

10 Ways to Create Compelling Characters

by Lynne M. Spreen

Have you ever read a novel where the main characters just don't interest you that much? Here are some tricks for making them more interesting.

1. Give the character a superpower.
 - a. FOR EXAMPLE They're an exceptional baker, or they can sense when somebody's lying.
 - b. BECAUSE everybody likes a winner. We want that character to succeed.
2. Make the character care about something other than herself.
 - a. BECAUSE instead of being narrow, this adds complexity to their personality, which is interesting to the reader.
3. Make your good characters do bad things and your bad characters do good things.
 - a. BECAUSE this is fun for you as a writer, and it'll help you grow, AND
 - b. BECAUSE it makes your character more real and less predictable. IE more interesting.
4. Give your character a passion.
 - a. BECAUSE this makes them interesting. And you can use it in the story.
5. Know your character's psychic wound (example workaholism is a form of fight or flight.)
6. Give your character a worldview. Understand how she relates to, or generally sees, other people.
7. Know what your character wants.
 - a. BECAUSE then you can make her work for it.
8. Know what she FEARS the most.
 - a. BECAUSE then you can threaten her with it.
9. Give your character some blind spots
 - a. BECAUSE then a friend or even better, an ENEMY, can enlighten her.
10. Hint at depth. For side-characters. Like have a granny mumble about missing her AR-15.

BONUS TIP: in all of the above, DON'T BE GRATUITOUS.

I hope this was helpful. For more information about my works and worldview (!), go to

AnyShinyThing.com