

Mr. Potato Head

Level 1 Questions to Get To Know Your Character

Almost every writing craft book out there that deals with character will have some form of questions you can ask about your characters to get to know them. There are also lots of these types of “intro” questions available on the internet or in creative writing apps. The idea is to start with the surface level things - put a “face” on your character - and then delve deeper under the surface to find out what really makes them tick. Here are the “level 1” questions I use when I start thinking about a new character. Because the character is just coming into focus, I usually approach these as an outside observer - the writer looking at the character, noting things that are plainly observed, or clues that could suggest a hobby or interest. For example, calloused fingertips may indicate the character is a musician, possibly a guitar player.

Hair color -
Eye color -
Height -
Weight -
Age -
Gender/Orientation (if known) -
Occupation/Career/Career Interest -
Hobbies -
Relationship status -
Clothes -
Mannerisms/special sayings -
Socioeconomic status - rich? poor? -
Speech patterns/dialect -
Friends (generally) -
Parents -
Siblings -
Education/Type of school attended -
Ethnicity -
Religion? -
Name -
Nickname -