There are fourteen common character archetypes used in fiction for their recognizability across genres, cultures, and experience. They represent a slice of the human condition and, when used correctly, can act to quickly establish a base for you to build a character off of.   
 There are also thirteen common punctuation marks that writers need to understand to tell their stories effectively. By assigning them one of these character archetypes, you can quickly get an idea of their function by what kind of roles they would play in a story!  
  
PERIOD .

The Everyman: A relatable and average character who represents the common person who faces everyday challenges and struggles.

The average middle-class, blue-collar man who wants to come home to his quiet life, sit down at the end of a long day, and have an American beer. He’s a neutral, calm voice without excessive emotion in any conversation. Some may call him boring. But he’s steady and dependable, always there at the end of any job.

Periods express the END of sentences (which have a subject, predicate & complete idea). They may follow a word or phrase standing alone, or at the end of a rhetorical question.

They also indicate an omission from abbreviations and in initials or titles: formal titles, months, days, partial names, Latin abbreviations, and abbreviations of non-metric measuring systems:

Mr., Dr., Ph.D.; Jan., Feb.; Mon., Tue.; S. G. George, J. K. Rowling; *Etc*., *et al*.; in., ft., lbs.

Abbreviations for metric units of measures do not use a period. If the entire name is abbreviated, no periods.   
 km, mm, cm; MLK   
 Sometimes there are periods in a.m./p.m. but it’s falling out of fashion, as well as for acronyms (FBI, CIA, NSA).

No second period is needed if the sentence ends with an abbreviation. You can add comma, semicolon, colon. There’s only a single space after a period.

ELLIPSIS . . .

The Orphan: A vulnerable and resilient character who has experienced loss or abandonment and seeks a sense of belonging and connection.

Our orphan has many things left unsaid. They tend to trail off in their thoughts, when they speak at all.

Ellipsis are formatted as three periods in a row with non-breaking spaces between them or as its own dedicated character (…). They are punctuated as if you typed the word "SILENCE" with spaces on either side and ending punctuation that indicates tone like a question or exclamation mark.   
 “What do you mean you . . .?”

They show that part of a quote has been omitted or that the sentence is incomplete.

They are often used more liberally in fiction to indicate a dramatic pause, a thought that trails off, or faltering speech.

It is recommended that you use them sparingly, like, once every 100k words in the narration, and once per paragraph of dialogue inside quotation marks.

APOSTROPHE’

The Caregiver: A nurturing and empathetic character who supports and cares for others, and values compassion and selflessness.

Our healer is also clingy. She doesn’t like to be alone and is always hanging around whomever she has taken under her wing. Some might call her a helicopter parent. But she heals the wounds where words lose their letters.

Apostrophes indicate the possessive case: Sara’s presentation.

They stand for missing letters/numerals: It isn’t my fault you were born in ’99.

They form the plural of letters, numbers, or symbols: Dot your i’s and cross your t’s

Nothing separates it from the word it is part of.

QUESTION MARK?

The Explorer: A restless and adventurous character who seeks to discover new lands or experiences and values freedom and self-discovery.  
 Our question mark isn’t someone you would want to go on a road trip with. They’re always asking if you’re there yet.

Question marks indicate a direct question.

But they can also express doubt, surprise, disbelief, uncertainty in sentence that traditionally are phrased as sentences: You ate ice cream for dinner?

But don’t need a question mark if the question is just a polite request disguised as a question: Can you have that report on my desk by Monday.

Question marks always stick to the sentence regardless of any line breaks or dashes that may try to separate them.

EXCLAMATION MARK!

The Joker: A witty and irreverent character who uses humor and satire to comment on life's absurdities and challenges authority and convention.   
 Our exclamation mark is always the loudest voice in any room and, more often than not, the most annoying.

Exclamation marks get across loud, big emotions like excitement, urgency, emphatic.

They can also be just an indicator of volume.

Use instead of a question mark for questions when rhetorical or ironic.

Exclamation marks always stick to the sentence regardless of any line breaks or dashes that may try to separate them.

“QUOTATION MARKS”

The Seductress: A charming and alluring character who uses their sexuality and charisma to manipulate or seduce others and values pleasure and desire.

Our quotation marks are never alone, always with a partner. They love to gossip and never shuts up. I wouldn't trust them with your secrets.

Quotation marks are used to indicate quoted material. In fiction this is almost exclusively spoken dialogue.

Period goes inside closing quotation marks at the end of a sentence.

Colons and Semicolons follow quotation marks unless they belong to the quoted matter.

Add a space between a single and double quote if they appear next to each other.

HYPHEN -

The Lover: A passionate and sensual character who values connection and intimacy and seeks to experience love and desire.   
 Our hyphen enjoys bringing together multiple partners as closely as possible. But their bonds are weak and don’t extend more than a word’s worth of characters at a time.

Hyphens are used to form compound words, names, and to indicate word divisions. Generally, they go between two words, but you can hyphenate together as many words as you want, especially in fiction.   
 Brick-red, Smith-Baker, hy-phen

They combine groups of numbers that are not inclusive, like your phone number or social security number. 9-1-1

Combine letters when a word is spelled out: H-E-L-L

EN DASH –

The Magician: A wise and powerful character who possesses mystical or supernatural abilities and guides or mentors other characters.

Our hyphen is a priest, cleric, or holy man who uses his powers to do grammatical magic that no one really understands and goes very underappreciated.

You can think of it as able to replace the word "to" where it's independent.

Shows a range for dates, times, numbers. This includes a range like you would see for Bible verses.  
 Open Monday–Friday; Houston–Dallas connection; 1982–1989; Psalm 23:1–6

They can act as super hyphen when showing a relationship between names: The Paul–Tyson fight.

To hyphenate a multi-word noun to another as part of an adjective: New York–busy streets.

EM DASH —

The Ruler: A powerful and authoritative character who seeks to control and organize the world around them and values order and stability.   
 Our em dash is loud, brash, abrupt, and rude. He will cut you off when you're talking because he is the oldest and largest of his three siblings.

Em dashes indicate abrupt interruption and serve to amplify explanatory elements.

Can be used instead of commas, parentheses, or colons.

Can be used to set off an introductory noun from a pronoun that refers back to the noun in the main clause: Mickey, Minny, and Donald—they found their mousekatool.

Question or exclamation marks go inside em dashes: Thanks for—what do you have in your mouth?—watching him.

But they replaces any commas or periods that would have been in that space otherwise.

(PARENTHESES)

The Innocent: A pure and naïve character who views the world with wonder and optimism and seeks to preserve goodness and beauty.

Our parentheses are close-minded and independent. They tend to be in a world of their own.

Parentheses are used to enclose extra information. They can set off text that has no relationship to the rest of a sentence.

When complete sentences are enclosed, periods go inside: (It was free.)

Nested inside another sentence, period goes outside: I got this purse (it was free).

Commas also follow closed parentheses if they would otherwise normally be needed: I got his purse (it was free), and I love it.

COLON:

The Sage: A knowledgeable and wise character who imparts wisdom and guidance to others and seeks to understand the mysteries of the universe.   
 Our colon is a bit of a know it all and will always expand on any topic that comes up.

Colons introduce a lists, quotes, and explanations.

Colons are used to introduce speech in a back and forth list:  
 *Jenny: Can we eat?  
 Tim: We just ate*!

Colons are followed with a space. And you only capitalize the letter following a colon if introducing complete sentences.

SEMICOLON;

The Outlaw: A rebellious and nonconformist character who challenges the status quo and values personal freedom and individuality.

Our semicolon is the cooler comma. It wants to do what the comma does but better, stronger.

Semicolons connect two independent clauses not joined by a conjunction: There are many types of birds; my favorite is the thrush.

They can be used before conjunctive adverbs: however thus, hence, indeed, accordingly, besides, therefore. A comma usually follows.

And are used as a super comma where more regular commas would be confusing: We ate hot, spicy wings; cool ranch Doritos; the table, chairs, and plates; and a side of curly fries.

COMMA,

The Hero: A courageous and selfless character who embarks on a quest or mission to achieve a goal or defeat an enemy.

Our comma is trying to keep the kingdom together, keep all his friends together, and provide better understanding in the team.

Commas are the smallest break in sentence structure, but they are the most common punctuation mark.

Some people use them as slight pauses. Some people use them correctly.

Commas glue parts of sentences together.

Commas glue two sentences together with the help of a conjunction when joining two independent clauses. When joining very short and closely connected ideas you can skip the comma. Don’t need a comma where the subject is implied:

Jenny and I went for a short stroll around the park, and it was lovely. She wore blue and I wore red. We had planned to match but got confused.

Commas glue extra information onto a sentence that is not necessary to understand the core subject, predicate, and complete idea. Ideally, you'd be able to remove what's after or between commas and still get a whole, functioning sentence. Sometimes it's at the front, sometimes it's at the end, sometimes it's right in the middle.

This includes the names of people when you already provide a relationship, often referred to as a spousal comma: This is my wife, Karen, and our two daughters.

For example, "that" implies information that is necessary to understand the sentence, so it doesn't receive a comma. "Which," however, indicates information that is extra to whatever the core of the sentence is, which means you can put a comma in front of it.

Adverbs and adverbial phrases at the beginning and ends of sentences don't need commas unless they're longer than four words, but you do put them in parenthetical commas in the middle of a sentence.

But commas are used glue introductory participial phrases that add extra explanations to a noun.

Commas glue together items in a list, including the one before the conjunction in a series of three or more. But you don't need commas in a list joined by conjunctions or before an ampersand.

Commas often glue on single words to the front of sentences like yes, no, okay, well, oh, ah.

Commas glue together two adjectives that could, without changing the meaning, be joined by "and" or when adjectives are repeated: I was a sticky, sweaty mess. It was very, very hot outside.

Commas glue dialogue tags to their quotation marks.

Comma glue “not” phases that clarify a particular noun to that sentence: The dinner, not the service, was fantastic.

Commas glue names to sentences in a direct address: Kevin, can you hand me that knife?

Commas glue together sentences where whole words are dropped for one reason or another. Like with "and then." You can replace that "and" with a comma.

And, when all else fails, commas glue understanding to ideas because you put them there to make a reader think.

YOU!

The Creator: An imaginative and inventive character who uses their talents to create art, technology, or other forms of expression and seeks to bring something new and beautiful into the world.  
 And now you have all the tools you need to write fantastically grammatically correct sentences!

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