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# Characters

B.1.1.1

Everyone in a story—people, animals, monsters, even talking trees—is a **character**. A very short story might have one character; a long novel might have hundreds. The **main character** is the most important person in the story.

**Look** Authors can *tell* you what their characters are like. What characters think, say, or do *shows* what they are like. As you read, take notes to flag details that tell you something important about the characters.

You should also pay attention to the relationships among characters. How do they feel about each other? How do their actions reveal their feelings? Look also at the **dialogue**, or what characters say. For example, a story may have a character named Orlando who always speaks rudely to Jennifer, but is always pleasant to everyone else. You can figure out that Orlando probably does not like Jennifer. You should also think about a character’s **motives**, or the reasons behind his or her actions.

## Example

Which sentence **best** describes Eileen in “The Hip-Hip-Hooray”?

- (A) Eileen is timid and easily frightened.
- (B) Eileen doesn’t let her fears stop her from trying new things.
- (C) Eileen is very nervous and unwilling to try new things.
- (D) Eileen is a considerate and loyal friend.

<b>D I S C U S S</b>	(A) Eileen gets frightened when things are scary, but she is hardly timid.	(C) Eileen tries flying a plane, something that is new and difficult.
	(B) Eileen is nervous, but she immediately tries flying when her aunt suggests it.	(D) Eileen may have those qualities, but nothing in the story supports that idea.



**Connections** Not that many people fly their own planes. But you might know someone who talks and acts like Aunt Benicia. Think of someone Aunt Benicia reminds you of, and use details from the story to explain how they are alike.

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