

# Character Traits for Kids

Who are the people young readers meet in their books? How do authors help us know what these characters are like? This reading and writing activity will help your first grader build important comprehension skills that she'll need in second and third grade, too.

## What You Need:

- A book of fiction
- Pad of paper
- Pencil

## What You Do:

1. Although first graders often start reading on their own, it's still a good idea to keep reading to them, too, especially longer, more complex stories. The next time you read a book together, take a few minutes to talk about the main character. Ask your child to describe this character in terms of character traits (for example, *he is friendly, she is brave*). As your child lists the character traits, write them down together.
2. Ask your child to explain why he chose each character trait and which words in the book made him think it was true. For example, if your child described the main character as "friendly", a text clue might be: *he says hi to everyone in his neighborhood*.
3. A major element of becoming a strong reader, is the ability to make predictions about what will happen next. Usually teachers pause in the middle of a story, ask students to predict what a character will do next, and then keep reading to see if their prediction was right.
4. But for a fun spin on predictions, ask your child to guess how his character would do in the *real* world. For example, if he took him to dinner, what would he say? If he took him to school, how would he behave? Give your child a pad of paper and ask him to use this character in his *own* story and place him into your everyday world.

This activity makes a great writing prompt. And it's a kick for kids to imagine one of their favorite characters in the school cafeteria or playing ball at the park. So write on!

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