



## Theme: Exploring Identity

To build genuinely complex, realistic characters, we need to consider what a character wants (driving force of the story), what is standing in their way (conflict), and who the character is/wants to become, at their very core. Use the following prompts to create diverse plotlines and characters. Stay true to your character's heart, culture, and history.

- A bookshop that's the last refuge of a group of fans of an unusual (and very specific) genre.
- A character who discovers a strange calendar which appears to prophesy important events in their life.
- A character who gets trapped in their memory palace and has to find a way out in order to save someone else.
- A painter who travels to another planet in search of a rare pigment.
- A teacher who takes attendance and finds that there's an extra student in their class.
- A guest who begins to suspect that they're not the only guest.

## Theme: Multiple Points of View

- Create two main characters who are working towards the same goal(s) and tell the story from different perspectives by switching the point of view character in each chapter.
- Write different versions of your story and try switching the point of view. Will telling the story in first person build an exciting story for readers, or will switching to third person give your readers the juicy details they are looking for?

## Theme: Conflict

- Write a scene where your character confronts their greatest fear. Describe their emotional state and physical reactions. How does your character deal with this situation? Do they overcome it, or does it control them? This can reveal deep emotional truths and add tension to your story.
- Put your character in a tense situation. This could be a moral dilemma, a physical threat, or an emotional conflict. Reveal your character's strengths and weaknesses by showing how they handle with this situation.



# WRITING IDEAS & PROMPTS

## TIPS AND INSPIRATION

*Know your character.*

Your audience does not necessarily need to know every aspect of your character, but knowing them yourself will help you add texture and dimension to your writing. It can also help to identify character wants and what obstacles stand in the way of those wants, thereby defining the conflict of your story. Consider the following.

*Who is my character?*

- **Traits:** This is your character's unique mixture of positive, negative, and neutral traits, habits, likes, dislikes, talents, hobbies, quirks, and mannerisms.
- **Values:** Your character's individual point of view, beliefs, attitudes, values, and passions.
- **Flaws:** Your character's negative traits, fears, resentments, emotional issues, etc. (These are important not only because they are distinctly human, but because they provide a basis for readers to sympathize/empathize with your character, which builds understanding and relatability.)

## WRITING EXERCISES

- Write a scene from your character's past that shaped helped them develop into who they are today. It could be a childhood memory, a defining experience, or a pivotal relationship. Focus on how this backstory influences their current behavior.
- Good dialogue can really hook a reader! Write a dialogue between your character and another person. Focus on the subtext—what is being said versus what is left unsaid. This is a chance for you to give your character a distinct voice and define their speech patterns, vocabulary, and body language to reveal more about their personality and relationship with the other character.
- Write a letter or journal entry from your character's perspective to someone they love or despise. This exercise can help you understand your character's inner voice and communication style.
- Choose an unfamiliar setting for your character, such as a different city, country, or even a fantastical world. Write about how they navigate and adapt to this new environment, the challenges they face, and how it changes them.