

Activity based on *Tattoo Heaven* by Lori Weber

After reading the various descriptions that the author uses to describe “the sick girl,” write your own profile of a character that you find interesting or intriguing for some reason. In your description, make use of as much detail as you can. Include detail about :

- a) the character’s physical qualities, such as height, weight, hair colour and length, facial features and expressions, way of standing or sitting; posture
- b) the character’s particular habits, such as nail biting etc; try to make this original
- c) what the character is wearing and how s/he is wearing it

Now, write a short dramatic monologue where your character speaks about her or his life. Capture the particular qualities of your character’s speech patterns by paying attention to:

- a) the length of the sentences; short and choppy or long and rambling, or somewhere in between
- b) use of repetition of a particular word or phrase
- c) the actual diction; is this a formal speaker or someone who uses a lot of slang
- d) hand gestures or facial gestures that accompany the speech

Now, describe your character’s room. Think carefully about what is in the room because this will reveal much about your character. Pay attention to:

- a) colour or colour patterns that are dominant in the room, both on the walls and materials
- b) the condition of the room; is it super neat and tidy or extremely messy, or in between
- c) what is on the walls; posters and pictures reveal much about the mental makeup of a person
- d) objects on the shelves or bureau tops
- e) windows and window coverings; is it dark and gloomy or full of light

Now, think of a particular object that could be extremely meaningful to your character and who he or she is. This would become a symbol in the story, like the caterpillar is for Theresa. Write a short scene where your character interacts with this object. Pay attention to:

- a) how he or she holds it or looks at it; this will convey the character’s attitude toward it
- b) the pace of the scene; slow and introspective or fast and frantic
- c) how willing your character is to share what the object means with other people
- d) how aware your character is about how meaningful the object is