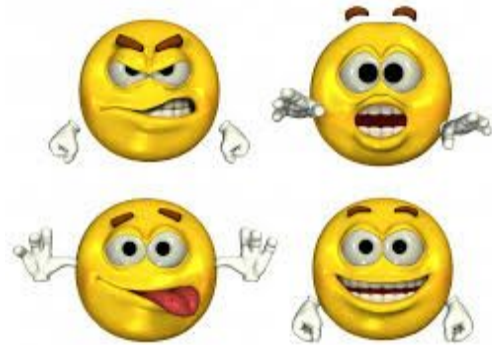


Identifying Character Traits

Characters do things. They feel things. They hear things. They say things. They think things. They go places. They interact with other characters. And these things show us what kind of people these characters are: friendly, sad, nosy, happy, lovestruck, confused, angry, or inventive.



What is a character trait?

When we talk about a character, we often describe that character in terms of character traits, **descriptive adjectives** like happy or sad that tell us the specific qualities of the character. They're the same kinds of words that we might use to describe ourselves or others, but we're using them to describe fictional characters in something we've read.

The author may **tell** us these traits directly, but more often the author will **show** us these traits. Our job as readers is to draw a conclusion about the character's traits (*to infer them*) from what the character says, thinks, and does. We can also make inferences based on how the character is physically described as well as from his or her interactions with other characters. We might infer a character trait from something a character does only once, or we might draw our conclusions from a series of things the character says and does.

How do we find a character's traits?

An easy way to think about characters is to use a simple chart. **Using the "Examples of Characterization" worksheet and your book, document character traits for the characters in *The Running Dream*.**