All About Characters

TYPES OF CHARACTERS

- <u>Static</u> - A character who **does not change over time**.

- <u>Round</u> - A character who has a **complex personality**; he or she is often portrayed as a conflicted person. This character may change as a result of the conflict in the story.

- <u>Flat</u> - The opposite of a round character. This character is notable for **one kind of personality trait or characteristic.**

TYPES OF CHARACTERS

- <u>Protagonist</u> - The central character in a story. He or she (or they) is faced with a conflict that must be resolved. The protagonist may not always be admirable (e.g. an anti-hero)

- <u>Antagonist</u> - The antagonist is an obstacle that the protagonist must overcome.

- <u>Anti-Hero</u> - A major character who lacks nobility of mind and struggles for values not universally admirable.

TYPES OF CHARACTERS

- <u>Foil</u> - Acharacter whose personality contrasts with an important character's personality. This comparison reveals more information about important characters.

- <u>Symbolic</u> - A character who represents some major idea or aspect of society.

- <u>Archetype</u> - A character that represents universal patterns of human nature.

DIRECT CHARACTERIZATION

Characterization is the way a writer reveals a character.

Direct Characterization: When a writer directly describes a character and tells you about, their looks, feelings, and motives either through a narrator or another character:

- *"Bill was short and fat, and his bald spot was widening with every passing year."*

- *"'Jane is a cruel person,' she said.'"*

- *"I looked in the mirror and saw how dark the circles under my green eyes had become."*

INDIRECT CHARACTERIZATION

Indirect characterization is when an author SHOWS you the who character is and what his motivation or feelings are.

There are five different ways a character is revealed indirectly. Together, they spell the acronym STEAL:

- Speech
- Thoughts and Emotions
- Effect on Others
- Actions
- Looks

STEAL Characterization

Speech: What does the character say? How does the character speak? What does this reveal?

- "Her voice sounded like a song"
- "I hate you…" she whispered as the teacher walked away.
- "He often stuttered, as if he could not remember the right thing to say or why he was saying it at all."

STEAL Characterization

Thoughts/Emotions: What is revealed through the character's private thoughts? How does the character feel about things?
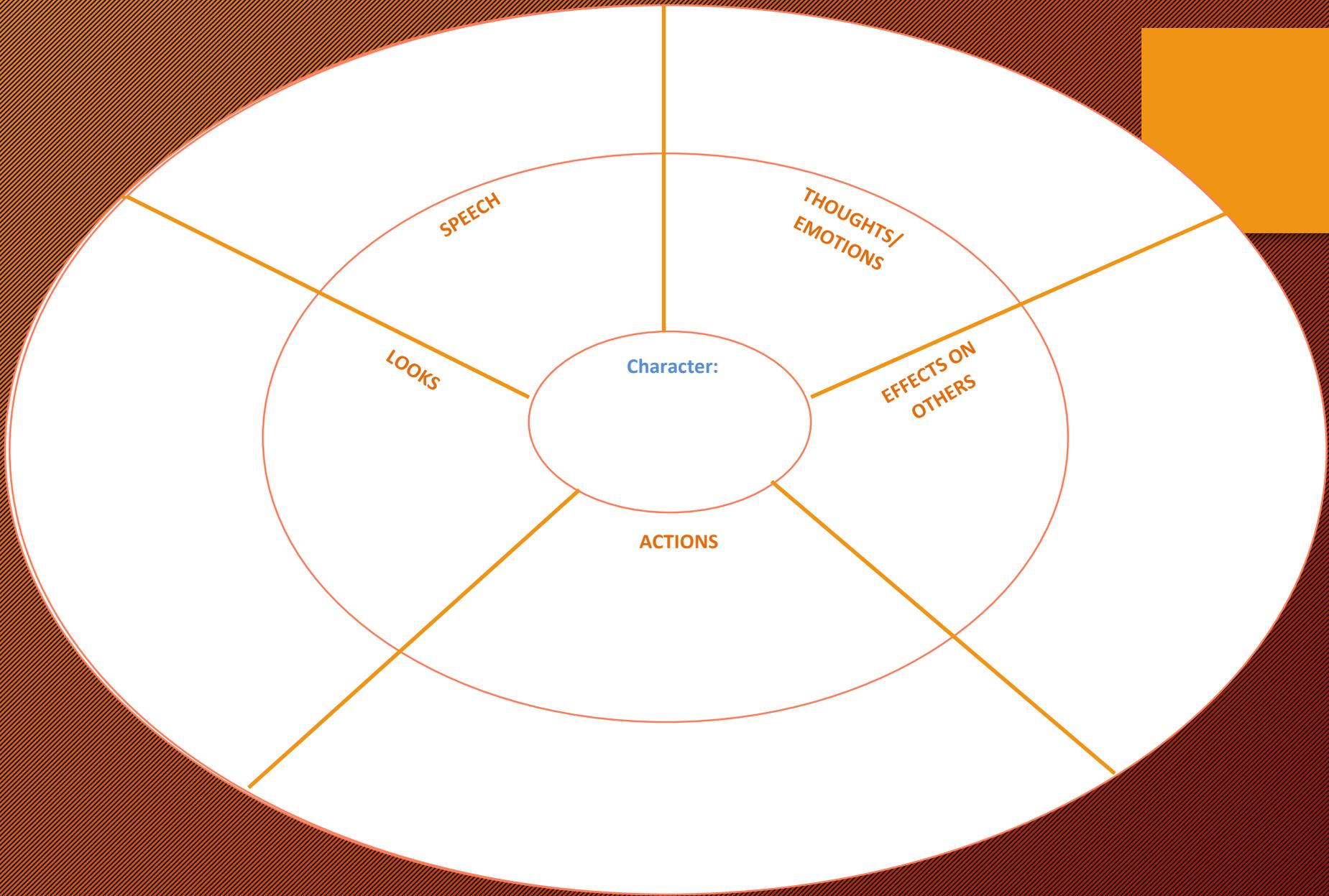
- "Maria wondered why her friends were only nice when they were alone with her."
- "He cried when the lights went out, silently but violently."
- "Tomorrow she would fight. Tomorrow she would show them…"

STEAL Characterization

- Actions: The actions and behaviors of the characters reveal motivation and feelings. How characters physically or verbally interact with other characters in the story shows their personality traits.

- "She threw the ball hard, hitting Jim squarely on the head."
- "No!" he yelled as the door closed.
- "They fought like two cats who had been thrown in water together while tied."

STEAL Characterization

- Looks: The appearance of characters can reveal personality. How characters dress also provides a look into their personalities. How characters carry themselves is also significant.
- "She looked as though any breeze might knock her down."
- "He wore the most expensive clothing, even if it was second hand or stolen."
- "His nose was sharp, beaklike. His eyes were beady and round, his forehead always sweaty."