**Speech**

**What they say**

The words that a person speaks says a lot about them. If they use complex language, they may well be intelligent. If they swear, they may be angry or crude. If they talk a lot, they may be social or nervous.

What they do not say also says something about them. If they say little, they may be introverted or timid. If they avoid talking about a crime, perhaps they are guilty.

**How they say it**

The accent, voice tone, speed, and other attributes of speaking also tells much about a character.

A person who speaks in a refined accent may be wealth and privately educated. A person who speaks quickly may be thinking visually. A person who has a deep, rough voice may have spent much time out of doors. If they hesitate, they may be unsure or lying.

**Thoughts**

**Thinking**

In a written story a person's thoughts can easily be exposed. In plays monologues can be used and in movies thoughts can be betrayed from self-talk to conversation and action. Thinking is based on such as [beliefs](http://changingminds.org/explanations/belief/belief.htm) about how the world works. [Decisions](http://changingminds.org/explanations/decision/decisions.htm) also show the rationality (or not) of thought, as does the way a person [argues](http://changingminds.org/disciplines/argument/argument.htm).

**Feeling**

Feelings are particularly given away by [body language](http://changingminds.org/explanations/behaviors/body_language/body_language.htm) and voice tone. It is particularly in [emotions](http://changingminds.org/explanations/emotions/emotions.htm) that the underlying character is exposed. Emotions often appear in response to external effects and their effects on personal goals and whether they align with expectations. They thus also say much about the internal structure of how the person thinks.

**Effects on others**

The way a person interacts with other person says a great deal about their character. This shows factors such as [empathy](http://changingminds.org/explanations/emotions/empathy.htm) and social understanding.

**Emotions**

Of note are the [emotions](http://changingminds.org/explanations/emotions/emotions.htm) a person elicits in others. Do they invoke [repulsion](http://changingminds.org/explanations/emotions/repulsion.htm), [fear](http://changingminds.org/explanations/emotions/fear.htm) or [love](http://changingminds.org/explanations/theories/love.htm)? Are others attracted to them or move away?

**Reactions**

The way others react to a character also says a lot about them. Are they popular or alone? Are they leaders or followers? Do others help them or ignore them?

**Actions**

The way a person acts is driven by how they think, feel and how they interact with others. Above all, it is in the actions of people that the true character emerges.

**With others**

A particular test of a character is how they interact with other people, for example how selfish or sympathetic they are and whether they will altruistically help others without expecting something back in return.

**Under stress**

When we are [stresssed](http://changingminds.org/explanations/stress/stress.htm), our behavior often changes to something less thoughtful. Stress is thus a further test of personality and reveals more of the person's character.

**Looks**

The appearance of a person can give much away about them, although appearances can be deceptive. Looks thus should not be the only way a character is portrayed.

**Expression**

Facial expression and other body language tells much about a person. If they are scarred or otherwise battered by life or the weather, this also says much.

**Dress**

A person's dress says something about what they can afford and also something about their sense of fashion (and concern for it). Thus a casually dressed person may be less worldly than a smart dude in a zoot suit!