

Characters

A story **character** is a person or animal in a story.

We learn about a character in four ways.

1. How the character looks



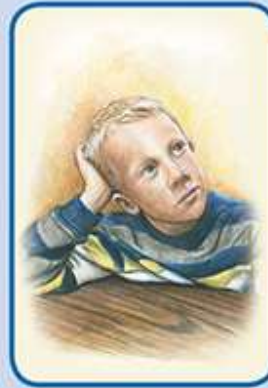
2. What the character says



3. What the character does



4. What the character thinks



One of a Kind

*Realistic fiction by Milly Howard
illustrated by Sandy Mehus*



Think as You Read

Who is the story mostly about?

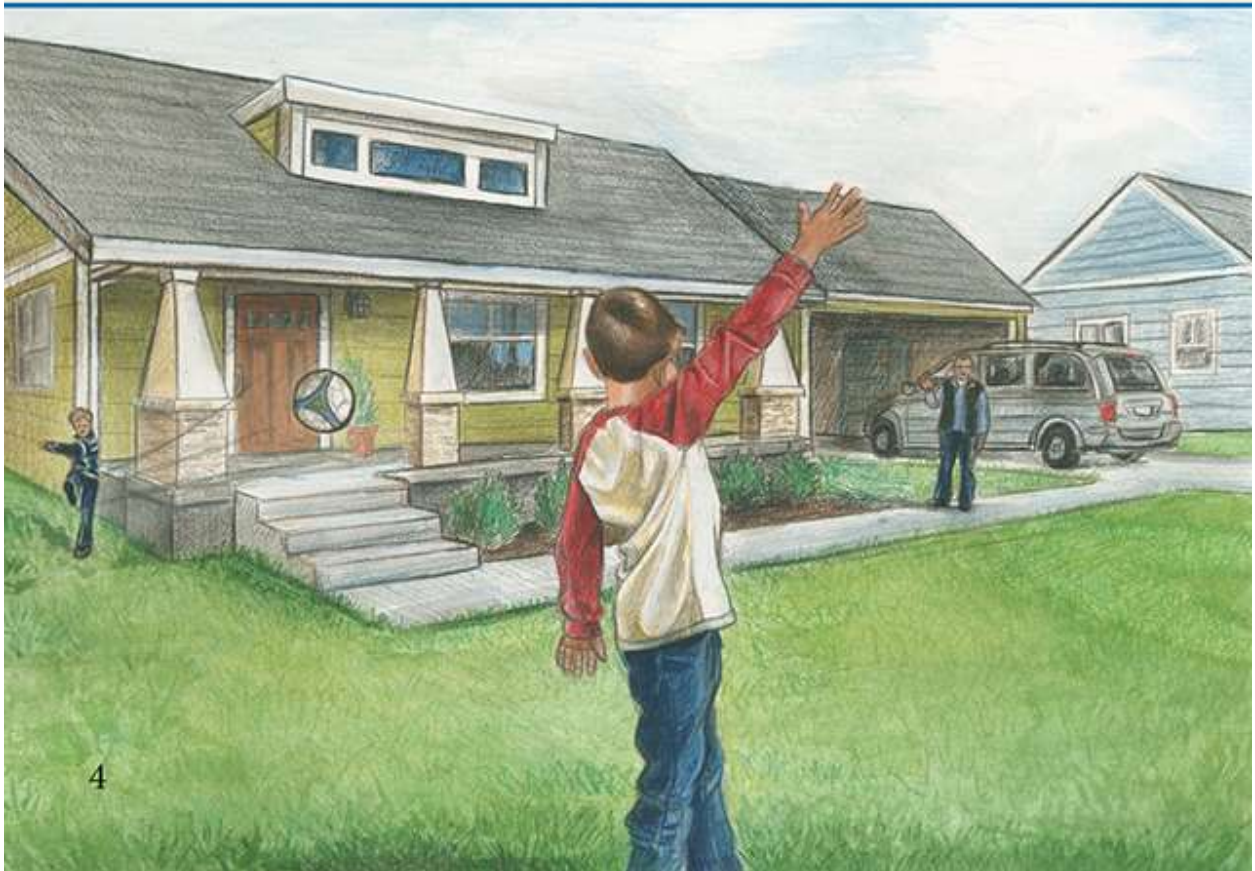
What can you learn about the main character?

Bits and Pieces

“Made it!” Ethan cheered as the soccer ball sailed past his friend Pete. “That’s five goals in a row!” he exclaimed, as Pete ran for the ball. “Let’s see you beat that!”

Ethan’s dad turned into the driveway and stopped the car. As he got out, the soccer ball sailed across the yard. “Good kick, Pete!” called Mr. Cord. “You boys are getting pretty good! All that practice is starting to pay off.”

“Thanks, Mr. Cord.” Pete grinned as he followed Ethan to the car.



The boys noticed a big box in the back of the car. Ethan peered into it. "What's that, Dad?" he asked.

"Oh, just bits and pieces from different bikes," Dad said. "I know a boy who needs a new bike and thought I could put one together for him. You boys want to help?"

"Sure," the boys replied.

"Great! You can start by carrying the box into the garage while I change into my work clothes," said Ethan's father. He opened the back door and went inside the house.





The boys tugged the box into the garage and began looking at the bike parts. Pete held up badly scratched handlebars.

“Boy, your dad was right when he said these pieces were from different bikes,” said Pete. “These handlebars are red, and that long piece is blue. Why would he want to go to all the trouble to put a bike together for someone else?”

“Dad is always doing things for other people,” replied Ethan. “He goes with the pastor to visit people in town. When he meets someone who needs something, he tries to help.”

“But look at all these parts. Why would he go to all the work of putting a bike together when he could just buy one?” asked Pete.

“Bikes aren’t all that cheap,” Ethan replied. “I should know. I’ve been saving for a new one for almost a year.”

Pete put the handlebars back into the box and looked up. “What kind of bike do you want?”

Ethan’s eyes sparkled. “A Silver Flash.”

“Wow!” exclaimed Pete. “The Silver Flash is the best! How much money have you saved?”

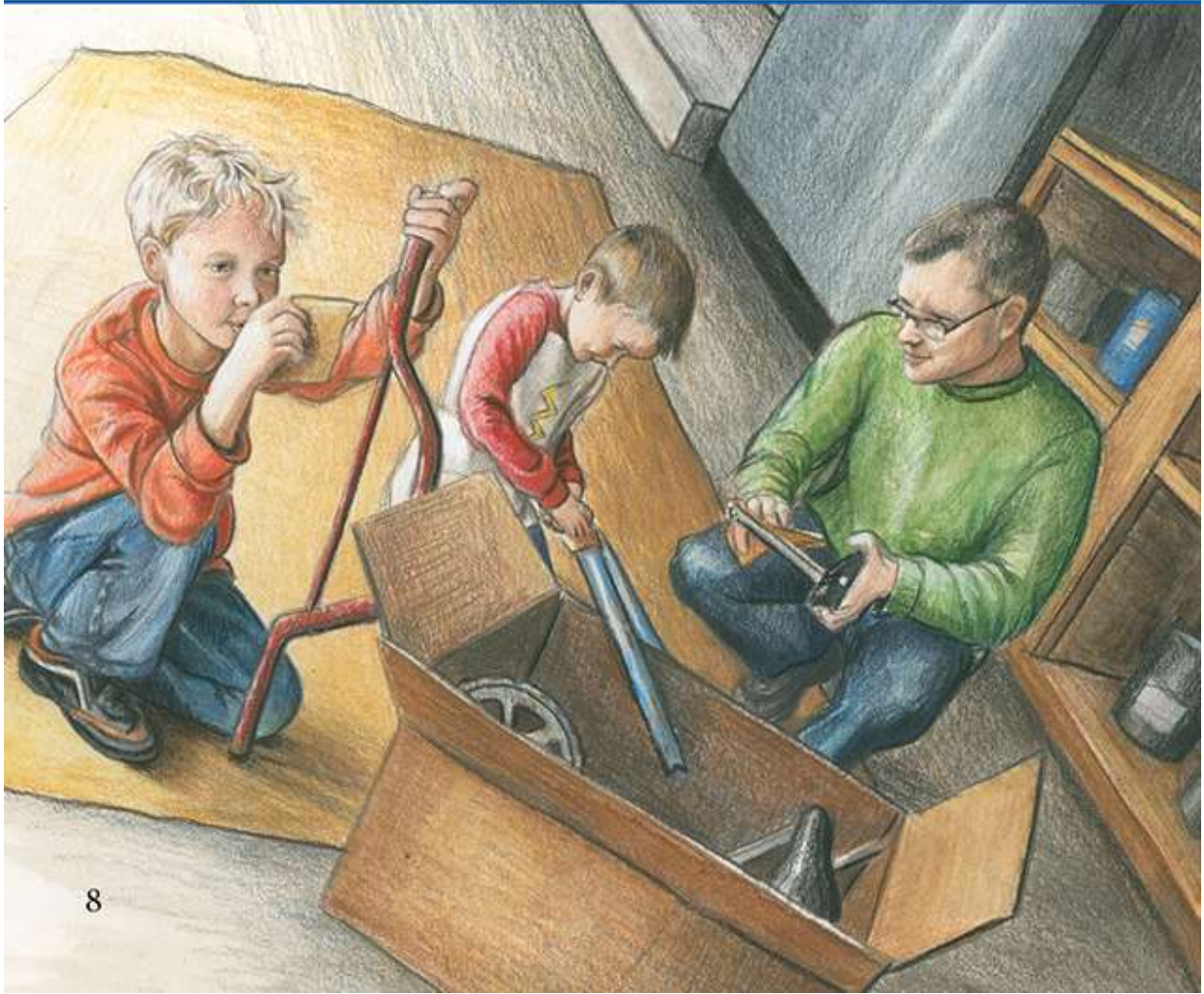
Ethan sighed. “Not very much. I get an allowance, but I’m supposed to use part of that to buy my school supplies. The money doesn’t go very far.”

The door slammed behind Mr. Cord. “Ready, boys?” he asked.



Mr. Cord took some pieces of sandpaper out of a box. “Why don’t you boys start sanding the paint off some of the parts?”

Ethan pulled out the long blue part, and Pete picked up the red handlebars. Both boys watched as Ethan’s father showed them how to sand off the paint. Then they all got to work.





An hour later Pete stretched and put down his tattered sandpaper. "I've got to go home," he said. "If I don't leave now, I'll be late for supper."

"Thanks for the help, Pete," said Mr. Cord.

Ethan walked with Pete to the garage door. "See you later, Pete," he said. Then he came back to look at the bike frame his dad was starting to put together. "Think it's going to work, Dad?"

"Mm-hmm," replied Dad. "I think I have enough parts." He stood up and wiped his hands. "It's time for us to stop too."

Ethan helped his father put away the tools and clean up the garage before they went inside to eat.

The next afternoon Ethan and Pete raced home from school on their bikes.

“Beat you!” called Pete, braking at the Cords’ house.

Ethan’s wheels spun as he turned into the driveway. “Just wait,” he said, frowning. “When I get my Silver Flash, you won’t stand a chance.”

Pete just laughed. “Want to come over to my house?”

Ethan glanced at the garage. Part of the bike frame was propped against the workbench. “No,” he said slowly, “I have to do my homework and then help Dad work on the bike when he gets home.”

“Why? It’s not your bike,” said Pete.

“Dad wants me to help,” Ethan replied.

“Every day? Glad it’s you and not me,” called Pete as he pedaled away. “See you tomorrow.”

