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# STATIC & DYNAMIC CHARACTERS



The key word when dealing with the difference between static and dynamic characters is **CHANGE**.

The type of change, though, is specific. We aren't talking about how a character changes physically. It doesn't matter if the character begins the story as a blonde and ends the story as a red-head. Weight loss, weight gain, age, height....the physical doesn't matter. The type of change is internal----changes that occur within the character. These can include:

- \* a change in personality
- \* a change in values
- \* a change in the nature of the character



Think about the Grinch and Scrooge. Are they the same in the end of the story as they were in the beginning? Nope! So they are **DYNAMIC CHARACTERS!**

In order for a character to be classified as **STATIC**, the character will basically remain the same throughout the story. There will be no internal changes.

Read the description below. Would the character John be static or dynamic?

**STATIC** or **DYNAMIC**: In August, John has already made the decision that he will hate his new school. He won't make any friends, and all the teachers will be unfair. He is certain that the work load will be cruel. Yes, John knows that he will have a horrible school year. September begins and John lashes out at his classmates. He says mean things about them and is disrespectful to the teachers. Although the students try to be friendly to John, he makes it difficult for them to like him. The teachers try to show John extra encouragement, but John pushes them away as well. This happens all through autumn. Winter rolls around and John's class attends an assembly. A missionary speaks to the students and tells them all about the children in Africa that he works with. Many of the children are orphans with no families. They don't have the basic needs to survive. John feels a stirring in his heart. He decides then and there that he wants to be like the missionary and help others. After assembly that day, John apologizes to his classmates and teachers. For the rest of the year, John is known as one of the most friendly -compassionate students.



So how do distinguish static characters from dynamic characters? Think about the character at the beginning of the story. Answer these questions:

1. How does the character feel about him/her/itself?
2. How does the character act toward others?
3. What is the character's goal?

Repeat the process at the end of the story. Usually, if you are dealing with a dynamic character, your answers will now change. You'll be able to notice a difference in the character's personality. Basically, dynamic characters learn a lesson. If there is no major difference, you are most likely dealing with a static character.