

# Defining Characterization

**Characterization** is the process by which the writer reveals the personality of a character.

Characterization is revealed through **direct characterization** and **indirect characterization**.

**Direct Characterization** tells the audience what the personality of the character is.

**Example:** "The patient boy and quiet girl were both well-mannered and did not disobey **their** mother."

**Explanation:** The author is directly telling the audience the personality of these two children. **The** boy is "patient" and the girl is "quiet."

**Indirect Characterization** shows things that reveal the personality of a character. There are five different methods of indirect characterization:

<b>S</b> peech	What does the character say? How does the character speak?
<b>T</b> houghts	What is revealed through the character's private thoughts and feelings?
<b>E</b> ffect on others toward the character.	What is revealed through the character's effect on other people? How do other characters feel or behave in reaction to the character?
<b>A</b> ctions	What does the character do? <b>How</b> does the character behave?
<b>L</b> ooks	What does the character look like? How does the character dress?

**TIP #1:**

Use the mnemonic device of STEAL to remember the five types of indirect characterization

**TIP #2:** Use indirect characterization to analyze visual media:

**Film:** Look at how the character dresses and moves. Note the facial expressions when the director moves in for a close-up shot.

**Drama:** Pay attention to the way that the characters reveal their thoughts during a soliloquy.