

Task for *Evil Genius*

Character development chart

This activity will help you to apply what you have just learnt about how authors develop their characters and how you might apply this knowledge to the development of your own characters in your creative writing.

Read through the extract below and then complete the chart on the following page. You will be looking for ways you can identify: the protagonist and focaliser, the **supporting characters**, elements of **characterisation** and **generic qualities** used by the author to develop her characters.

In the **Identify/Analyse** column record your conclusions and in the **Evaluate** column support your response with textual references.

...Thaddeus, as a qualified psychologist specialising in troubled teenagers, was asked to review their case.

He found them fascinating, simply because they seemed to have mysterious powers of communication.

'It's the sort of instinct that can't be coincidental,' Thaddeus has explained to Cadel. 'I ran some tests. There was an extra level of EEG slow waves, and several other features, not all of them neurological. Your father and I thought that the twins might respond well to training.'

Cadel had expected a pair of mystic-looking figures wearing Celtic symbols and hippy clothes. He had expected gypsy earrings and haunted eyes and whispering voices. He hadn't expected a couple of blonde bombshells in tank-tops.

'I'm studying computers,' he said. 'Computers and Embezzlement.'

'Ooooooh,' Jem crooned. 'I knew he was clever. We're doing – what are we doing, Ni?'

'Channelling. A lot of channelling. Mindpower stuff.'

'You mean you're pyrogenic?' the bully exclaimed, and his face turned an even deeper shade of red as the two girls turned their heads, in perfect unison, to look at him.

'Say what?' Jem drawled.

'I'm pyrogenic. I do channelling too. I'm in your channelling class.' The bully adopted a slight swagger. 'You can call me the Bludgeon.'

The twins glanced at each other, and burst into a fit of giggles.

'The *Bludger*?' Jem squeaked.

'The *Bludgeon*, not the Bludger. A force to be reckoned with.' The bully sounded cross. 'It's time to leave your old name behind. Your old self. This is a *metamorphosis*.'

'You mean we afta change our names?' A worried voice suddenly piped up. It came from the transmission filter of a young man in a full-length, air-tight suit attached to a tangle of breathing apparatus – a suit like those commonly worn by technicians

dealing with hazardous materials. 'I didn't change me name,' he fretted, his voice muffled and distorted by the clear plastic mask he wore. 'Were we supposed to?'

'No we weren't,' replied the pale, curly-haired young man. My name is Abraham Coggins and it's *staying* Abraham Coggins. At least until I have a police record.'

'Are you pyrogenic?' the Bludgeon inquired.

'No, I'm a microbiology student.'

'Then butt out.'

Cadel looked at Abraham Coggins with interest. According to Thaddeus, Abraham was a graduate of medicine who was paying money to attend The Axis Institute because he was obsessed with the idea of creating a race of vampires. He had a theory about how it might be done and Terry had agreed to work with him.

'But – but do we really *want* vampires?' Cadel had stammered on being informed of this fact, whereupon Thaddeus had placed a comforting hand on his shoulder.

'We're not going to get vampires,' he'd said. 'It's all a mad dream. But the extra money will be useful. Most of our students are on scholarships – Dr Darkkon pretty much pays their way. It's good to have a few fee-paying students to ease the load.'

So that's Abraham Coggins, Cadel thought. And if this bully here is pyrogenic, he must be Clive Slaughter.

Evil Genius (pp. 107–109)

Characteristic	Identify / Analyse	Evaluate
Who is the protagonist and focaliser in this extract?		
What generic qualities have been used by the author?		
What are the roles of the supporting characters in this extract?		
What elements of characterisation have been used by the author?		