

Character Sketch

Writing a character sketch is like painting a portrait of someone. The writer's objective is to present the subject in words so that the reader gets a clear idea of the subject. The subject should be interesting and distinctive in some way, either in characteristics or actions. Readers should be told enough so that they feel that they have met the subject and almost know him or her.

Following are steps for writing a character sketch:

1. Select a person to write about. Choose an individual you know well who should be interesting to your readers.
2. List the subject's characteristics and accomplishments. Underline the most important ones for the kind of sketch you want to write. Each person has an enormous number of qualities, facts, and idiosyncrasies. Your careful selection of these details adds up to the portrait you are trying to create.
3. Decide how you want to portray your subject. Do you want to emphasize your subject's personality, appearance, or character? Simply giving an individual's accomplishments usually isn't enough to hold a reader's interest.
4. Keep your audience in mind. Who will read your sketch? Will your audience be sufficiently interested in your subject to keep reading?
5. Write your rough draft. Don't be too concerned with spelling, punctuation, or grammar at this stage. Leave plenty of space between the lines for corrections.
6. Read over your first draft silently and then read it aloud. Make obvious corrections. Put it aside and don't look at it for a few hours or a day.
7. Read your first draft again, putting yourself in the role of a reader. Does it read easily?
8. Make the corrections and changes that you see should be made. Look for one kind of error or weakness at a time. Here are the main areas in which possible errors or weaknesses might occur:
 - **Mechanics:** Check your sketch for errors in punctuation, spelling, sentence construction, and grammar.
 - **Consistency:** Is there a logical order in terms of time, plan, importance, complexity, or step-by-step unfolding of the sketch?
 - **Clarity:** Have you given enough details so that a reader can picture your subject clearly?
 - **Development:** Are the main parts of the sketch put together logically? Does the material grow as the sketch develops?
 - **Total Effect:** Do you believe your readers will see, feel, and understand what you have written about your subject? If not, add or remove details so that they will.
9. Give the second draft to someone you respect and ask for frank comments.
10. After the trial reader has read your sketch critically, discuss it with him or her. Make sure you understand any criticisms or suggestions.
11. Rewrite your final draft in light of your trial reader's critique.

Character Sketch

Planning and writing a character sketch

Person to write about:	
Characteristics and accomplishments:	
I want to emphasize my subject's personality, appearance, or character	
Who will read my sketch?	
	Tick
I have written a rough draft	
I read over the first draft silently	
I read over the first draft out loud	
I made obvious corrections	
I put it aside and didn't look at it for a few hours or a day	
I have read my first draft again, putting myself in the role of a reader. It reads easily.	
I have made necessary corrections and changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Punctuation, spelling, sentence construction, and grammar.• There is a logical order in terms of time, plan, importance, complexity, or step-by-step unfolding of the sketch• I have given enough details so that a reader can picture the subject clearly• The main parts of the sketch are put together logically• The material grows as the sketch develops• I believe my readers will see, feel, and understand what I have written about my subject	
I have given my second rough draft to someone I respect for comments	
I have discussed any criticisms and suggestions	
I have written my final draft	

Character Sketch

Grandpa, My Favorite Relative

Opening statement/facts	My favorite relative was a fighter pilot in World War II, and he's only 5'4" tall. But those 64 inches weigh a solid 185
Appearance/facts	pounds. Even though he is 79, you'd guess he couldn't be more than 65. Maybe he was blond when he was young, but now his hair is silvery white. There's usually a twinkle in his eye and a
Personality trait	half-smile on his face. He looks like a good-natured gnome. Grandpa cracks jokes all the time, but sometimes they aren't very funny. That's all right—he tries.
Glimpse of subject	When I visit my grandparents, Grandpa is usually busy at his workbench in the garage. He can fix almost anything.
Personality trait/ examples	Once, when I was young, he fixed my train set when Dad couldn't. The other day he was able to fix the muffler on my
Personality trait	dad's car. He just works away at whatever he's doing, but when I ask him a question he likes to explain how things work.
Personality traits	Grandpa doesn't talk much about his experiences in World War II or about being a high school principal, and he doesn't try to give me advice. He's a great fisherman
Facts	because he's patient. Maybe that's why he has been married to Grandma for 51 years. During that time she went from being a flaming liberal to a diehard conservative. When someone
Quote	asked Grandpa why he put up with Grandma's political shenanigans and occasionally bizarre behavior, he said: "Maybe it's because I love her."
Summary statement/ example	Even though he doesn't tell me what to do, I like to talk with Grandpa when I have a problem. He doesn't tell me I goofed or anything. Mostly he just listens. I guess that's why he's my favorite relative and one of my very favorite people.

Marks are awarded as follows: (see below)

1. Planning, coherence, introduction and conclusion; development of structure - **7 marks**
2. Content (objective detail; inclusion of relevant information; originality) – **7 marks**
3. Order and sequencing of events/arguments – **7 marks**
4. Language structure and use; vocabulary – **7 marks**
5. Use of the writing process – **7 marks**

Character Sketch

	5	4	3	2	1
Planning, coherence, introduction and conclusion; development of structure	Through planning; well-developed and coherent, with effective introduction and conclusion. Excellent use of paragraphing in essay	Effective planning, coherent, good introduction and conclusion. Good use of paragraphing in essay	Good planning, coherent, functional introduction and conclusion. Adequate use of paragraphing in essay	Some evidence of planning; poor coherence; poor introduction and conclusion. Paragraphing in essay poor	Little or no evidence of planning, poor coherence; no introduction or conclusion. Little or no paragraphing in essay (solid text)
Content (objective detail; inclusion of relevant information; originality)	Excellent development of original content; excellent use of objective detail; originality in approach to subject	Good development of relevant content, good use of objective detail; systematic approach to subject	Adequate development of relevant content, objective detail evident; fairly systematic approach to subject	Poor development of content, some irrelevant; lacks objective detail; topic handled systematically	Little or no relevant content, poorly developed; little or no objective detail; handling of subject inadequate
Order and sequencing of events / arguments	Events / arguments are sequenced logically; excellent use of connectors	Events are sequenced; good use of connectors	Events are sequenced; connectors correctly used but limited	Poor sequencing of events; inconsistent use of connectors	Little or no sequencing of events; little or no use of connectors
Language structure and use; vocabulary	Correct language structures, spelling and punctuation; broad, effective vocabulary; excellent language use (correct register, style, first person narration)	Mostly correct language structures, spelling and punctuation; good use of vocabulary; few errors in language use	Uses appropriate language structures with some errors; some spelling and punctuation errors; mostly adequate vocabulary; some errors in language use	Sometimes uses appropriate language structures; spelling and punctuation; basic vocabulary; some errors in language use	Many errors in language structures, spelling and punctuation. Poor vocabulary limits expression. Many errors in language use
Use of the writing process	Clear evidence of revision, editing and proofreading, leading to a near-perfect essay. Clear improvement from first draft to final draft	Evidence of good use of revision, editing and proofreading; very few mistakes. Marked improvement from first draft to final draft	Some evidence of revision, editing and proofreading; however many mistakes remain. Some improvement from first draft to final draft	Some evidence of revision, editing and proofreading; however many mistakes remain. Some improvement from first draft to final draft	Little or no evidence of revision, editing and proofreading. Little or no improvement from first draft to final draft