Dialogue and Actions to Show Character Traits

Character traits are words that help us understand and describe a character's personality. Usually, character traits are **obvious** by the words characters say (dialogue) or things they do (actions).

Dialogue is when characters in a story talk to each other. Dialogue is placed between quotation marks. For example: **"Little Robin Hood, don't talk to strangers along the way. Be careful!"** said her mother.

Actions can be seen by the verbs in the sentences to **show what the character does**. For example: Maria **ran** towards the man who had been hit by the car and **helped** him. She **called** an ambulance and **stayed** with him until it came.

Read the text below and determine whether it shows a character's dialogue or actions. Then, choose a character trait from the word bank.

Character's Trait Word Bank

Friendly	Funny	Shy	Persistant
Honest	Generous	Rude	Malicious

Underline the words that help you find the character traits.

Text evidence	Dialogue or action?	Character trait
Marnie said to her Mom: "I want to give my pocket money to the flood victims. I know they need it more than I do."		Marnie:
Sean was getting frustrated with the science project. Every time he thought he had solved the problem, another issue came up. He never gave up until he found the solution.		Sean:
Teo called out to Max: "Hey buddy! You free? I'm bored. Let's go to the hardware store and change the prices on different items."		Teo:
On Tuesday, Sam noticed that there was a new student in class. He walked up to her at recess and invited to play soccer with him. Yesterday, Sam was at the dentist office, when he saw a boy playing in the waiting room. Soon, they were playing cards together.		Sam:

Watch this video about how to describe a character from a story.

Choose and read a short novel*. Find dialogues and actions involving the main character and fill in a table like the one below.

While you read, note any changes you find from beginning to end such as below:

- his speech;
- the way he acts;
- the way he feels;
- the way he thinks.

* If you have read a short novel recently, you can use it for the exercise.

Text evidence	Dialogue or action?	Character trait

If you were a character, how would you describe yourself? Find some actions to prove it.

My actions	Character trait

Could you be the main character's best friend? Explain why or why not.