



Peter Sawyer

Home schooling pack

Creative Writing - Creating Character

I've been writing ever since I was a teenager, scribbling bad sci-fi and contemporary short stories in a notebook on the school bus. I've now got 10 books published through Amazon and am currently co-writing a trilogy to be published together in October 2020.

As so many people have so much time, I'm putting together a pack to help you write your first complete short story or novel or just as fun things to do with the days of lockdown. Each part could be a short activity or stretch it out as long as you want. My writing style is very organic, I'm not very good at planning things out but I've tried to make this as usable as possible!

I'm not a teacher, but I am a history graduate and I've been doing Living History for 2 years. Covid-19 has hit my business hard, it's unlikely that I'll be working again before September but I'm fortunate that I don't have any children to look after. So, for anyone who's having to try their hand at home-schooling, I've put together this education pack based on my work as an author and my Living History workshops. Feel free to print, copy and distribute this pack as far and wide as you want.

I'll also be doing packs on:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vikings and Saxons• Ancient Roman society• Ancient Roman army• Ancient Greece- Athens• Ancient Greece- Sparta• Medieval | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• World War One• World War Two• More creative writing exercises• Favourite books• More to follow |
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*Keep an eye on www.peter-sawyer.com
or "Peter Sawyer, author" on Facebook or Twitter*

You'll need:

- Whatever you're most comfortable writing with- pen or pencil
- Whatever you're most comfortable drawing with
- An A4 notebook/pad/paper
- If you prefer, you could do this all on a laptop or tablet: you'll need a writing programme like Microsoft Word and a drawing one such as Microsoft Paint

- *Things to do are marked like this*



Part 1- Creating Character

First, you need to know what genre you're going for: there are over 30 listed on Amazon! I've written contemporary fiction and fantasy and I'm currently working on a mixture of both.

Your main character is the anchor for your story and you need to know them intimately.

This is the basic character profile that I used for *Elena* in my book *Princess*.

Full name: Elena Anna Rachel Johnson

Born: 21/08/83 to **Parents:** Carl & Juliette. **Siblings:** only child.

Brief family details: Carl is half German on mum's side, mum is Agnes. Juliette's mum is Frances.

Hair: Blond hair to waist. **Eyes:** blue eyes. **Height:** 5'11". **Physique and noticeable features:** curvy, long legs

Education: College-qualified hairdresser

Significant Other: Ceri Elizabeth Moss

Hobbies: Hockey for Oxford (Captain), police & drama TV,

Politics/religion: Anti-religious due to sexuality

Personality: Authoritative, determined, protective, fierce

Weaknesses: Ceri, temper

Fears: Loss

Guilty pleasure: 80s TV- MacGyver, Airwolf, A-Team

Prized possession: Wedding ring

Bad habits: Sacrifices self for Ceri

Proudest moment: Buying salon

Secret talent: --



- *Create a character profile for a few characters. Minimum 3, maximum of however many you want!*

Some details, like fears or guilty pleasures, might crop up later in the book or never reveal themselves, like Elena's Secret Talent. Frances never appears in *Princess* but it's a detail I know.

Try to see the characters in your mind, a detailed physical description.

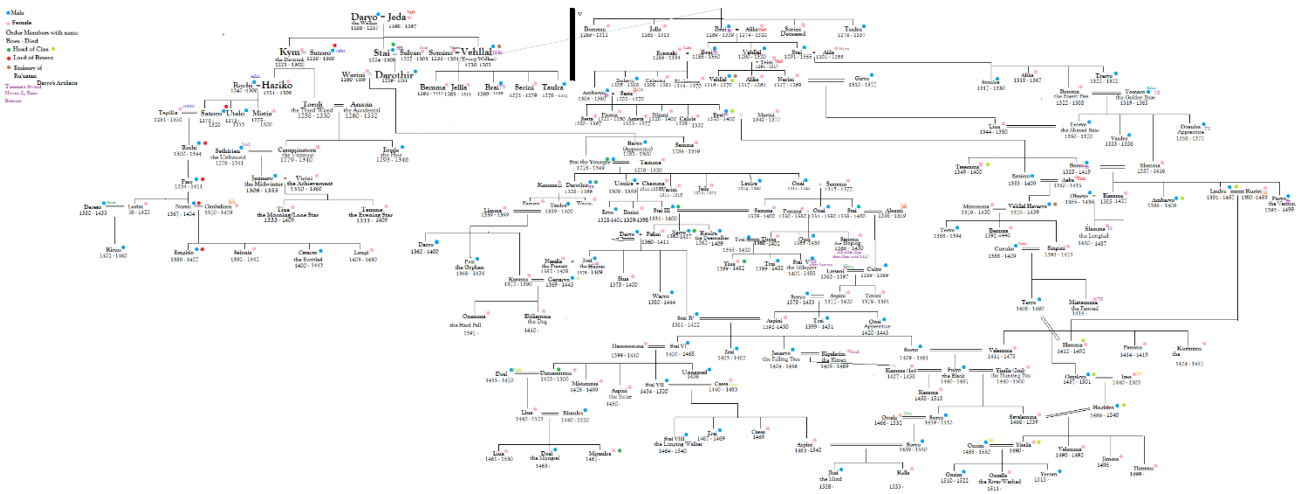
- *If you have the ability, draw your characters, if not, write a detailed physical description*

How big is their nose? How do they wear their hair? What colours suit them? Is there something they always carry? Are they a boots-person or a trainers-type?

These things will also give you more of an idea about their personality, which might change the details in the profile

One of your characters is going to be the main one. Decide which one you feel most pulled towards, who's the most interesting, the most challenging or the most complex? Who seems to talk to you?

- *Create a timeline for this character. Birth to death, birth to start of novel, one important year of their life, whatever works. You might also want to draw up a family tree.*



This is the family tree of my characters from my *Heart, Mind & Honour* series. Daryo, the original character, is right at the top and off to the left. Following are about 15 generations!

Understanding your character is a key part of writing, it's essential to how I write as my books tend to be character-driven, what the character wants, needs and achieves is what steers my plot.

Knowing their background can help shape them as people, my latest book in the *Heart, Mind & Honour* series is set 500 years after the original and that legacy weighs heavily

on some of the characters.

- *Write two short scenes with your character from their timeline. Perhaps their first day at school or their first memory.*

Understanding your character's backstory is an important part of understanding them. How a rich child and one from the slums grow up influence their character. If they hate their mother, this influences later relationships with women. Only children have very different experiences to those with large numbers of siblings.

- *Describe your character's relationship to their family and closest friends. Perhaps they're from a military family or an orphan and totally reliant on their friends?*

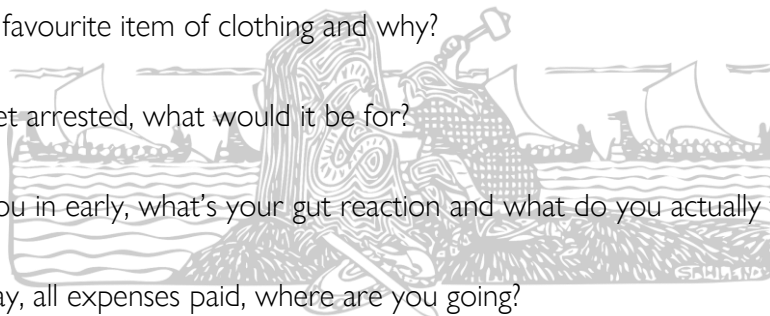
If your plot is character-driven, then this backstory might be what motivates them.

- *Now you know a bit about them, make a list of their wants and needs. From this, what is their NUMBER ONE want or need, this could be the basis of your plot.*

Getting to know your character is essential. My characters are like voices in my head, sometimes they seem to crop up with ideas of their own or say something that I didn't plan for. Yours won't necessarily misbehave this way!

• *Answer these questions using your character, like a dialogue.*

1. What scares you?
2. If you were trapped in a lift, what would you do?
3. Someone you love is sick, would you help them and how?
4. Somebody you dislike, even hate, has just died. How do you feel?
5. What do you want to eat?
6. Fight or flight?
7. What's your favourite item of clothing and why?
8. If you ever get arrested, what would it be for?
9. Work calls you in early, what's your gut reaction and what do you actually tell your boss?
10. 14-day holiday, all expenses paid, where are you going?
11. You've got an hour to yourself, what do you do?
12. What makes you cry?
13. What makes you angry?
14. Are you a good liar?
15. You've got one last phone call. Who do you call and what do you say?



Hopefully those give you a bit more understanding of your character.

Now you've got them, it's time to put them in a setting.

Part 2- Setting, will be online on Friday 10th April.