

# Character Trading Cards

## Learning Beyond the Classroom



**URL:** [www.readwritethink.org/materials/trading\\_cards/](http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/trading_cards/)

Creating trading cards for their favorite story characters will challenge children to think more deeply about what they read or even watch in movies or on television. By answering a series of questions, children zero in on what's obvious and not so obvious about a character. Not only will they describe the character's appearance and actions, but also probe for thoughts, feelings, and motivations. The cards also offer a chance for children to consider their own impressions: What is likeable or not likeable about a character and what personal connections might children make?

### Here's What to Do

Character selection is an important step. Book characters are ideal, but let children choose any character they like from any media, including graphic novels, comic books, and movies. Children then answer five groups of questions about the character and story. A planning sheet is available so children can start thinking about their answers before starting the online exercise. When finished, they can print the completed card (see sample), cut out the two pieces, and tape them together to make a two-sided card. No trading card is complete without a photo, so the character card includes space for children to attach or draw a picture.

### More Ideas to Try

- Try the activity with a group of children, but have them keep their characters a secret so they can play a "Guess Who?" game. Children can give out one detail at a time from the trading card until someone guesses their character.
- Use the Character Trading Cards tool to examine children's original writing or to help plan stories. Remind children that richly detailed characters are the most interesting to read about.
- Remind children that they are the main characters in their very own story—their life. Invite them to create character cards about themselves. The answers can be true reflections or a chance to dream a little about the characters they'd like to be.

\*This tool uses the free Flash browser plug-in (version 8 or later), which can be downloaded from the ReadWriteThink [Site Tools](#) page.

To view this tip sheet online, go to [www.readwritethink.org/materials/trading\\_cards/CharacterTradingCards.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/trading_cards/CharacterTradingCards.pdf).

**Intended for: Grades 3–8  
Ages 8–14**

**Technical requirements: Flash 8\***

**ReadWriteThink.org**

Provides high-quality  
resources for reading and  
English language arts learning

**read • write • think**

International Reading Association **NCTE**

**Thinkfinity.org™**  
supported by the Verizon Foundation