

Using Extraordinary Characters to Generate Story Ideas

You need to use this in conjunction with the **Writer's Character Sheet** below.

You'll need a **ten sided dice** and a **pen**.

On this sheet each ability and behaviour is represented by a percentage. Start by rolling the dice. The first number you roll will be the number of tens, for example 8 will be 80. Roll again and this will be the units, for example 6 would make the total 86%. Write this number against the first ability Strength, so in our example the character is very strong. Carry on filling in all the percentages in turn for the abilities then behaviours. If you want to speed things up don't bother rolling the units unless you roll a 0, 1, 8 or 9 – so a roll of 4 could just be entered as 40%. We're mostly interested in the extremes that make this an extraordinary character.

Alternatively you can pepper the sheet with your own imposed values or swap the values around to make the character represent what you are looking for.

In this way you may find this sheet is a useful way of keeping your story characters' profiles to hand for quick reference when needed.

I haven't included every possible ability or behaviour here so you'll notice that there are a few extra spaces at the bottom to fill in your own favourites if you want to.

Now you should have good selection of numbers. Highlight the high (80-100) and low (1 to 20) numbers. These highlighted abilities and behaviours outline the extreme nature of your character. The rest is up to you: the combination of highlighted characteristics should start your imagination working and suggest many of the elements that will help you complete the character description. Keep going until the description is full.

The Next Step - Conflict

You should now have an extraordinary character filled in on the sheet and almost alive in your mind. We need some conflict. A few story ideas may already be presenting themselves to you. You can make things even more interesting by throwing this character into a situation with another character created in the same way.

In our workshop we will probably work in groups of two or three. Then we can put the groups' characters together in a stressful situation and see what happens.

Good luck. Oh, I only rolled an 18% for that – let's hope luck doesn't come into it.

Darren Bailey

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Writer's Character Sheet

Current Abilities

Strength (%): _____ Dexterity (%): _____ Constitution (%): _____

Intelligence (%): _____ Energy (%): _____ Charisma (%): _____

Luck (%): _____ Will Power (%): _____ Memory (%): _____

Current Behaviour

Selfish (%): _____ Patient (%): _____ Friendly (%): _____

Aggressive (%): _____ Impulsive (%): _____ Greedy (%): _____

Stubborn (%): _____ Trusting (%): _____ Passionate (%): _____

Adventurous (%): _____ Careful (%): _____ Cheerful (%): _____

Confident (%): _____ Glutton (%): _____ Lustful (%): _____

Lazy (%): _____ Proud (%): _____ Decisive (%): _____

Kind (%): _____ Inquisitive (%): _____ Envious (%): _____

Courageous (%): _____ Vain (%): _____ Sensitive (%): _____

Honest (%): _____ Loyal (%): _____ Forgiving (%): _____

Reliable (%): _____ Prejudiced (%): _____ Funny (%): _____

_____ % _____ % _____ %

_____ % _____ % _____ %

Character Description

Name: _____ Gender: _____

Height: _____ Weight: _____ Build: _____

Age: _____ Hair: _____ Class: _____

Eyes: _____ Skin: _____ Voice: _____

Appearance: _____ Smell: _____

Features: _____ Profession: _____

Clothes: _____

Possessions: _____

Other Comments: _____
