

Questions to Ask Your Characters

Use these questions to build a well-developed profile for each of your major characters.

Questions About How They Look

- How conscious are you about your looks? How much time do you spend getting ready to go out?
- What kind of clothes do you prefer the most? Casual? Formal? A mix of both?
- Do you have a self-confident bearing? Or do you tend to slouch?
- Do you see yourself as attractive or not?
- What do you wish was different about the way you look?

Questions About Your Character's Background and Childhood

- What did your parents do for a living?
- Did you grow up with both parents? With one parent? With grandparents? With foster families?
- How was your family's social status when you were growing up? Do you consider yourself well-off, poor, or middle class?
- Did your parents have favorites when you were growing up?
- How were you disciplined when you were growing up? Were you basically a goody-goody, or a rebel?
- Where did you grow up?
- What were your favorite childhood experiences?
- Who was your first love?
- What was your biggest heartbreak?
- How did you do in school? Were you popular? Bullied? Barely getting by?
- When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?
- If you went to college, how did you pay for it? Why did you pursue the course of study that you did?
- Do you look back on your school years with pride or regret?

Questions About Your Character's Likes and Dislikes

- Do you prefer books or movies? What's your favorite book or movie?
- What type of food do you like? Healthy options, or fast food?
- How do you spend your free time?
- What hobbies do you have?
- What would you say is your greatest talent? Your greatest weakness?
- When you get extra money, what do you like to spend on?

Questions About Your Character's Social Life and Relationships

- Are you single, married, separated, or is it complicated?
- What is your sexual orientation? Are you comfortable with it? If not, why?
- Where do you live now? Do you like it, or would you rather live elsewhere?
- Who are the main influences in your life?
- Who do you run to when you have problems? With whom do you share your deepest secrets?
- How is your relationship with your parents? Siblings? Are you close? Estranged?
- Do you have children? How is your relationship with them? Why?
- Who is the most important person in your life right now? How is your relationship with him or her?
- What is your dream relationship? Your dream family?
- How do you feel about your current social life? Are you happy, or what would you wish to change?

Questions About Your Character's Occupation

- What do you do for a living? How did you enter this career?
- How do you feel about your current workplace or work situation?
- What is one thing you wish you could change about your current occupation?
- Would you rather have a different job? What would you rather do?
- How is your relationship with your boss? Your colleagues? Your subordinates? Your clients?
- How are your current income and spending?
- If money were not an issue, what would you like to be doing with your life?

Questions About Your Character's Feelings and Thoughts

- What activities do you enjoy the most?
- What irritates you the most?
- Are you mostly a pessimist or an optimist? An introvert or an extrovert?
- What makes you come alive?
- What are you most afraid of?
- What kinds of things do you worry about the most?
- What is the one thing you would like to have but don't have right now? What is keeping you from achieving it?
- How do you cope with stress?
- What do you do to re-energize yourself?
- Are you mostly in tune with your feelings? Or do you struggle to express them?
- What would you say is your greatest failure? Greatest accomplishment?
- How do you deal with conflict with other people? Do you fight, freeze, or flee?

Questions About Your Character's Faith and Beliefs

- How would you describe your current worldview? Do you adhere to a specific religion?
- Did you grow up in the religion you have now, or have you shifted along the way?
- What would you say were major turning points for your life?
- What do you think is your purpose in life?
- Do you have any political affiliation? If so, what?
- What is one social issue you feel strongly about? Why?
- If you could change one thing about the world, what would it be?