



Go beyond clichés and stereotypes! Traditional characterization methods rely on typecasting and extrapolation based on bias and blindness which ruins writing and spreads nonsense. Instead, think about the core of every character and unlock their full narrative potential. Use your words!

Don't bog down in appearance or assumptions; look at how your character ACTS.

Spot 9 things your character simply does that express a state, mood, or involuntary response to a stimulus but change nothing. These are descriptive ACTIVITIES. (e.g. yawn, yearn, meddle, meditate, sparkle, sneeze, giggle, cringe)


Name 9 things your character does to something or someone else in the course of your story to change a situation. These offer a partial list of their TACTICS. (e.g. protect, attack, restore, seduce, push, pull, join, split)


See if you can identify the 3 go-to methods your character uses to change situations and accomplish necessary ends. These are ACTION candidates.

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Narrow it down! Identify the one thing that your character does to anything and anyone in their vicinity at all times in the present tense in order to accomplish their goals. This is their ACTION.

(If every one of these answers isn't a verb, this character needs help.)

- The **ACTION** is something the character does every moment of a story. It expresses their essential nature, not something they *want* to do or *used* to do, but something they are always doing to achieve their **story** goal.
- **TACTICS** are synonyms of the Action (and synonyms of synonyms), which reveal the character's *re-action* specific to a situation the story unfolds to achieve their **scene** goal. For character to cohere, tactics must align.
- **ACTIVITIES** are character behaviors revealing moods, states, and reflexes via intransitive verbs. Instead of doing something, activities simply occur.

