



MYNOVEL AUTHOR SERIES

PRACTICAL GUIDES FOR BUDDING INDEPENDENT AUTHORS

**BOOK
2**

CREATING STRONG CHARACTERS

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO CREATING
BELIEVABLE PEOPLE READERS CARE ABOUT —
OR COME TO HATE

*From flat ideas
to unforgettable
people...*

VOICE

BACKSTORY

MOTIVATION

CONFLICT

CHARACTER ARC

INCLUDES
PDF GUIDE
+
EDITABLE
WORD
WORKBOOK

Great
Characters
Change
Everything



MIKE GROBLER

FREE PREVIEW

CREATING STRONG CHARACTERS

MyNovel Author Series — Book 2

Mike Grobler

This short preview contains the introduction and the opening of
Chapter 1.

The full guide includes 15 chapters plus an editable Microsoft Word
workbook.

*A practical guide to creating believable people readers care about —
or come to hate*

Introduction — Characters Are the Story

Readers may be attracted by a clever premise, an unusual setting or a dramatic cover, but they usually stay because they care about the people in the story. A plot matters most when its events matter to someone.

A strong character does not have to be likeable — think of JR in the Dallas TV series. They do need to be understandable. The reader should be able to see why the character makes a particular choice, even when that choice is unwise, selfish or dangerous.

This is where many early manuscripts become flat. The writer knows what needs to happen next in the plot, so the character is pushed into doing it. Stronger fiction works the other way around: the character's wants, fears, habits, history and relationships help create what happens next.

A believable character does not serve the plot. The plot grows from what that character chooses to do.

In this guide, we will continue using Leah Daniels and the neglected coastal guesthouse from Book 1. Leah gives us a practical example of how the same character can be developed from a simple story function into someone who feels human.

WORKBOOK: Complete Exercise 1 — Before You Begin in the accompanying editable Word workbook.

1. Start With the Character's Purpose

Before you decide a character's eye colour, favourite food or childhood nickname, ask a more useful question: why is this person in the story?

Every important character should do something that affects the story. The protagonist makes central choices. An ally supports or challenges those choices. An opponent creates resistance. A confidant allows private thoughts to surface. A minor character may provide information, create an obstacle or reveal a side of someone else.

If you cannot explain a character's purpose, the character may be unnecessary or may need to be combined with someone else.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLE

In the guesthouse story, Leah is not simply “the owner of the guesthouse”. Her purpose is to carry the main conflict. Daniel, her brother, should not exist merely because Leah needs a sibling. His purpose is to challenge her decisions about the property and force unresolved family history into the open. A long-time employee might serve as both ally and witness to the family's past.

Purpose does not mean a character must feel mechanical. In fact, once you know why the character matters, you can give them interests, habits and contradictions that make them feel like a person rather than a plot device.

WORKBOOK: Complete Exercise 2 — Define Each Character's Purpose in the accompanying editable Word workbook.

THE PREVIEW ENDS HERE

Continue with the full guide to explore wants, fears, backstory, physical description, voice, relationships, motivation, character arcs, antagonists, point of view and more.

Your purchase includes the complete PDF guide and an editable Microsoft Word workbook.

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