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Detailed Character Profile

from Trisha Jenn Loehr, Book Coach for Romance Writers

Get To Know Your Character

The goal here is to make sure you fully understand your characters. A lot of this information won't end up in your novel directly on the page, but it will inform how you write your character, how they move and speak and react and, most importantly, change during the story.

I recommend trying this exercise out for your protagonists and love interests.

The questions fit into a few categories:

1. The Outer Layer

- a. Character Basics
- b. Physical Appearance
- c. Speech and Communication

2. The Background

- a. Backstory
- b. Family
- c. Other Relationships

3. The Core

- a. Psychology
- b. Story Goal and Arc

Write as much or as little for each question as you feel appropriate. (I know, it's a lot to think about. Don't stress. This isn't a test. It's all just meant to make you think.)

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, fire me an email at trisha@trishajennreads.com.

Let's get to it!

Trisha Jenn Loehr

Book Coach for Romance Writers

** This character profile questionnaire was developed from [Reedsy's](#) character profile template.*





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The Outer Layer

The simplest layer includes basic character demographic information and their surface want/need.

This includes:

- Character Basics
- Physical Appearance
- Speech and Communication



Character Basics

Name:

Age:

Place of birth:

Current location:

Nationality:

Education:

Occupation:

Income:

Hobbies or special interests:

Physical Appearance

Eye colour:

Hair colour and style:

Body type/build:

Distinguishing features? (e.g., tattoos, scars, birthmarks)

Preferred outfit?

Do they wear glasses or contacts?

Do they use any other assistive technology?

What accessories are always associated with them? (e.g., cane, pipe, necklace, etc.)

What's their usual level of grooming? (e.g., disheveled, smart, very put together, untidy but clean)

Do they have any distinguishing mannerisms?



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What's their health like? Do they live with any chronic illnesses or conditions?

Describe their handwriting. (e.g., sloppy, neat, careful, unintelligible)

How do they walk? (e.g., confident, powerful strides; Lazy stroll; fast; distracted, eyes on the ground)

Speech and Communication

How do they talk? (e.g., rapid, slow, measured, drawl, etc.)

What's the style of their speech? (e.g., elevated, educated, peppered with slang, etc.)

What's their usual posture like? (e.g., stiff, military; slouching, casual/relaxed, turtle/tired, etc.)





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The Background

Start digging into the layers to understand who your character is, why they are the way they are, and what they actually want.

This includes:

- Backstory
- Family
- Other Relationships



Backstory

What's the name of their hometown?

What type of childhood did they have? (e.g., sheltered, neglected, etc.)

Describe their education?

Were they involved in organizations and clubs at school?

At graduation, they were named Most Likely To _____ in the yearbook.

What would their résumé look like?

What was their dream job as a child? Why?

Who were their role models growing up? Describe them.

What's their greatest regret?

What were their hobbies growing up?

Favorite place to be as a child?

What's their earliest memory?

What's their saddest memory?

What's their happiest memory?

What are their skeletons in the closet?

If they could change one thing from their past, what would it be? Why?

Describe the major turning points or “life beats” in childhood.

What are three adjectives to describe them as a child?

What advice would they give to their younger self?



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List their criminal record.

Family

Father:

Age (if living):

Occupation:

Briefly describe their relationship with your character:

Mother

Age (if living):

Occupation:

Briefly describe their relationship with your character:

Siblings

How many?

What are their names and ages?

Briefly describe their relationship(s) with your character:

Children

Age (if living):

Occupation:

Briefly describe their relationship with your character:

Extended family

Grandparents:

Uncles and aunts:

Cousins:

Other:

What's their family's economic status?

How often do they see their family in a year?



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Other Relationships

Who are their closest friends? Describe them.

Who are their other significant friends?

Enemies? Describe them.

How are they perceived by:

- strangers in the street?
- acquaintances at a work function?
- colleagues in the office?
- authority figures?
- friends in their friend circles?
- children?
- the opposite sex?
- extended family?

What social media platforms are they on?

- Twitter (X)
- Tumblr
- Facebook
- Reddit
- Instagram
- Threads
- Snapchat
- Other? If so, explain.

How would they use their social media platforms?

How would they fill out an online dating profile for themselves?

What's their role in a group dynamic? (e.g., leader, joker, parent, hype person, mooch, etc.)

Who do they depend on for:

- practical advice?
- mentoring
- a wingman?
- emotional support?
- moral support?

How quickly do they respond to emails?

What do they want from a relationship?



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Who would be their ideal partner?

Who is their significant other? Describe them.

How many people would attend their funeral?





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The Core

Now to the deepest part of your character—their heart.

This includes:

- Psychology
- Story Goal
- Misbelief about Love and Character Arc



Psychology

What do they do on rainy days?

Are they:

- Street-smart or book-smart
- An optimist or pessimist
- Introverted or Extroverted

What is their favorite sound?

Favorite place in the world?

What secrets do they keep? What are they most afraid of people finding out?

What do they want the most?

What's their biggest flaw?

What's their biggest strength?

What's their biggest fear?

What is their biggest accomplishment?

What is their idea of perfect happiness?

What's their favorite quote?

Do they want to be remembered? What for?

How do they approach:

- power?
- ambition?



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- love?
- change?

What is the one object or possession that they would rescue from their burning home?

What (or who) bores them?

What makes them angry?

What do they look for in a person?

How strong is their moral compass? When, specifically, are they willing to compromise their morals?

List the last 5 books they read.

Which fictional world would they most wish to visit?

If they didn't have to sleep, what would they do with the extra time?

What are their pet peeves?

If they won the lottery, what would they do?

Describe the character's bucket list at the ages of 15, 20, 30, and 40.

List the 5 songs that would occupy their All-Time Most Played playlist on Spotify.

What is the best compliment that someone ever paid them?

In an elevator, do they push the elevator button more than once?

What would they want their tombstone to say?

Story Goal

What does your character want? Why do they want it?

Do they achieve their goal? How?

Does this goal change from the beginning of the story to the end? How?

Misbelief About Love & Character Arc

What does your character believe about themselves and love at the beginning of the story?

What do they believe at the end?

How does this character change from the beginning of the story to the end?





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Thank you!

Hi! I'm Trisha Jenn Loehr, a book coach who helps busy women who want to write romance novels without guilt or shame prioritize their writing, develop their craft, and find joy in the journey toward their publishing dreams.



As a writer myself, I know how tough writing can be and how lonely it often is. Sometimes, we just need someone to bounce an idea off of or to talk through a scene or a writing process problem with.

And, if you're like me, someone to be accountable to with deadlines so that you can actually make progress on your novel instead of putting it aside for "more important" things like doing the dishes or folding laundry or scrolling Instagram.

Oh, and just as important as all that other stuff, someone to encourage you and squeal with excitement about a sweet or sexy scene you just wrote.

As a book coach, I get to:

- Help you become a better writer by giving you feedback on your pages as you write.
- Chat with you, get to know you, and help you talk your thoughts out to solve plot problems or other writing difficulties.
- Encourage you and help you make your writing goals a priority in your life—because no matter what other hats you wear or roles you have, if you want to write a book, you deserve all the support and encouragement to do that.

I offer a range of coaching and editing services for women who write nearly all subgenres of romance.

I'd love to hear about your project and chat about how I might help you make progress on it.

Book a free 20-minute intro call to get started, meet me, and tell me about your project and your sticking points.

Take a look at my book coaching services at <https://www.trishajennreads.com/services> to see all that I offer and get a sense of what might be the best service for your needs.



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Email me any questions at trisha@trishajennreads.com and don't forget to connect with me on [Instagram](#) at @trishajennreads.

Happy writing, lovely!

Trisha



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