

Vanilla Grass presents:

Tips for Creating Dynamic Characters

Create Character Flaws



No human is perfect. And no character should be either! Character weaknesses are what make them relatable to the reader. They're what sow the seeds of doubt when your character faces a challenge. And they're what the reader is hoping the character will overcome.

Decide on a False Truth



Many resources, like *Story Genius*, talk about the false truth your main character should believe at the story's start. This could be about themselves (No one will love me), the world (is a cruel, loveless place), or others (mothers leave). This false truth will drive every decision your character makes. So choose carefully!


Know the Backstory



Even if you don't share it with the readers, you should know your character's past. This includes the moment they started believing their false truth, their family ties and place in society, and where they're at before the story starts.


Focus on Voice

Does everyone you know talk the same? Make the same joke? Understand the same references? Of course not. Make sure each character sounds distinct. Give them a unique point of reference, their own phrase, or a certain way of phrasing things.



Believe in Your Character

This one may sound weird, but it's important to think about your character at the start of the story as well as the end! Good stories see characters change. Understanding who you want your character to become allows you to shape the story around their growth.



Be Willing to Change

Sometimes we write our stories and our character takes a few turns we weren't expecting. When this happens, don't worry! You just created a character-driven story. Decide which turns worked for the better and which were off-theme. Being willing to adjust the story around the new changes will make for a much richer story!

