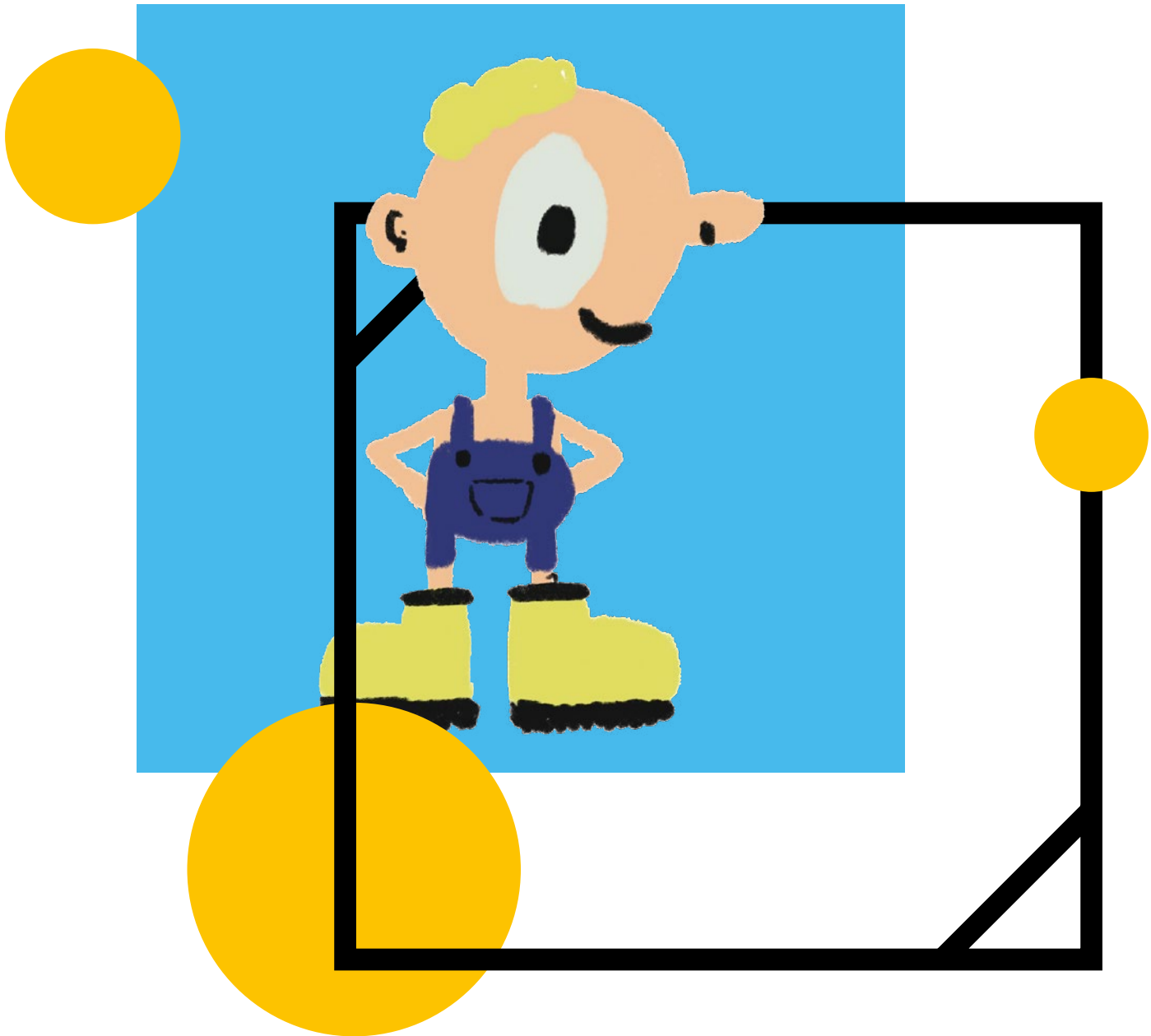


Character Design Workshop



Illustration, Games Design and Animation

2 hours

World building, drawing and story telling

Character Design Workshop

Materials

Before you start make sure you have the following materials.

- Pencils ranging from HB to B4
- Rubber
- Colour Pencils
- Ruler 30 cm (optional)

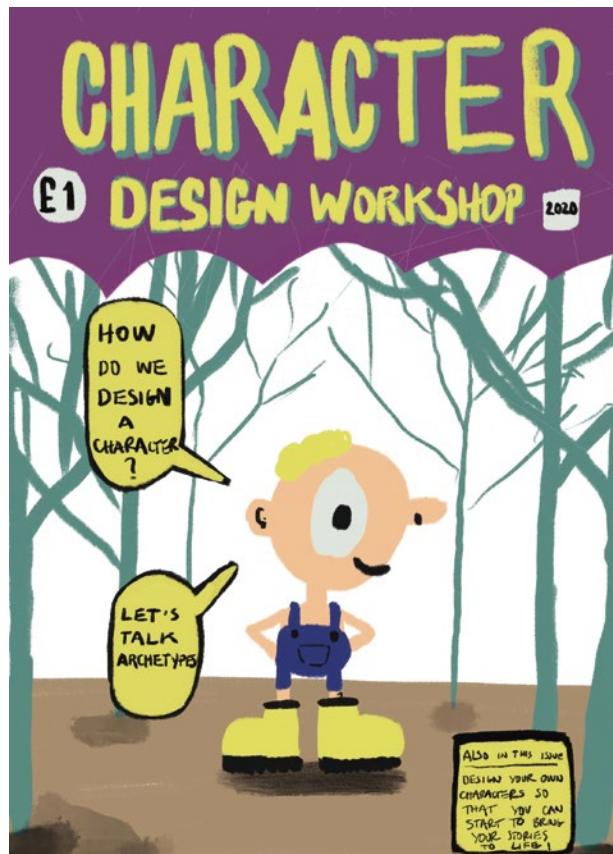


Character Design Workshop

Introduction

In this workshop you will learn how to make a very simple character that has a strong visual identity and a clear back story.

When you start to create a character the first thing to think about should be, who your character is?



Video tutorial: youtu.be/VCAf8BwRS7I

Follow the link to watch the Character Design Workshop video made for this project

Character Design Workshop

Task 1—Archetypes

To start decide what archetype your character fits into. Traditionally fictional archetypes can be categorised in the following ways:

A Hero: A real person, full of contradiction—strong but also weak. On a journey of discovery.

A Mentor: Wise and learned. Selfless and generous. Often old. To teach and advise the hero on their journey.

A Threshold Guardian: Aggressive, obedient, apprentice of the villain. To obstruct the hero's progress and test their resolve.

A Herald: Friendly, loyal and sometimes outspoken. Lover or partner of hero.

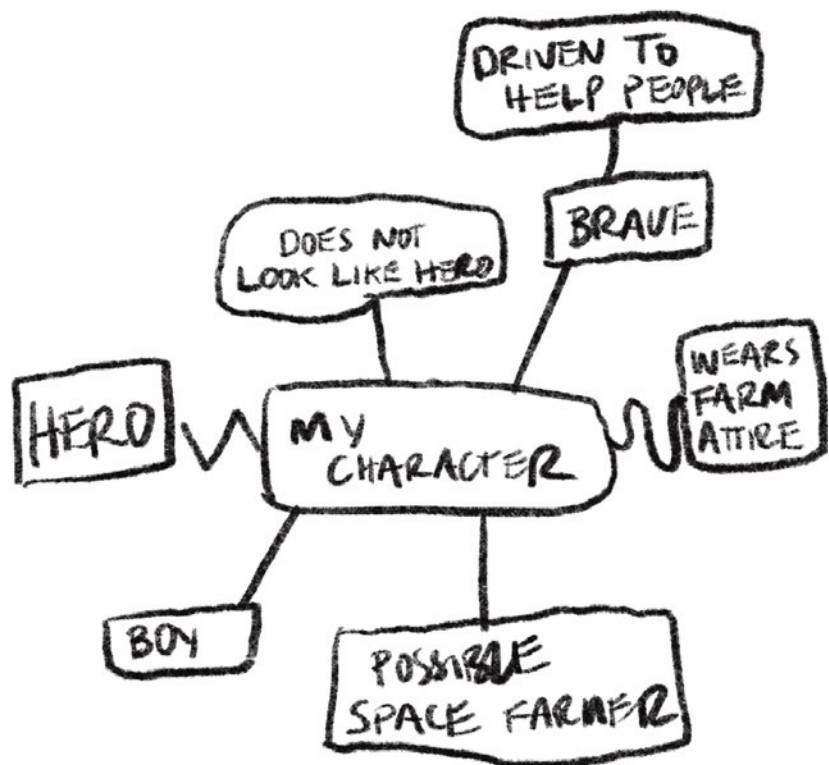
A Shape-shifter: Changeable character personalities. To test the hero and create confusion.

A Shadow: The dark side. Reveals unknown, repressed feelings. To stop the hero from reaching their goal. To destroy hope.

A Trickster: Mischievous troublemaker. Comic relief, to point out absurdities and hypocrisy. To create chaos.

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For your first task create a mind map.
Consider what characteristics you want your character to have then decide what archetype those characteristics fits into.



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Task 2—Specific Information

Once you have done this let's pick out a few specifics about your character. For example:

Age:

Height:

Body type: (tall, short big, small)

Hair Colour:

Eye Colour:

Distinguishing features:

Doing this before you start drawing is going to help form a picture of your character in your mind.

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Task 3—World Building

After you have written down the specifics try and build a world around your character. Start out by writing:

Characteristics: What is your character like? They could be shy, angry, happy or scared.

Background: Where does your character come from?

What is its story? What is their motivation in life (quest, journey or calling)?

Associates: Does your character have any friends or enemies? Who are the other characters in your story?

Tips: Feel free to go crazy with this. If you are a budding fantasy writer then flex your creative muscles and get specific. The more information you can create the more real your character becomes. The clearer your character becomes the easier it is to draw your character.

Character Design Workshop

Task 4—Drawing in Four Stages

At this stage you should have quite a good understanding of who your character is.

You have established their back story and have started to write down some basic physical characteristics.

Let's consider what your character might look like. To do this we are going to start by making five very simple drawings of your character in a full body front on position, facing the audience.

Tips: Be kind to yourself. Most people will not get it right the first time or maybe even ten times, but remember practice makes perfect!

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Drawing one:

Draw your character using shapes only. If your character is tall you might use a long rectangle for the body.

You should start every drawing using simple shapes.



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Drawing two:

Draw your character again but with only three colours. If you don't know where to start why not use the primary colours which are red, blue and yellow.



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Drawing three:

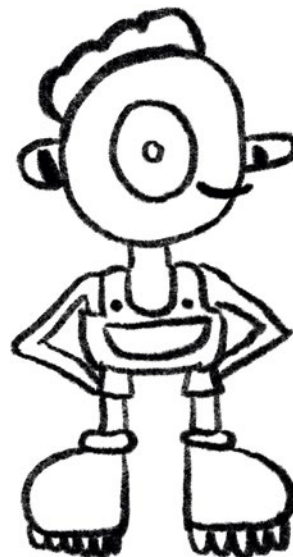
Draw your character with volume. For example, try and imagine that a light is shining at your character from one side. This will mean that one side of the body will be lighter than the other. Doing this will give the effect that your character has volume.



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Drawing four:

Draw the outline of your character but with smoother lines instead of basic shapes. For example: if you have used a triangle for the hand try smoothing the lines so there are no sharp corners.



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Drawing five:

Draw your character using colours, volume and smooth lines.



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Task 5

When you are happy with your character try and draw it out in the following positions

Left Profile

Front on

Right Profile

Above

Behind



L. PROFILE



R. PROFILE



ABOVE



BEHIND

Character Design Workshop

Task 6

Your character might have objects that it carries with it on journeys. These are called assets. Try and draw your character with assets.

Tip: Try and play with scale. For example if your character is big and carries a hammer try and make the hammer either really big or really small.



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Task 7

By this stage you will have created a complete character with a back story and a strong visual style. If you wish to continue to create characters why not think about creating a very simple comic.

For help with creating a comic why not try the Best Stay at Home project available from Rave Outreach.

Character Design Workshop



Ravensbourne Outreach tutors and students have produced a new series of online projects and courses to help you stay creative at home

If you'd like to find out more please visit our website makeit.ravensbourne.ac.uk or email us at outreach@rave.ac.uk

Instagram: [@raveoutreach](https://www.instagram.com/raveoutreach)

Twitter: [@ravensbourneWP](https://twitter.com/ravensbourneWP)

#letsmakeitcreative

