



## MODULE 2: **CHARACTER**

Characters are the lenses through which we experience a story. So what makes a strong character? Let's dive into our characters' background, objectives, given circumstances and relationships in order to make them as specific as possible.

# CHARACTER

## WHAT IS CHARACTER?

The voice's identity & their traits, goals and story arc.

## QUESTIONS EVERY SONGWRITER MUST ASK ABOUT CHARACTER:

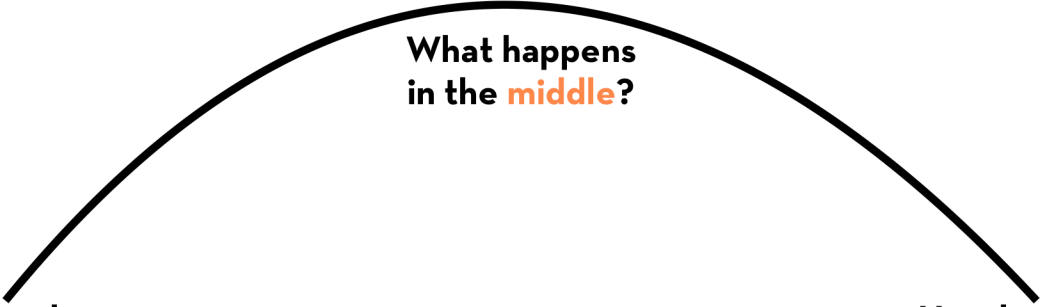
- ♪ What does my character **WANT**?
- ♪ **WHY** do they want it?
- ♪ Why is it important that they get what they want?  
What happens if they don't?
- ♪ What is my character's **JOURNEY** through the song?  
How are they different from the start to the end?

As a songwriter, it is important to know as much **information** about your character as possible. The more you know about your character, the more effective your song will be and the clearer your writing. In order to do this, you will need to **spend time getting to know your character(s)**.

Try to be as **specific** as possible as you dive deeper into your character's **background, objective, given circumstances** and **relationships**. For example, if your character has an older sibling, how many years are they apart? If they are from California, what city or town? Give your character a last name if they don't have one already. These details help bring your character to life more clearly.

## CHARACTER MAPPING

*This exercise will help you clearly define your character's objective, dive deeper into their given circumstances, and track their journey throughout the song.*

OBJECTIVE	GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES
<p><b>What does my character want?</b></p> <p><b>Why do they want it?</b></p> <p><b>Why is it so important that they get what they want?</b></p> <p><b>What happens if they don't get it?</b></p>	<p><i>Asking the 5Ws</i></p> <p><b>Who</b> is your character? <b>Who</b> are they singing to?</p> <p><b>What</b> happened right before they started singing?</p> <p><b>When</b> are they singing?</p> <p><b>Where</b> are they singing?</p> <p><b>Why</b> are they singing?</p>
<h3 style="text-align: center;">JOURNEY</h3> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  <p><b>What happens in the <b>middle</b>?</b></p> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div data-bbox="126 1726 490 1848" style="width: 45%;"> <p><b>Where is my character at the <b>beginning</b> of the song?</b></p> </div> <div data-bbox="1214 1726 1455 1848" style="width: 45%;"> <p><b>How have they changed by the <b>end</b>?</b></p> </div> </div>	

# DEVELOPING YOUR CHARACTER'S UNIQUE VOICE

*This exercise will help you discover your character's specific language to give them a distinct identity.*

## Part 1: Monologue Writing

Choose one (or more) of the following:

1. Write a monologue version of your song from your character's point of view (POV).
2. Write a monologue from your character's POV about the moment before your song.
3. Write a monologue from your character's POV about the moment after your song.

Set a timer for ten minutes and write. Do your best to write the whole time, even if you repeat the same sentence. There is no right or wrong, no judgment - this is about experimenting creatively. Give it a try!

## Part 2: Identify Unique Words

Read your monologue and highlight phrases that feel clearly in your character's voice.

What do you notice about how your character speaks and thinks?

Do they use any metaphors/similes/images through which they view the world/their situation? Can you turn any of these phrases into lyrics?

# EXPLORING YOUR CHARACTER'S WORLD

*This exercise will help you dive into the sensory world that your character experiences.*

## Part 1: The 5 Senses

Think about what your character experiences through each of the 5 senses before, during, and/or after the moment of your song.

Set a timer for five minutes and fill out the table below. There is no right or wrong, no judgment - this is about experimenting creatively. Give it a try!

What does my character SEE? 	What does my character SMELL? 	What does my character FEEL? 	What does my character HEAR? 	What does my character TASTE? 

## Part 2: Collecting Images

Looking at your chart, which images stand out to you? Circle them above.

Think about how you could incorporate these images into lyrics.

Do any of these images inspire a musical phrase?

Use the space below to experiment!