

Mr Potato Head Comes to Life

Level 2 Questions to Learn About Your Character's Choices and Preferences

Once you have observed your character and answered all the “level 1” questions you can about them, it’s time to dive a little deeper into who they are. Again, writing craft books, online resources, and writing apps will have all kinds of questions you can ask to get at the deeper workings of your characters mind. Here are the “level 2” questions I use. This is when I start to make a shift from observing the character to asking things about them. The character is still not fleshed out enough for me to interview them - ask them directly - but at this stage you’re bridging between what you can observe and what you can’t. For example, the first two questions - What kind of car do they drive? What kind of car do they want to drive? The first you can observe, the second you can’t. You have to get into their heads a little more, and start to learn about their preferences.

What kind of car do they drive/want to drive?
Where were they born? Where have they lived?
What type of house do they live in & how it is decorated? How do they feel about their home?
What is their favorite song/music?
Favorite movie? Why?
Favorite TV show? Least favorite TV show? Why?
Favorite color? Why?
Favorite food? Food they will not eat under any circumstances?
Favorite/special saying? Is it a quote or something they came up with on their own?
What is their most prized possession? Why?
What is their approach to hygiene? Would they ever leave the house wearing pajamas? Without brushing their hair?
How do they ask for directions/information from others? Do they ever? How do they feel about being asked for directions/information?
What is in their pockets? Did they even know it was there?
What does their bedroom look like?
What kind of grades do they get? What do they think about that?
What do they do when they think no one is watching?
What is on their nightstand? Under their bed?
What sense do they most rely on? Why?
What would they do for the person/pet/thing they love most?
What are they dissatisfied about? How do they deal with that?
What are they most afraid of?
What makes them happy/sad/frustrated/eager?
What do they dream of? Hope for? What gets them out of bed in the morning?
What do they wish were possible?
What do they value?
What is their most admirable quality? Self-sacrifice? Forgiveness? Intelligence?
What is their biggest weakness? Insecure? Plagued with self-doubt?
What are they really good at (special skill)?
What do they need most?