





Adjectives and Character Traits

When we talk about a character in a story, we can describe them with **character traits**, descriptive adjectives like happy or sad that tell us the specific qualities of the character.

We can use the simple "to be" sentence pattern to list the traits for a character. Imagine that we have read about a character named Pat.

We can describe the character by filling in our basic sentence with character traits. Just replace the pronoun he, she, it, or they in the base sentence with the name of the character: Pat is _____.

The words that fill in the blank should be adjectives—the character's traits. In the examples on the right, the character traits are sad, happy, angry, and imaginative.

	Pat is <i>sad</i> .
	Pat is <i>happy</i> .
	Pat is <i>angry</i> .
	Pat is <i>imaginative</i> .

The author may tell us the character traits directly, but more often the author will show us these traits in the things that the character does. Our job as readers is to think about the things that a character does and then describe the character with character traits.

An easy way to think about characters is to use a simple chart like the one below.

1. Jot down things that the character does, feels, and thinks.
2. Use the fill-in-the-blank sentence to write down the related character traits.

For this example, we'll use the character of Charlotte from *Charlotte's Web*.

Things the Character Does, Feels, & Thinks	Related Character Traits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thinks of a way to help save Wilbur • writes words in her web • knows how to get Templeton to do what she wants 	Charlotte is wise. Charlotte is smart.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • says, "I know a good thing when I see it. I stay put and wait for what comes." 	Charlotte is patient.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • calls her egg sac her masterpiece. • makes sure that her babies are taken care of after she is gone. 	Charlotte is maternal. Charlotte is caring.