



Creating Characters: How to Build Story People

By Dwight V. Swain

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A jargon-free manual on the basics of developing interesting fictional characters

Vibrant, believable characters help drive a fictional story. Along with a clever plot, well-drawn characters make us want to continue reading a novel or finish watching a movie. In *Creating Characters*, Dwight V. Swain shows how writers can invent interesting characters and improve them so that they move a story along.

“The core of character,” he says in chapter 1, “lies in each individual story person’s ability to care about something; to feel implicitly or explicitly, that something is important.” Building on that foundation—the capacity to care—Swain takes the would-be writer step-by-step through the fundamentals of finding and developing “characters who turn you on.” This basic but thought-provoking how-to is a valuable tool for both the novice and the seasoned writer.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

YA-- Young people seriously interested in creative writing will find this manual for developing fictional characters a rich source of detailed information. Students can browse through the 17 chapters, each titled and annotated, without reading the book from cover to cover. Swain talks to his readers in a conversational tone, suggesting techniques, giving examples to illuminate his points, and offering activities for sharpening character development skills. This is a book for those already committed to writing fiction and who want to think about the craft of writing.

Joyce H. Jones, Mount Vernon High School, Alexandria, VA

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About the Author

Dwight V. Swain spent a lifetime writing newspaper and magazine articles, pulp fiction, and screenplays. For more than twenty years he taught in the Professional Writing Program at the University of Oklahoma. His popular books, *Techniques of the Selling Writer* and *Creating Characters: How to Build Story People* are published by the University of Oklahoma Press.

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