REVERSE BACKSTORY TOOL

Writing authentic characters means understanding how a person’s past affects their present. Filling in this Reverse Backstory chart for your own characters will help you see the big picture: what they want and need, what motivates them, and what their backstory might be. Planning out their wound and the lie they tell themselves will also help you choose what traits might help them succeed and which will get in the way.

Character’s Name: ______________________

The Negative Trait Thesaurus: A Writer’s Guide to Character Expression contains a sample breakdown of a character’s backstory as well as more information on motivation, needs, fears, wounds, lies and the role these elements play within character arc.
WHAT IS A WRITERS HELPING WRITERS® DESCRIPTIVE THESAURUS?

Have you ever had a critique partner or editor suggest you need to show, not tell? Angela Ackerman and Becca Puglisi have, which is why the two set out to learn as much as possible about showing and telling, and how to master both. To help others, they created the Writers Helping Writers Thesaurus series, where they dive deep into an area of description and provide comprehensive lists of specific details that will help writers bring that element alive on the page.

These bestselling guides have sold over half a million copies, are available in many different languages, and are used by writers and editors all over the world. Maybe they can help you, too.

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- A hyper-intelligent Character Builder that makes it easy to explore a character’s deeper layers, helping you build a strong, fascinating story cast in half the time

- A Character Arc Blueprint that identifies key pieces of character information that will shape your story, giving you a map to work from as you write

- Story Map, Scene Map, & Timeline tools to demystify story structure and make novel planning a snap

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