

Characterization

With Finding Nemo

What is Characterization?

Characterization is the act of creating and developing the characters in a story.

Types of Characters

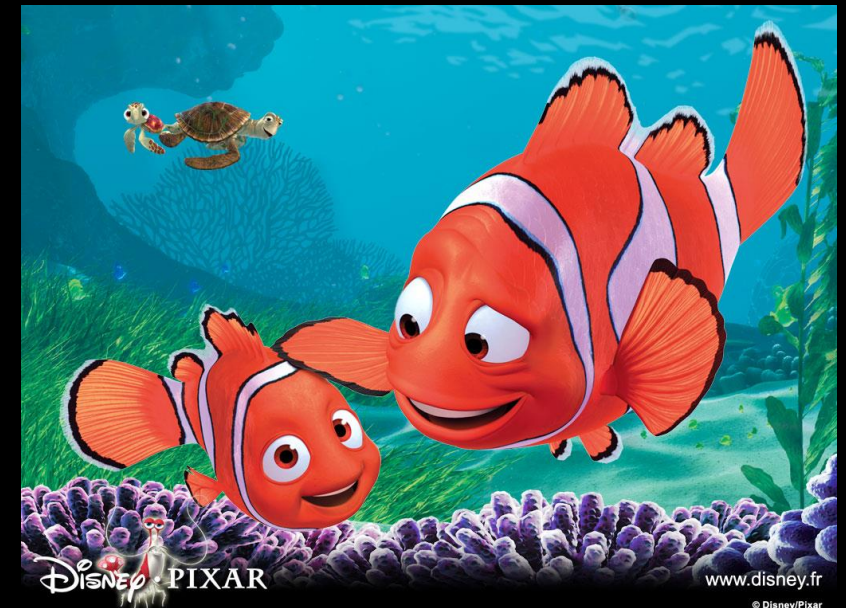
Using Finding Nemo as our example

1. Protagonist:

- the main character in the story
- usually the person the reader is “rooting” for. You want to see this character succeed and do well.

Example:

In Finding Nemo, Nemo is the protagonist. He's the main character who is trying to find his dad. Nemo's dad, Marlin, is also a protagonist.



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2. Antagonist:

- usually the villain or “bad guy” in the story.
- creates conflict for the protagonist.

Example:

The diver who catches Nemo is an antagonist because he puts Nemo in captivity.

Darla is also an antagonist. She’s not intentionally mean, but she kills fish by shaking the bag. She creates a dangerous situation for Nemo.

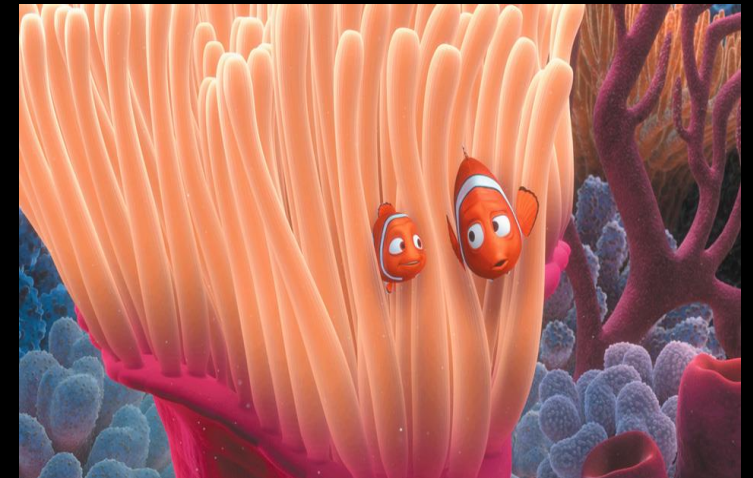


3. Round characters :

- usually the main characters in a story.
- we know so many details (good and bad) about a round character that they start to seem “real.”

Example:

Nemo and Marlin are round characters. We know a lot about them through the story such as where they live, what happened to Nemo’s mother, how well they get along, etc.



4. Flat characters :

- usually minor characters.
- they don't play a big part in the story so they lack detail.
- often stereotypes.

Example:

Crush and Dory are two flat characters. We know Crush says, "Duuuuuude!" a lot and Dory has a bad memory, but that's mostly all we know about them.

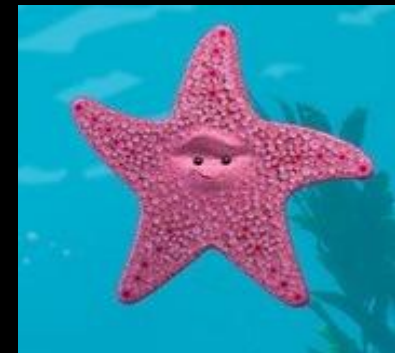


5. Static characters:

- do not change at all through the course of the story - their personalities remain the same.
- most minor, flat characters are static.
- villains tend to be static (but not always).

Example:

The dentist and his niece, Darla, are both static characters. Neither of them change during the story. The same is true of Peach the Starfish and most of the Tank Gang.



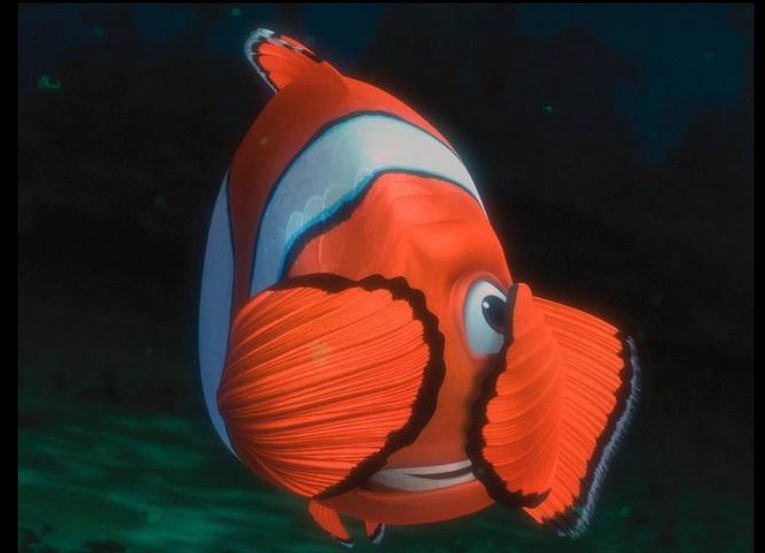
6. Dynamic Characters:

- characters who change (develop) during the story, usually as a result of something big that happens to them.
- main characters are often dynamic.
- heroes tend to be dynamic (but not always)

Example:

Marlin is timid and scared at the beginning of the story, but by the end he is brave, doing things he didn't think he'd be able to do before.

Nemo is also dynamic. He realizes at the end of the story how much his dad loves him and looks out for him.



Types of Characterization

There are 2 types of characterization: direct and indirect.

Direct Characterization:

- the author TELLS us about the personality of the character in the story.

Example:

“Minny’s always been a strong woman, always fighting.”

- The Help

The author directly tells the reader that Minny is strong willed and always fights for what she believes in.



Indirect Characterization:

- The author SHOWS us the character's personality through his or her speech, thoughts, actions, and appearance. We also learn things about the character by the way other characters react to them.
- When you watch a movie, you have to watch and listen to the characters to notice how their personality is revealed through the story. There isn't a label on the screen to tell us that a character is a gullible teen or an arrogant villain.
- In novels, you imagine, or visualize, the characters in your head as you read descriptions of his/her actions and dialogue.

As You Read Your Novel...

- Look for ways characters change
- Decide how they change and why
- Notice how characters differ from one another
- Does the difference fuel the conflict or promote the resolution?