

Story Explorer Profile Overview Sheet | Handout

Stories we love—whether in books, movies, or other media—help us connect with one another and understand the human experience. When we look closely at a story, we can see how the storyteller’s choices shape our feelings about characters, influence how we relate to the plot, and affect what we take away from it.

One way to do this is by examining the story from different angles, such as the author’s purpose, the characters’ motivations, or the cultural setting. These angles give us a clearer picture of the story’s complexity. We can use profiles, or perspectives, to view the story from different angles. Examples of four types of profiles are described below. You can use them to explore any story in multiple ways.

The Phoenix

- The phoenix is a mythical creature that is reborn from its own ashes. This lens symbolizes setbacks and recovery.
 - Where do we see setbacks and recovery in the story?
 - How do characters bounce back from adversity?

The Mirror Holder

- A mirror reflects our image, allowing us to see ourselves. This lens represents personal reflection and connection to our own experiences.
 - How does the story reflect your life, even in small ways?
 - How do characters reveal who they are through their actions, and how do we do the same?

The Virtue Seeker

- A virtue is a moral quality. When we consider the moral of the story, we search for the deeper lesson or meaning beneath the plot.
 - What is the deeper meaning of the story?
 - How do character actions demonstrate civic virtue?
 - What values guide the choices characters make, and why are they important?

The Media Decoder

- Every story is shaped by the person who tells it. Storytellers make choices about what to include, change, or leave out, especially in media like films.
 - How does the story influence our emotions?
 - How do storytelling choices shape how we perceive characters and their decisions?