

Character Profile Sheet
*(Put a * for areas of further research)*

Name:

Hair colour, eye colour:

Height:

Age:

Weight:

Hair style:

A distinguished physical trait:

Favourite outfit, style of clothes:

Education:

Social class background:

Occupation:

Religion:

Ethnicity:

Ableism:

Sexual orientation:

Where they grew up:

Hobbies, interests:

Where they live:

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

A bad habit:

What they fear:

What they do when they are afraid:

What makes them happy/what do they want:

What makes them angry. How do they react when they're angry:

Five words a friend or family member would use to describe them:

The problem in their life that keeps returning in a slightly different form. How did this problem look when he/she was 5, 10, 20, 30 years old (depending on your character's age)?

Reading Activity:

- What techniques are used to bring characters to life on the page?
- What techniques are used to give a unique ‘voice’?

Text 1

He is famously kind, my husband. Always sending money to those afflicted with obscure diseases or shovelling the walk of the crazy neighbour or helloing the fat girl at the Rite Aid. He's from Ohio. This means he never forgets to thank the bus driver, never pushes in front at the baggage claim. Nor does he keep a list of those infuriate him on a given day. People mean well. This is what he believes. How then is he married to me? I hate often and easily. I hate, for example, people who sit with their legs splayed. People who claim to be ‘comfortable’ when what they mean is decadently rich. You’re so judgemental, my shrink tells me, and I cry all the way home thinking of it.

The Department of Speculation, Jenny Offill

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Text 2

Before my wife turned vegetarian, I'd always thought of her as completely unremarkable in every way. To be frank, the first time I met her I wasn't even attracted to her. Middling height; bobbed hair neither long nor short; jaundiced, sickly-looking skin; somewhat prominent cheekbones, her timid swallow aspect told me all I needed to know. As she came up to the table where I was waiting, I couldn't help but notice her shoes—the plainest black shoes imaginable. And that walk of hers—neither fast nor slow, striding nor mincing.

[...] The passive personality of the woman in whom I could detect neither freshness nor charm, or anything especially refined, suited me down to the ground. There was no need to affect intellectual leanings in order to win her over or to worry that she might be comparing me to the preening men who pose in fashion catalogues, and she didn't get worked up if I happened to be late for one of our meetings. The paunch that started appearing in my mid-twenties, my skinny legs and forearms, that steadfastly refused to bulk in spite of my best efforts, the inferiority complex I used to have about the size of my penis—I could rest assured that I wouldn't have to fret about such things on her account.

The Vegetarian by Han Kang

Text 3

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This may be hard to believe, coming from a black man, but I've never stolen anything. Never cheated on my taxes or at cards. Never snuck into the movies or failed to give back the extra change to a drugstore cashier indifferent to the ways of mercantilism and minimum-wage expectations. I've never burgled a house. Held up a liquor store. Never boarded a crowded bus or subway car, sat in a seat reserved for the elderly, pulled out my gigantic penis and masturbated to satisfaction with a perverted, yet somehow crestfallen, look on my face. But here I am, in the cavernous chambers of the Supreme Court of the United States of America, my car illegally and somewhat ironically parked on Constitution Avenue, my hands cuffed and crossed behind my back, my right to remain silent long since waived and said goodbye to as I sit in a thickly padded chair that, much like this country, isn't quite as comfortable as it looks.

Paul Beatty- *The Sellout*