

# The Journey Through the Character Arc Master Questionnaire

If you followed the **Character Evolution Files'** Journey Through the Character Arc series, you might recall that each post ended with a set of questions designed to help writers construct each arc stage with appropriate literary elements and devices. Now, you can have those interviews in one convenient document!

The **Journey Through the Character Arc Master Questionnaire** contains all 10 "interviews" that, when combined, result in a complete and in-depth character arc outline to accompany a traditional plot outline. In other words, it's a "one-stop shop" for plotting a [positive arc](#) from beginning (Trigger / Inciting Incident) to end (Emergence / Resolution) and for gathering all of your notes about a protagonist's journey of [change and growth](#).

Haven't read the Journey Through the Character Arc series yet? No worries! Each interview's heading is linked to its respective blog post. Just click the link so you can read more about the arc stage.

## **Instructions:**

Print out a copy of this worksheet, and (if possible) have a print or electronic version of any outlines or plotting / planning documents you're using for your next story.

Feel free to use a blank page or Word document to complete this activity.

# The Journey Through the Character Arc Master Questionnaire

## Stage 1: [The Trigger \(Inciting Incident\)](#)

1. During which chapter and page does the Trigger occur? Where is it located in terms of the story's overall page and word count?
2. Have you introduced your protagonist yet?
3. Have you volunteered details about the protagonist such as age, occupation / role in society, and important physical descriptors? If so, list those details below.
4. Have you revealed some of the protagonist's qualities, strengths, or talents? How about flaws or weaknesses? If so, what are they?



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5. How does the Trigger tie in with the external plot?

6. How does the protagonist react to the Trigger?

7. Does the Trigger bring the protagonist face to face with her false belief?

8. Does the Trigger hint at the protagonist's story goal?



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9. What reason(s) have you given so far for readers to care about the protagonist? Why should they care about her reaction to the Trigger?

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## Stage 2: [The Comfort Zone \(Act I\)](#)

1. How long does the Comfort Zone last in terms of the story's overall page and word count?
2. What is the protagonist's current world like? What does it consist of ("home," possessions, governing laws / rules / expectations, beliefs / morals / values, etc.)? Why does the protagonist feel comfortable here? What would force her to leave this place against her will?
3. Who are currently the important people in the protagonist's life? What role(s) will they play during the story? Will the protagonist meet new characters who will also be significant to the plot and/or her character arc?







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10. Does the Comfort Zone continue to hint at the upcoming story goal?

11. What reason(s) have you given readers to continue bonding with and caring about the protagonist? Why should they care about her Comfort Zone struggles?

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## Stage 3: The Point of No Return (End of Act I)

1. Where does the Point of No Return occur in terms of the story's overall page count / word count?
2. What event brings the protagonist to the choice she will need to make?
3. What choice is the protagonist forced to make? What are her options, and the consequences of each?
4. What is the protagonist's story goal as a result of this choice? How does it conflict with her false belief?



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5. Who will help the protagonist as she works to achieve her story goal? What antagonistic force(s) stands in her way?

6. When and where does the protagonist need to reach her story goal?

7. How will the protagonist reach her story goal? What steps will she need to take? What challenges will she face along the way?



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8. Why does the story goal matter to the protagonist? What's at stake if she fails to achieve it or take action?

9. What is the protagonist's immediate reaction (physical and emotional) to her decision?

10. What reason(s) have you given readers to continue caring about the protagonist?













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7. What is the first action that the protagonist takes after making this decision? How does this reflect her acknowledgment of the truth?

8. What evidence (e.g., emotions, thoughts) proves to readers that the protagonist still clings to her false belief?

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## Stage 6: [The Charge \(Act II, Second Half\)](#)

1. Where does the Charge begin in terms of the story's overall page count / word count? How long does it last?
  
2. What further steps does the protagonist take toward her story goal? How does she switch from a state of reaction to a state of initiative?
  
3. How does the protagonist's acknowledgment of her false belief's opposite truth impact her story goal progress? What new behaviors (character strengths, correct decisions, etc.) allow her to demonstrate her understanding of this truth?











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7. How does the Dark Night represent the death of the protagonist's old self? What immediate action does she take that symbolizes this death? Do other types of "death" emerge?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. How does the Dark Night foreshadow the Moment of Truth? What additional information does the protagonist receive about the antagonistic force(s)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What is the protagonist's emotional state at the end of this stage? How does it reveal her willingness to reject her lie and embrace the truth?









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10. How does the protagonist feel at the end of the Aftermath? What is her mentality as she prepares for the Climax / Moment of Truth?

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## Stage 9: The Moment of Truth (Climax)

1. Where does the Moment of Truth begin in terms of the story's overall page count / word count? How long does it last?
2. Briefly describe the protagonist's Plan A, as well as any facts of the final confrontation between her and the antagonistic force(s). Who is involved? Where and when does it take place? What assistance (supporting characters, objects, skills, etc.) from previous stages is available to her at this time?
3. How does the antagonistic force(s) assault the protagonist's belief in the truth? How does the protagonist overcome each attack?













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10. How does the protagonist feel when the story ends? What other thoughts of importance does she have at this time?