



Standout Characters: How to Write Characters Who Make Readers Laugh, Cry, and Turn the Next Page

Mary L. Mercer

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SET READERS FREE TO FEEL YOUR STORY

Remember the favorite stories on your “keeper shelf,” and more than likely the first thing that pops vividly to mind are the characters. That’s because truly great stories make readers feel, and standout characters are the primary key to unlocking those emotions.

To lose themselves in a story, readers need to be given rooting interests in the characters they’re spending time and money on. Rooting interests are developed from specific physical, moral, and psychological traits that emotionally bond readers to the character. Spicing page after page with these empathy traits in fresh and imaginative ways puts the writer in control of readers’ emotions like working tumblers in a lock.

Take your writing to the next level by learning how to deliver the kind of fantastic emotional experiences readers crave. This book empowers you to craft your story with the reader in mind, and capture their hearts with exciting and emotionally involving characters. You’ll learn—

- How to lay the foundation for standout characters by using quick and simple characterization tools to create a working snapshot.
- The one indispensable trait every character must have that’s essential to winning readers’ empathy.
- Three different categories of rooting interests and how each works to evoke specific emotional responses in readers.
- Which empathy traits work best for which kinds of characters, and the special circumstances that can permit a character to get away with almost anything.
- How to use flaws to bond your protagonist closer to readers, and create villains readers love to hate.
- How to skillfully combine traits to effectively illustrate your theme while still fulfilling genre conventions and satisfying readers’ expectations.
- Quick tips from analyses of seven of the most iconic heroes, heroines, and villains ever to come alive on the page or screen.

(Previously published as "Standout Characters: How to Forge an Emotional Bond with Readers")

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From reader reviews:

Cora Gallien:

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Frederick Cagle:

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