



Name _____ Date _____ List # ____ - ____

Describe Characters

In this lesson, you will . . .

- find details that describe what a character looks like,
- identify characters traits by examining their thoughts and feelings,
- understand how characters change in a story.

Learn about Characters

- **Characters** are the people, animals, or made-up creatures in a story.
- Stories can have one character or many characters.
- You can identify characters by asking, *Who is this story about?*
- Authors use **details** to tell you about characters.
- Details can include descriptions of a character's face, body, clothing, and age.

Identify Character Descriptions

- I. **DIRECTIONS:** Read the story. Think about how the author describes Mateo's face.
Then answer the question.

A Breath of Fresh Air

At recess, Jay ran over to Mateo, who was sitting on a swing. Both boys were nine years old and had been friends since kindergarten. Mateo was staring at his watch, and his cheeks were filled with air, like giant balloons. His eyes looked like they might pop out of his head.

"Hey, Mateo, what are you doing?" Jay asked, with a sly smile.

Mateo stared straight ahead, and waved his hands, as if to say, leave me alone! Jay looked right in Mateo's wide-open eyes and said, "Don't take this the wrong way, but you look like a blowfish—a really ugly blowfish!"

Mateo couldn't hold on any longer. He cracked up and said, "Come on, I was so close to my all-time record!"

"Oops!" Jay said, grinning. Mateo laughed and hopped off the swing. As he chased Jay across the playground, his curly hair blew in the breeze.

___ 1. Look at each picture. Choose the option that BEST illustrates Mateo's face.

Option A



Option B



Option C



Learn about Character Traits

Stories can tell you about what characters are like on the inside, too.

Character traits describe personality and how the character *usually* behaves and why. Authors use details to show character traits.

Feelings

What is the character feeling?

A character who feels excited on a roller coaster might be **adventurous**.

Actions

What is the character doing?

A character reading a book might be **curious**.

Motivations

Why is the character doing something?

A character who wants to win an award might be **competitive**.

Thoughts

What is the character thinking?

A character who thinks *I hope nobody is watching* might be **shy**.

Words

What is the character saying?

A character who says "Go to the end of the line!" might be **bossy**.

Understand Character Traits

- II. DIRECTIONS:** Read the story again. Think about the reason Mateo is making a silly face. Then answer the question.

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- ___2. Choose the sentence from the story that tells you about Mateo's motivation for making a silly face.
- A. Both boys were nine years old and had been friends since kindergarten.
 - B. "Come on, I was so close to my all-time record!"
 - C. At recess, Jay ran over to Mateo, who was sitting on a swing.
 - D. "Don't take this the wrong way, but you look like a blowfish . . ."

Understand Character Changes

In many stories, characters learn lessons, develop new attitudes, and even change their behaviors. These character changes usually happen over time.

Beginning

You learn about a character's strengths and weaknesses.

Middle

An event occurs that causes a character to change the way they act, think, or feel.

End

A character shows growth through different actions or thoughts.

Understand Character Changes

- III. **DIRECTIONS:** Read the story. Watch for character changes. Then answer the question.

Jorge Makes a Splash

On Saturday, Jorge arrived at the pool. He had been dreading this day for weeks. *Why do I need swim lessons?* he thought, as he walked slowly over to the lifeguard.

"I'm Mandy!" the lifeguard said. "Today, I'll help you swim underwater. It's okay to feel a little scared at first."

Mandy tossed a bunch of bright green rings in the pool, and Jorge watched them sink.

"Okay, everyone, catch a ring!" Mandy said.

Jorge jumped in the water and scooped up not one but two rings! *This was actually fun!*

- ___ 3. **Select the letters of** the two sentences that BEST describe how Jorge has changed after the swimming lesson.
- A. Jorge does not feel confident.
 - B. Jorge can catch rings underwater.
 - C. Jorge does not think he needs swimming lessons.
 - D. Jorge thinks swimming is fun.

Remember . . .

- Authors can use details to describe a character's appearance.
- Look at thoughts, feelings, motivations, words, and actions to learn about character traits.
- Characters can change their thoughts, attitudes, or behaviors in a story.

Apply

Read the story. Then answer the question.

Eddie and Tina Play Chess

Eddie idolized his sister Tina. At 14, she was three years older than Eddie, and could do anything. She could sprint faster than any kid, solve that color cube puzzle in seconds, and play chess incredibly well.

Tina agreed to play chess with Eddie. He knew the basic rules but wasn't very skilled yet. "Don't take it easy on me, Tina," he said. And she didn't.

She said "checkmate" and he lost after just five moves.

He wanted to scream, but he kept his cool, and said, "Teach me how you did that!" And she did.

4. Select the **FOUR** words and phrases that BEST describe Tina.
- A. fourteen years old
 - B. fast reader
 - C. incredibly skilled chess player

- D. older than her brother
- E. has many talents
- F. tall
- G. has red hair
- H. wears glasses

ANSWERS: __, __, __, __ (Write your choices in alphabetical order).

___5. Choose the sentence that BEST explains why Eddie lost the chess game so quickly.

- A. Eddie is too young.
- B. Eddie isn't very skilled at chess.
- C. Tina cheated.
- D. Tina only knows the basic rules.

Apply

IV. DIRECTIONS: Read the story. Then answer the question.

When Tuyen Met Waffles: A Diary Entry

Tuesday, August 3

Today is my birthday, so Dad drove us to the Second Chance Animal Shelter. I had worked ridiculously hard to convince Dad that I could care for a dog. Every day, I finished my homework extra early and picked up extra chores. On the other hand, Dad is unsure that we'll find the right dog. "No promises, Tuyen," he said cautiously, "but if we don't find the right dog today, we'll come back." I've been begging for a puppy for three years now. It has to be a puppy.

At the shelter, a cheerful woman named Kory said they had 43 dogs. They all need "forever homes." I felt embarrassed (but secretly awesome) when Dad told Kory that I was now "mature enough for a dog." Kory said, "I know just the one for you." She introduced us to a sweet, older dog named Waffles, who had been found on the street. We took him for a walk, cuddled with him, and knew that Waffles had found his "forever home." It felt right. I looked up at Dad, and he nodded.

Choose the letter that BEST describes each character in the story.

- A. Hardworking and responsible.
- B. Unsure and cautious.
- C. Distracted and unfocused.
- D. Afraid of dogs.
- E. Cheerful and knows about dogs.

___6. Tuyen:

___7. Tuyen's dad:

___8. Kory:

___9. Choose the sentence that BEST describes Tuyen's motivation to do his homework and complete extra chores.

- A. Tuyen wants to show his dad what kind of dog he wants.
- B. Tuyen wants to prove to his dad he can be responsible.
- C. Tuyen wants to ask for a bigger allowance.
- D. Tuyen wants to think about a gift for his dad.

___10. Choose the sentence that BEST describes how Tuyen changes at the end of the story.

- A. Tuyen liked his old home, but later decides a new "forever home" is best.
- B. Tuyen first wanted to adopt a cat, but later decides to adopt a dog.
- C. Tuyen originally wanted a puppy, but later decides to adopt an older dog.
- D. Tuyen wasn't sure about having a pet, but later decides he's ready to care for a dog.