



# **Creative Writing Course**

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## **Lesson 2**

**Please use this workbook to write down your ideas  
for the characters in your story.**

# Course Notes

## Part 2 - Choosing Your Protagonist

Now, you've chosen a great idea that gets you excited and enthusiastic whenever you think about it. Well done! Your next step is to think about the characters that will execute this story. And out of all the characters, your first focus should be on the main character, or the protagonist. The protagonist is the person that the novel is about, or his life and journey is the main focus of the novel.

Now as you were trying to come up with an idea for your novel, you may have already started thinking about the protagonist. But if you haven't decided yet, that's not a problem. Your story may have two or more people who are very important, and you may still need to do some thinking and brainstorming before you pinpoint exactly who the main character is.

To illustrate this, here's an example:

Let's say the idea for your story revolves around a huge bank robbery that was in the news. You heard about it, and you followed up on the story for many days. You found out that the robbers made away with millions of pounds, helped by an insider at the bank. During the raid, a gunshot was fired, killing an innocent customer. You also discovered who the robbers were, including the ringleader. You found out that since the robbery, the Bank Manager has been wrongly accused and suspended from his job, pending an investigation. A group of detectives have now been assigned the case, and the public is awaiting their investigation, and watching to see how and when the bank robbers will be apprehended and brought to face the law.

Now, you have an interesting idea for a novel, but who is the protagonist? In this example, the protagonist could any of the following people:

- 1) The ringleader among the gang of robbers
- 2) The insider at the bank
- 3) The suspended bank manager
- 4) One of the detectives investigating the crime
- 5) The wife of the innocent customer who was killed during the raid

The protagonist you choose will determine a lot of things, and how the story unfolds. If you're not sure, you should do a quick sketch of all the possible protagonists, and choose the one who you would like to follow up the most, and whose story you would find most intriguing.

**Based on the story above, you could choose to focus on:**

**The suspended bank manager** – Fingers have been pointed at him in suspicion. He is completely innocent but he has to prove it. He is out of a job and helpless while an investigation is going on. The stress from all this is now affecting his marriage and home life. Is he found guilty of negligence? Did he have an idea of what was going on, and used the robbery to cover up?

Or

**The ringleader among the gang of robbers** – He was a bright, promising young boy, but he had a troubled home life. His mother was a drug addict, so he was often lacking care and love. His father ran off with another woman. The young boy grew up and got into petty crime. Once after he was arrested and released from prison, he joined a gang of car thieves. Slowly he built a reputation for his intelligence and ability to outsmart even the most sophisticated anti-theft technology systems. He started planning the bank robbery a long time ago, and got his chance when he met an accomplice who worked inside the bank. He did the job, not for the money but for the thrill.

You can see that the protagonist you choose will drastically alter the direction of the story. You could also choose two protagonists, to make your story even more interesting. It's up to you!

You can also go through this process for choosing an antagonist for your novel. For example, in my novel, the story featured a betrayal by a friend. Since my protagonist had many friends, I had to choose one person to be the antagonist, and I also have to give her a motive to do so.

Now, let's go into the workbook for this section.

## Workbook 2 – Choosing Your Protagonist

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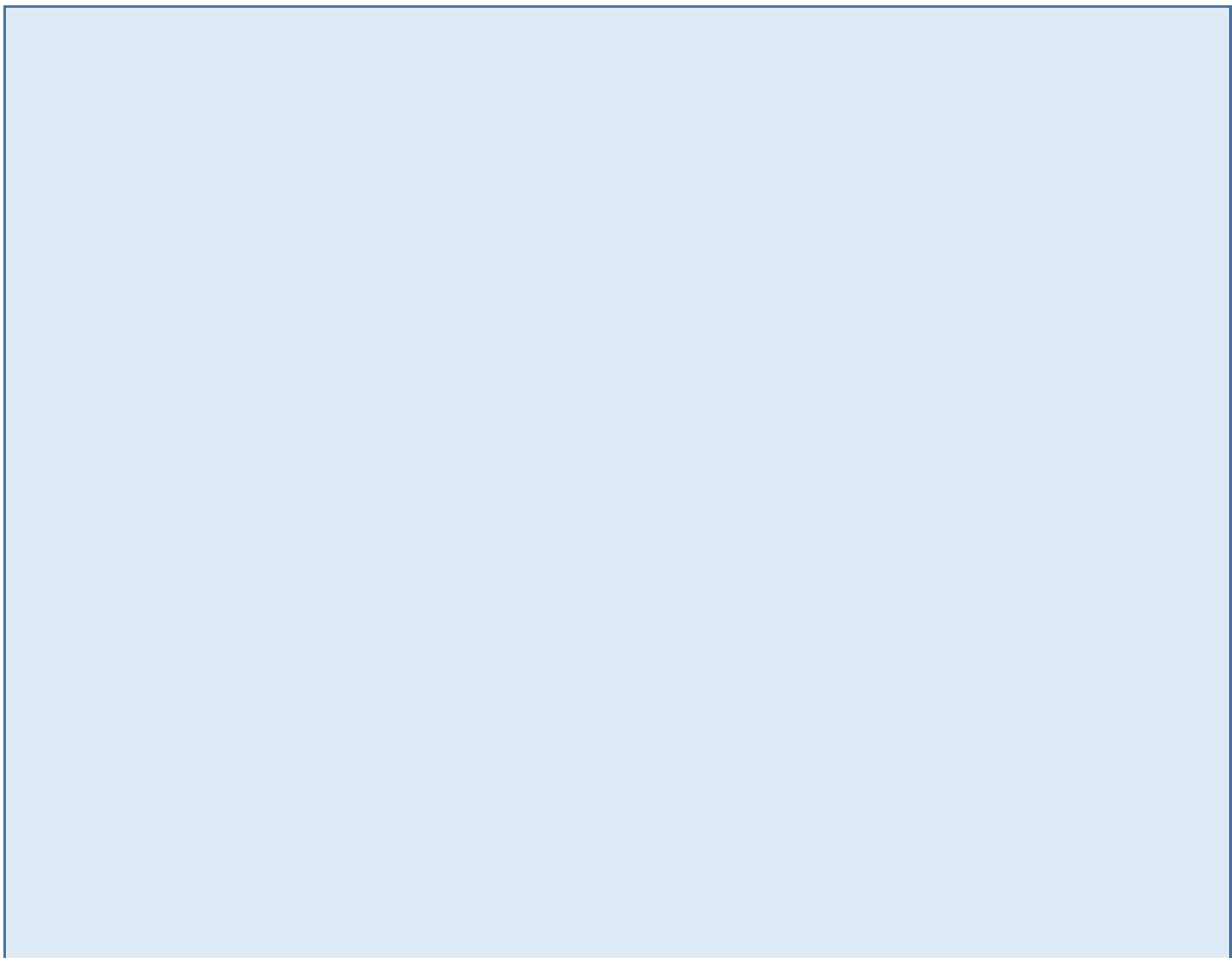
**Write down who you think is the main character for your story in the box below:**

**If you have more than one main character, define who the story revolves around a bit more:**

**If you have more than one main character, define who the protagonist is, and who the antagonist is.**



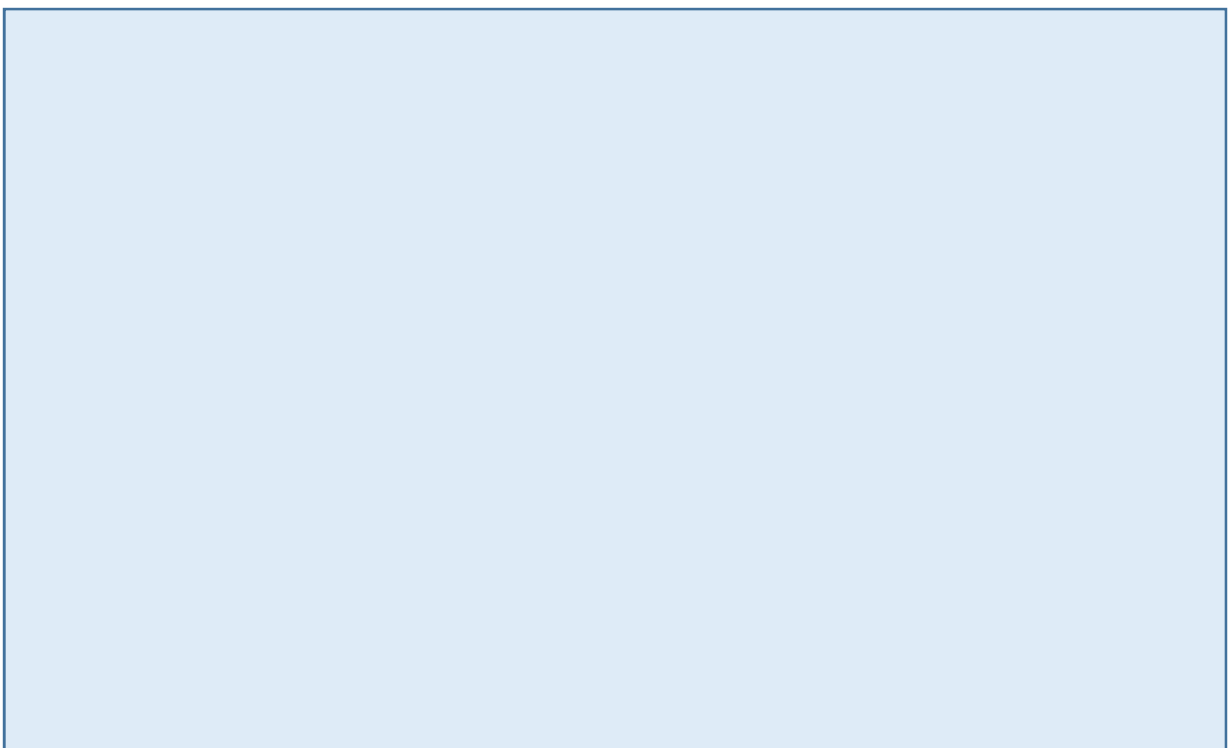
**Why does the story revolve around this main character?**



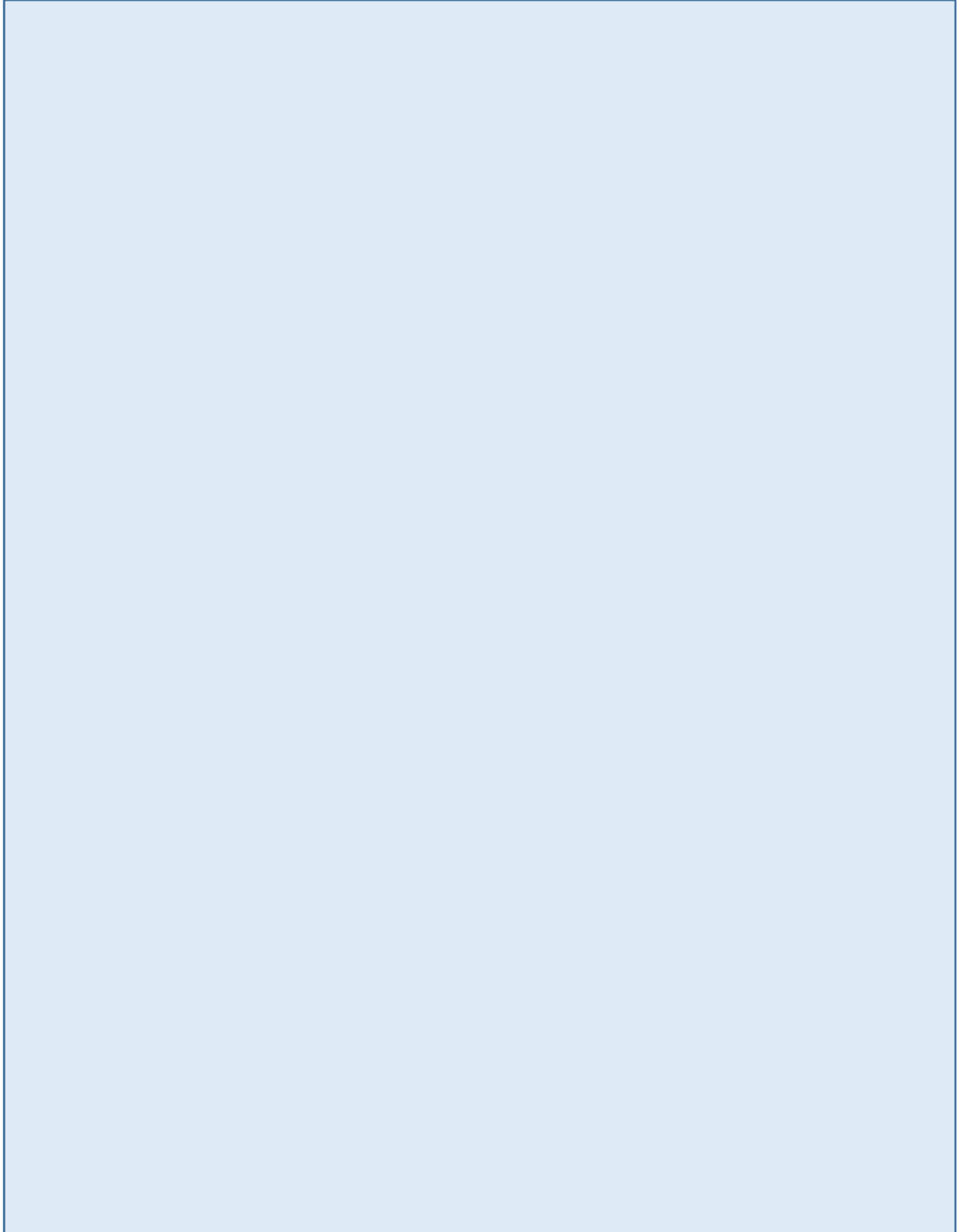
**What is your protagonist's aim?**



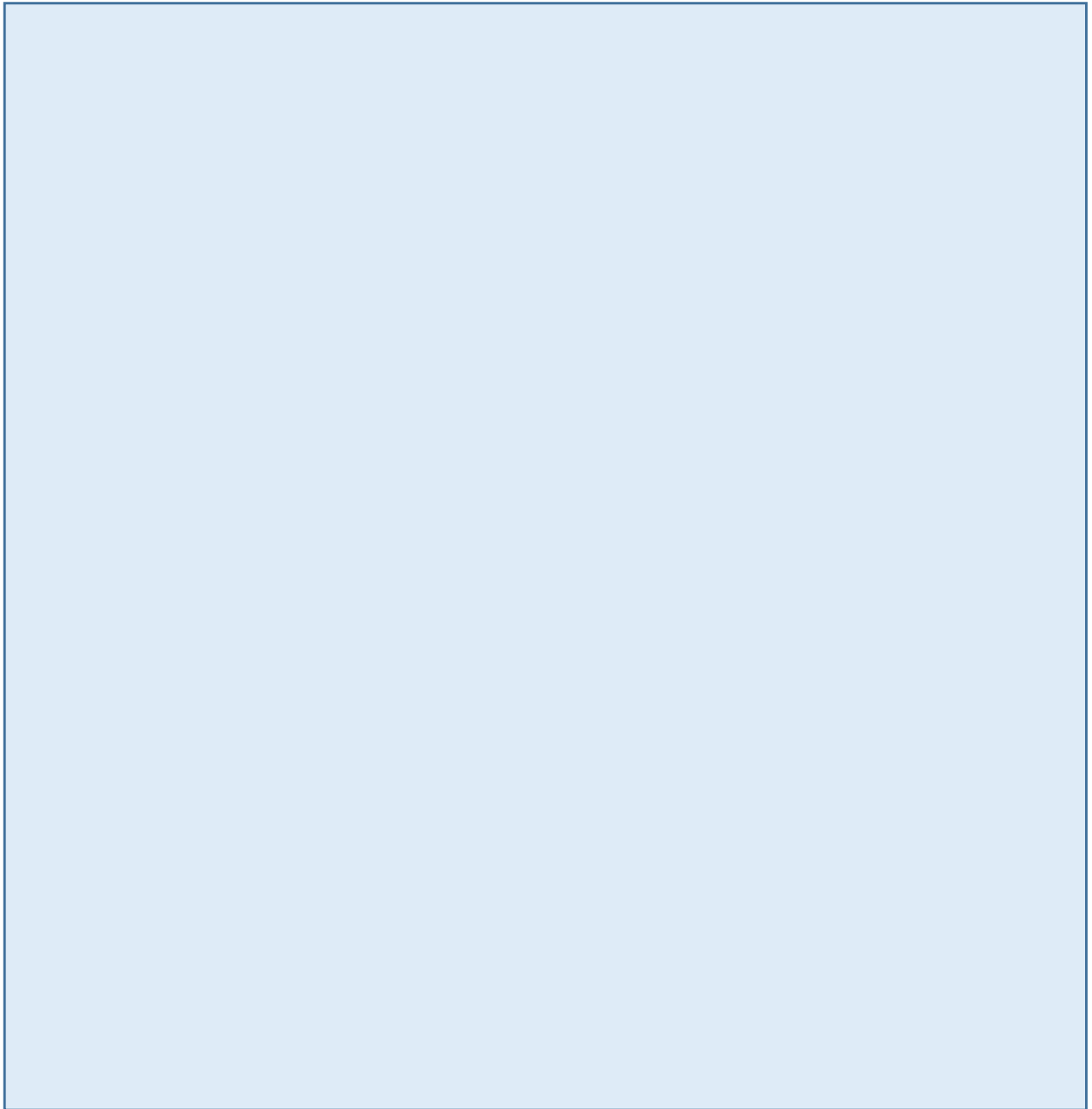
**What is the antagonist's motive?**



**Give your protagonist a personality, a history and a background. Try to be as detailed as possible. Describe his or her physical appearance. Describe his or her hobbies, likes and dislikes, age, favourite food, family background, endearing aspects, a character flaw, educational background, social circle, goals and ambitions, quirks, etc. The more you know about your protagonist, the more real he or she becomes, so go really deep.**



**When you're done with your protagonist, do the same exercise for your antagonist.**



**Assignment: Create a similar profile for all the major characters in the story. E.g your protagonist's family, friends, neighbours, colleagues, etc.**