

# NOVELLAB LESSON PLAN:

## Character Development

### 01 Introduction

Ayn and Sam passionately discuss their approach to crafting compelling characters for literary fiction, YA novels, mysteries, thrillers, sci-fi/fantasies, romances and more. This course is perfect for both new writers working on their very first novel or screenplay, or for writers that have a completed book or script but need help with creating richer, more original characters to help elevate their writing and appeal to agents and publishers.

### 02 Ordinary World

It may not seem like "Ordinary World" or setting is important to character development, but Ayn & Sam explain in vivid detail exactly why a character's ordinary world should be considered when creating your character and his or her detailed traits. They illustrate this concept with commercially popular novels and movies in their video lecture to help inspire you to construct a setting and character(s) that work well together to create a commercially compelling story for your novel or screenplay.

### 03 Need vs Want

In this lecture, Ayn & Sam dive into a character and story development element that not enough writing courses cover. In their opinion, in all successful stories, your protagonist (the hero) thinks that he/she *wants* something, however, after starting their journey, they discover what they really *need*. The struggle between want vs. need makes for powerful conflict and a dramatic character arc and transformation.

## 04 God is in the Details (So are Great Characters)

Ayn & Sam have created questions that serve as writing prompts to help you get to know your character and to help you develop one that is multi-dimensional and compelling for your novel or screenplay. Getting to know your character means that you can feel what it's like to walk in their shoes; therefore, you can create an authentic character and know how they would react in any situation. You will also explore inner thoughts, motivation, backstory, likes and dislikes, fears, insecurities, etc. Every character should also have a *strength* (a characteristic that can help them triumph in the course of the story) and a *weakness* that challenges them.

## 05 Bad Guys Make for Great Good Guys

Just like your hero (or protagonist), your villain (or antagonist) must be compelling and complex. A one-dimensional antagonist will not sustain your readers for an entire book. And similar to your protagonist, your antagonist should have strong wants, strengths and weaknesses, and be a fully developed character. In some great stories, the hero is their own worst enemy.

## 06 Make it Hard on Them

Conflict, conflict, conflict! Whether your novel or screenplay is a thriller, sci-fi, fantasy, drama, or a romantic comedy, make it super hard on your characters at every turn. Conflict draws the reader deeper into your story, and without it, even the highest concept story will fall flat. In this lesson, Ayn and Sam will explain how to create conflict and hurdles that will force your characters to think and act differently, and help them on their path to a transformation that will entertain readers or audiences.

## 07 Great Dialogue Makes Great Characters

Ayn and Sam provide examples of and tips on how to write great dialogue. They also provide a "Great Dialogue Checklist" resource and other resources designed to help you write fantastic dialogue.

## 08 Our Favorite Characters

In this lively discussion, Ayn & Sam share some of their favorite book and movie characters with you to illustrate how authors and scriptwriters shape characters to make them resonate with audiences and readers.

## 09 The Importance of the Catapult

In this informative video lecture, Ayn reveals how the Catapult or Inciting Incident of a story is linked to character development. The “Catapult” is the event or decision that begins the story or the main challenge of the story for the character. This lecture includes a worksheet to help writers develop a memorable catapult that works with their character.

## 10 Bonus Resources

Ayn & Sam share writing resources that they rely on to help inspire themselves and other writers when it comes to character development.

For more information, please reach out to us:

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