

Character Sketch

- Recall the text and identify the characters.
- Describe the role and significance of the character in the story.
- Describe the character's physique/appearance.
- Describe the personality traits like manners, behaviour, values, etc. of the character.
- Write about the character's relationship with other characters in the story.
- Quote details from the story to substantiate your views.

Q 1: *Martha's grandfather is depicted as a very strong and righteous person in the story 'The Scholarship Jacket'. Attempt a character sketch of her grandfather.*

Martha's grandfather is probably the most important character in the story. In our mind he will be the winner once we finish reading the full story. His words "if you pay for it, it is not a scholarship jacket" made even the principal change his decision. He is somewhat a rich farmer owning a two-hundred acre ranch. He is seen in the story working in his field always. He is a sort of reserved type but a man of strong determination. Though he is uneducated he believes it is injustice to pay for a deserving award. So he strongly stands with his belief even when his granddaughter cries. Finally, his words win and Martha gets the award. When he hears both sad and happy news of Martha, he expresses almost the same reaction. When she tells him about her winning the jacket, he still doesn't express his rejoice through words. He just gives her a smile and a pat on her shoulder. As the proverb 'still waters run deep', some people will not show overtly their deep love and affection. Martha's grandfather is a man of this sort.

Q 2: Describe the character of 'Martha' in the story 'The Scholarship Jacket'.

'Martha' in the story 'The Scholarship Jacket' is a character of mixed feelings. She is a little sensitive but bold and brilliant. She is 14 years old and an eighth grade student maintaining a consistent 'A' level since her first grade. She is in every sense qualified enough to win the prestigious scholarship jacket, an award to the class valedictorian of her school.

Martha is the daughter of a poor Mexican farmer. Owing to the poverty at her own family, she has been given to her grandparents to raise. In appearance she is very lean and her friends call her 'beanpole' and 'string bean'. Once she happens to overhear a heated argument between her two teachers. She understands that a conspiracy is going on to undermine her winning the jacket. Eventually the principal asks her to pay 15 dollars for the award. Although bold and brilliant, this incident makes her cry in despair.

But when Martha's granddad tells her that a paid award is not an award at all, she accepts his words. She strongly believes that she deserves the award by merit and it will come her way. She determines to tell the principal looking straight into his eyes that she is not ready to pay. Here, we see a bold Martha. However, later when Martha hears from the principal that she is going to get the jacket, she cannot control her happiness. But while talking to her grandfather about the happy news, she controls herself. Martha's words and deeds show that she is quite sensitive but at the same time sensible and bold.

Q 3: Think Tank in the play 'The Book that Saved the Earth' is a monopolist who tries to impose his foolish thoughts upon others. Prepare a character sketch of Think Tank.

In the play, "The Book that Saved the Earth, the most ridiculous and funniest character is Think-Tank. His appearance itself creates laughter. He has a huge egg-shaped head and he wears a long robe decorated with stars and circles. He has a domineering mentality over others. He thinks himself to be the most intelligent and powerful creature in the whole universe. He is the great and mighty commander-in-chief of the Martians. When the apprentice Noodle addresses him as "great and mighty Think-Tank, most powerful and intelligent creature in the whole universe", he simply doesn't become satisfied. He orders to address him again with the

missing part of his salutation. Noodle salutes him again adding “Ruler of Mars and her two moons”. Think-tank asks the mirror who ‘the most fantastically intellectually gifted being in the land’ is. He gets angry and smacks the mirror, when the reply to this question is a little delayed.

When he sees a book he intellectually interprets it as a sandwich and the bookshelves as crude refreshment stands. When Noodle says that the book may be a communication device, he immediately pretends that he knows it already and calls it a communication sandwich. The Martians under their great and mighty commander -in-chief Think-Tank are on a mission to attack the Earthlings. But at the end of the play, Think-Tank is seen as afraid of the Earthlings. He himself seeks ways to escape and orders his crew to leave the earth at once. All these words and deeds of Think-Tank show that, although he thinks himself to be the most intelligent and the mightiest, he is really a gullible coward.

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1. The grandfather in the story ‘Vanka’ is an interesting character. His styles and manners evoke fun and surprise throughout the story. Prepare a brief character sketch of the Grandfather.
2. Prepare the character sketch of the doctor in the story 'The Snake and the Mirror'.
3. Mr Thorat, the ring master was a man of a typical character. Prepare a character sketch of Mr. Thorat.
4. 1. Attempt the character sketch of Mr. John in the story ‘The Best Investment I ever made’.
5. Mr. Schmidt is a very powerful character in the story ‘The Scholarship Jacket’. He argues in favour of Martha. Prepare the character sketch of Mr. Schmidt.
6. In the play ‘The Book that Saved the Earth’ Noodle is seen more intelligent than Think Tank. But Think Tank is not ready to accept it. Prepare a character sketch of Noodle.
7. Write the character sketch of Kailash, the old cashier in the memoir ‘My Childhood Days’