

In Character

Purpose

Students will begin to use knowledge of a character's traits, motivations, and feelings to determine the causes for that character's actions.

Materials

For the teacher: chalk, chalkboard

For the students: copies of Black Line Master (BLM) *In Character*, books with distinctive character descriptions (e.g., *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl, *Frindle* by Andrew Clements, or, for reading aloud, *Holes* by Louis Sachar)

Activity

A. Pre-Activity Preparation

On the chalkboard, draw a chart similar to the one on the BLM *In Character*.

B. Find a Motivation

1. Have the class read a book with distinctive character descriptions.
2. Distribute the BLM and have students complete their BLMs as you complete the chart on the chalkboard.
3. Explain that you will be discussing characters. Ask students if they can think of words that might describe someone's personality.
4. Label the chart with the name of the book you will be discussing.
5. Have students give you the name of a character from the book and write it into your chart.
6. Have students think of three adjectives to describe this character. Write the answers into your chart. (Allow for discussion of students' answers and make changes if the students feel they are necessary.)
7. Ask students to name a few of the things this character does during the book. Write the actions in a separate space on the chalkboard.
8. Ask whether these actions are "in character" (i.e., match with the character's personality). Have students discuss which part of the character's personality might connect to each action, referring to the students' character description and the actions you have written on the board.

(continued)

EXTENDING THE ACTIVITY



Have students design action figures based on one of the characters from the book. Ask students: "What would the box say about the action figure? What are the most important accessories for the action figure to have? What outfits would the action figure wear?"

MEETING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS



Have students who complete this activity with ease think of a color that describes their character's personality and write it down. Have them then think of a piece of furniture, a food, a type of weather, and an animal that defines the character's personality. Have volunteers read a few character descriptions aloud.

Standards Link
4.3.5

Activity (continued)

9. Have students work independently on their BLMs to fill in the names of two other characters and three words describing each.


C. Closing the Activity


1. Have a few students read their character descriptions to the class.
2. Discuss them with the class, having students refer directly to the text to support their opinions.


Classroom Assessment

Basic Concepts and Processes

Assess students' knowledge by asking the following questions:

 How would you describe the personality of [*insert character*]?

 How does describing a character help you to understand the character's actions?

 How do you find out more about a character when you are reading?

Name: _____

In Character

Title of Book: _____

The worksheet is set against a background illustration of a forest with tall trees and a winding river. It contains four character analysis diagrams, each consisting of a central circle labeled "Name:" connected to three surrounding rounded rectangular boxes. A central rounded rectangular box is labeled "Setting:".

Character 1 (Top Left): Name: _____

Character 2 (Top Right): Name: _____

Character 3 (Bottom Left): Name: _____

Character 4 (Bottom Right): Name: _____

Setting: _____

In Character

Teacher Directions

Distribute the BLM *In Character*, and have students write short descriptions of the setting in the middle of the chart.

Have students write a character name in each circle, and direct students to write a personality trait of that character in each connected rectangle.

Have reading groups use the chart to discuss the book.

Answer Key

Not applicable.