

## ANALYZING CHARACTERS WITH WALTeR

**Directions:** Identifying character traits and how a character changes is important to understanding literature better. Begin by selecting a word that BEST describes a character. While reading, identify details that support your claim. If the character is dynamic, and main characters usually are, he or she may have more than one dominant or outstanding trait. However, this may change throughout the story. For example, a character may change from cowardly to brave. Select the strongest traits and text details to support your argument. Use **WALTeR** as a guide, but rather than trying to find one of each type of detail, focus on the details that BEST support your writing goals.



**W** a. Character's **Words**: What a character says through dialogue and how he says it gives a clue to his personality. Is the character saying it in an angry, sarcastic, frustrated, or humorous tone? This adds meaning beyond the literal words.

**A** b. Character's **Actions**: How a character acts or behaves gives insight beyond their words. A character might say he is tough, but does he act tough? Why is he angry when his friends throw a surprise birthday party?

**L** c. Character's **Looks**: Physical traits contribute to a person's character. They sometimes create conflicts that must be overcome before there is a resolution. Identify outstanding physical traits that contribute to external or internal conflicts.

**T** d. Character's **Thoughts**: Climb inside the character's head. What is the character thinking? If an author invites you inside a character's head, they are revealing something about the character: fears, dreams, goals, beliefs, etc. Pay attention to the character's secret thoughts.

**eR** e. Other Character's **Response**: Other characters will react to the main character in a positive, negative or neutral manner. When other characters respond in a dramatic manner, positive or negative, take notice.