

READER'S GUIDE FOR PLAYING A FICTIONAL LITERARY CHARACTER

1. *Choosing a Character*

- A. What about your character's story is interesting?
- B. Can a character be interesting based solely on the things that happen to him/her?
- C. Is your character more proactive or reactionary?
- D. Does your character undergo any type of change throughout the book?
- E. From what/whose perspective is the book written?

2. *Researching the Character*

Before reading or re-reading the book, there are other options to consider for gathering information:

- Research the region where the novel takes place
- Research the time period in which the novel takes place
- Research the age of your character from a developmental psychology perspective (what stage of development is he/she in?)
- Watch films or shows that have things in common with your novel (setting, theme, mood, etc.)
- Search the Internet for discussion questions or forums about the book

3. *Playing the Character*

Before starting the simulation, you should ask yourself the following question: At what point in your character's story are you going to be playing him/her? This is especially important in cases where the character undergoes a significant change in the story (see 1-D). It is also important in cases where great amounts of time have passed from the novel's start to its finish. If the book spans a lifetime it will be difficult to play your character at all ages in a simulation that is only several weeks long.

This is a decision that those playing nonfiction personas will have to make as well, but it is likely that they will choose to play their characters at their wisest points - typically near or after death. It is possible for you to play the character in a way that follows the story as the simulation takes place. This is especially true in works of fiction that span small amounts of time. You may, in fact, choose to read the book along with the progression of the simulation. If you do, consider employing the following strategies:

- Break up the book in a way that will allow you to read it in chunks, making sure to reach the desired point of portrayal with a significant fraction of simulation time remaining. This is unique in that it allows you to portray a dynamic character whose opinion/attitude can change over time unlike their nonfiction counterparts.
- Take detailed notes on ALL written things that relate to your character and keep them properly organized chronologically. These small details not only help you to understand the character, but also will make your character seem more real and less like a caricature. Example: You have the ability to speak of things happening to you in the simulation as if they have just occurred, while historical figures may have to recall stories of the past. This may help to make your character seem more interesting to some. After finishing a segment of the story, look back at your notes and decide what you will attempt to use. While you may not end up using everything, it is better to have too much to choose from than not enough.

Good luck!!