brief description of your character in terms of the following characteristics. You may use this handout or notebook and hand-write, but it will be easier to share your character with your partner or group if you type. *Don't feel that you have to* address the questions in order—you may begin envisioning your character by selecting an occupation or working from physical description—or that you have to answer every single one. Feel free to add additional categories. This handout is available my website under Creative Writing (fiction unit).

1. name and nickname
2. age
3. physical description
4. place you'd find this person at three in the afternoon
5. place you'd find this person at nine at night
6. employment
7. socio-economic status
8. beliefs and values
9. interests
10. obsession
11. long term ambition
12. favorite hangout—or place this person feels most secure
13. where this person lives
14. favorite food
15. kind of music this person listens to
16. favorite phrase or saying (reflect how this person talks)
17. talent(s)
18. weaknesses, character flaw
19. important relationships
20. pets (if any)

Step 2: CONFLICT & TURNING POINT

- a) What are this character's goals?
- b) What stands in the way of those goals? (by answering questions a and b, you are identifying conflicts.)
- c) Whether the character is facing internal or external conflict, think of a moment that might be a turning point for this character. At what point are things going to change—for better or worse—for this character?

Step 3: Sharing.

Meet with a partner or group of 3 and share your character description with others in your group. If you've typed your description, print an extra copy or two for group members to use.

Step 4: Write!

Write a draft of a story, which must include not only your character, but also your partner's or group members' characters. The partner's character may appear as a major character (villain, best friend, business partner, love interest), or minor character (the jerk who cut in line in front of your character, a nosy neighbor, someone sitting next to your character on the school bus, the eccentric aunt, even someone in a brief memory). Use your imagination

Assignment: short fiction (to be a short story, not just a character sketch, you must have elements of plot, including conflict, not just character and setting). Write for at least 45 minutes.