

CHARACTER PROFILE

WHO AM I?

Practical Exercises to Develop Your Character

From the Play Director's Survival Kit by James W. Rodgers and Wanda C. Rodgers

Rounding Out Your Character

Answer these questions from your character's point of view:

What is your full name?

What else are you called? (nicknames)

Where do you live? (city, state, country)

Where were you born?

Date of birth (day, month, year)

Do you have any brothers and sisters? How many older and younger?

What do you remember about the house you grew up in?

What do you remember about the neighborhood you grew up in?

What were some of the special occasions in your family? (holidays, reunions, picnics, vacations, etc.)

Name some of the special homemade foods you ate as a child.

Name and describe some of the games you played as a child.

What is your favorite childhood memory?

What is your worst childhood memory?

What is/was your relationship to your family?

Did/do you go to high school/college?

What subjects did/do you excel in?

What was your overall grade point average?

What you like best about your school?

Are you now a member of any clubs, organizations, or religious congregations?

Did you ever smoke? (when, why, how much)

What is your favorite drink, alcoholic and/or nonalcoholic?

If you drink alcohol, what kind of limits do you put on your drinking?

What section of the newspaper do you read?

What do you enjoy doing most in your free time?

What kind of music do you enjoy listening to?

What have you read recently? (book, magazine)

How do you feel about your age?

What do you do for exercise?

What is your best feature?

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

What is your favorite meal?

What are your favorite foods?

List three of your favorite films.

Who are your favorite movie stars?

What other forms of entertainment / recreation do you enjoy?

What is your favorite sport? Do you follow it professionally?

What time do you usually get up in the morning?

What time do you usually go to bed?

What is your favorite time of day? Why?

What is your favorite season? Why?

Which do you prefer: city or country? Why?

Do you like intimate parties or large gatherings? Why?

What is your favorite color? Why?

What is your greatest feat?

Who is your closest friend?

How would you like to spend your next vacation?

What type of clothing do you most like to wear?

What would you enjoy on an evening out?

What would you like to be when you grow up?

What is your favorite animal?

What are your prejudices?

Do you consider yourself an indoor or outdoor person?

What are your feelings or opinions about: sex? politics? war? old age?

What role does religion play in your everyday life?

Are you happy with your lot in life?

What do you feel the future holds?

How do you feel about each of the other people you meet in this play?

Understand the Period of Your Play

Use this worksheet to better understand how your character lived and functioned in a time and place different from your own:

Make a list of the books your characters might have read. (What were the popular books of the period?)

Make a list of the music your characters might have listened to. (What was the popular music of the period?)

Make a list of the films that are placed in the same time and place as the play you are working on.

Make a list of paintings and/or photographs that depict the same time and place as the play you are working on.

Search on the web for the fashions from the period in which your play takes place. Make a specific list of the clothes and accessories your character would have used.

Make a list of the major events that were happening in the world during the time when your play takes place.

How would your character have passed the time of day? Make a list of the pastimes and popular forms of entertainment during the period in which your play takes place.

When possible, read a newspaper or magazine from the period in which your play takes place. Make a list of interesting observations that might help you better understand your character.

Character Journal

Keep a daily journal to get in closer touch and better tune with your character. The following is a list of basic questions you can use for this exercise:

What new information have I learned from my character today?

What questions do I still have about my character?

How does my character feel about the other characters in the play? (Let your character's voice respond to this question.)

What one or two things do I plan to accomplish during the next rehearsal?