

Archetypes in Modern Literature

- Read the following descriptions of twelve common character archetypes and examples from classic literature.
- Then, give an example of each character archetype from modern literature, and explain how that character fits the archetype. **Sample answers**

Archetype	Examples	Description
The Hero	Bilbo Baggins (<i>The Hobbit</i>) Jo March (<i>Little Women</i>)	the main character who goes on a journey—literal or figurative—that requires them to use knowledge and skills to overcome obstacles and solve the story's biggest problem
	Modern Example: Percy Jackson (<i>Percy Jackson series</i>)	Explanation: Percy starts out as a normal, shy kid, but he eventually goes on an epic quest to save his mother and the world. Percy faces various monsters with courage and perseverance.
The Trickster	Loki (Norse mythology) Cheshire Cat (<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>)	a clever, funny, unpredictable, and sometimes mean character who loves playing pranks on others; often a master of escape or a shapeshifter
	Modern Example: Gen (<i>The Queen's Thief series</i>)	Explanation: Gen is a clever and arrogant thief who brags about being able to steal anything, which is why the magus selects him to steal Hamiathes's Gift. Throughout the first book, Gen uses wit and sarcasm to hide his true identity and purpose.
The Caregiver	Charlotte (<i>Charlotte's Web</i>) Samwise Gamgee (<i>The Lord of the Rings series</i>)	fulfilled by taking care of others; compassionate, helpful, and generous; dedicated to doing more for others than themselves
	Modern Example: Hagrid (<i>Harry Potter series</i>)	Explanation: Hagrid is a kind and caring friend to Harry, Ron, and Hermione throughout the books. He especially loves magical creatures and animals of all kinds, caring for them even when they are widely viewed as dangerous monsters.
The Innocent	Snow White (<i>Grimms' Fairy Tales</i>) Tiny Tim (<i>A Christmas Carol</i>)	wants to bring happiness to all and believes in the good of everyone; even when in danger or suffering at the hands of their enemies, the Innocent is not capable of wishing harm on others
	Modern Example: Rue (<i>The Hunger Games</i>)	Explanation: Rue is one of the youngest tributes in the Hunger Games and is pure and kind. Rue chooses to stay alive by hiding in the trees, rather than fighting the other tributes.

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The Sidekick	Dr. Watson (<i>Sherlock Holmes</i> stories) Tinkerbell (<i>Peter Pan</i>)	a follower who is absolutely loyal to their leader, whether it is the story's hero or villain; though not known for bravery, when it comes to protecting their leader, they will do what it takes
	Modern Example: Grover (<i>Percy Jackson</i> series)	Explanation: Grover is Percy's best friend and protector. He was with Percy before Percy knew he was a demigod. Grover even goes with Percy on his quest to the Underworld, protecting him and helping him overcome obstacles on their journey.
The Villain	Miss Trunchbull (<i>Matilda</i>) Smaug (<i>The Hobbit</i>)	besides doing as much evil as possible, the Villain's sole purpose in a story is to defeat the hero; usually intimidating and powerful, but at their core, they are often insecure and weak
	Modern Example: The Warden (<i>Holes</i>)	Explanation: The Warden forces Stanley Yelnats and the other boys at Camp Green Lake to dig holes in the blazing heat. She says it will help them build character, but in truth, she is using them to help her find buried treasure.
The Lover	Westley (<i>The Princess Bride</i>) Romeo and Juliet (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>)	can only be truly complete when they are with their one true love or caring deeply for someone; wears their heart on their sleeve
	Modern Example: Augustus "Gus" Waters (<i>The Fault in Our Stars</i>)	Explanation: Even though Gus is dying of cancer, he flirts with and eventually confesses his love for another cancer patient, Hazel Grace. He may not have long to live, but before he dies, he wants to have a meaningful connection.
The Creator	Willy Wonka (<i>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</i>) Tony Stark (<i>Iron Man</i> comics)	believes that anything that can be imagined can be created; tries to make dreams into reality; resourceful and ingenious; always questioning and thinking up new things to make
	Modern Example: Leslie Burke (<i>Bridge to Terabithia</i>)	Explanation: Leslie is imaginative, creative, and unique. A voracious reader with a keen sense of intellectual curiosity, Leslie is the one who comes up with the idea of Terabithia.

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The Rebel	Mulan (<i>The Ballad of Mulan</i>) Tom Sawyer (<i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i>)	an outsider or misfit who aims to better the world, though their means may be questionable; independent and radical; may shock others in order to shake them out of a false sense of security
	Modern Example: Tris Prior (<i>Divergent series</i>)	Explanation: Tris is Divergent, meaning she is different from most people in her society. But she refuses to accept the corrupt leadership and fights for a better world for all of the factions.
The Ruler	Queen of Hearts (<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i>) King Arthur (Arthurian legends)	entirely responsible for their world and those in it; their power often grows out of control and leads to corruption in themselves or in another character who wants to steal the power
	Modern Example: President Snow (<i>The Hunger Games series</i>)	Explanation: President Snow holds absolute power over the Districts in Panem, and uses the annual Hunger Games to keep the people under control. He fears Katniss's ability to overthrow his power and control.
The Magician	Merlin (Arthurian legends) Sherlock Holmes (<i>Sherlock Holmes stories</i>)	possesses strong magical powers or intellectual abilities and a great knowledge of history and strategy; tends to suffer from excessive pride and can lose their temper when they don't get what they want
	Modern Example: Severus Snape (<i>Harry Potter series</i>)	Explanation: Professor Snape is an extremely adept wizard with profound skills in potions. He is also arrogant and despises Harry because Harry's father, James, married the woman Snape loved, Lily.
The Sage	Glinda the Good Witch (<i>The Wonderful Wizard of Oz</i>) Gandalf (<i>The Lord of the Rings series</i>)	someone known for their wisdom, experience, and insight who often shows kindness and compassion for others; usually helps guide the Hero on their journey
	Modern Example: The Receiver of Memory (<i>The Giver</i>)	Explanation: The Receiver (also called The Giver) holds all of the memories of past generations for the community, which gives him wisdom and knowledge that others don't have. He shares the memories and his wisdom with Jonas in a kind and compassionate way.