

NERO Character/Personality Development Ideas!*

To start, please be sure to read the Do's and Don'ts of Character Creation in the NERO Rulebook before spending a great deal of time on your character's background. These pages are designed to add to your thinking on matters of character development. Do not feel obligated to know all of these things about your character right off the bat - some of the fun is letting the answers to such things come out and develop as you learn more about your character during in game play.

Some common background no-no's, likely to get your history ignored, refused, or downright laughed at:

- Making yourself the kid/cousin/neighbor of someone famous (noble, known hero/villain)
- Giving yourself special powers - what you can get with build skills is what you should develop your character around
- Giving yourself heirloom magic items - you need to earn these in game!
- Failing to leave open ends in the history and not providing enough detail to invent tie-outs. If you leave it open enough, there's material for Plot to expand upon and give you exciting personalized plot.
- Forgetting your own character history, especially the relevant names. Plot hates to spend time writing something up just for you, only to have you ignore it because you don't know what it is!

Some exceptionally good "do's" of development:

- Clearly denote all relevant characters. Any who are other PCs, make note of who's playing them OOG.
- Any NPC roles that have not yet been in game should be noted as such. Periodic updates of the history with additions that clarify these things are fantastic, and help Plot avoid oopsies.
- Clearly denote when you last saw any relevant characters in your history, and whether you are aware of their current whereabouts. Plot hates to write a character in that they didn't realize you conceptualized as permanently dead!
- Add a pronunciation charts for unusual names
- Create a "local level" bad guy/villain for you and those you travel with. Remember, all good big bad guys started as a local bully somewhere. The bad guy doesn't have to be "DOOMUS, the BRINGER OF ALL DOOM!" S/he can be someone who decimated a small village with some trolls s/he enslaved. That's pretty bad-guy for a small community, and makes for a good lead-in for future plotlines.
- Include some long term (open ended) goals, passions, fears, and hates for your character. If you've got no conflict in your background, how can Plot further it in your future?

* We wish to thank our friends at NERO Massachusetts for this article.

- For a brand new character, consider a history that's somewhere between 1-5 pages as a goal (not a mandatory one - just remember that the longer and more detailed it is, the less likely Plot can live up to your coolness expectations). For one who's had active game play, this may be longer, as you add relevant incidents that helped shape your thinking.

Here are some good questions to help you think about a richer character and character history for your NERO™ Character (with thanks to Rich Taylor for source material):

General Questions

- What about you is heroic? Good? Evil?
- What about you is social?
- Why did you come to the surface in the first place? Why do you choose to remain?
- Conceptualize an adventure/plot that your character would actively undertake (as opposed to just tagging along)?

Personal Questions

- What is your real, birth name? What name do you use (may be the same)?
- Do you have a nickname? What is it, and where did you get it?
- What do you look like?
- How do you dress most of the time?
- How do you "dress up?"
- How do you "dress down?"
- Do you wear any jewelry or other decor?
- In your opinion, what is your best feature?
- What's your birth date (in game year)?
- Where do you live? Describe it: Is it messy, neat, avant-garde, sparse, etc.?
- What is your most prized possession? Why do you value it so much?
- What one word best describes you?

Familial Questions

- What is/was your family like?
- Who is/was your Mother, and what is/was she like?
- Who is/was your Father, and what is/was he like?
- What is/was your parent's marriage like?
- What are your sibling's names? What are they like?
- What's the worst thing one of your siblings ever did to you? What's the worst thing you've done to one of your siblings?
- When's the last time you saw each member of your family? Where are they now, if you know?

Childhood Questions

- What is your first memory?
- What was your favorite toy?

- What was your favorite game?
- Any non-family member adults stick out in your mind? Who were they, and how did you know them? Why do they stick out?
- Who was your best friend when you were growing up?
- What is your fondest childhood memory?
- What is your worst childhood memory?

Adolescent Questions

- It is common for one's view of authority to develop in their adolescent years. What is your view of authority, and what event most affected it?
- What is your education level? Where did you attend school, if at all?
- What is your favorite memory from adolescence?
- What is your worst memory from adolescence?

Occupational Questions

- What do you do? Mage, Templar, Fighter, Rogue?
- Why did you choose to learn your skills?
- What is something you had to learn that you hated?
- What do you enjoy the most about what you do?
- Do you tend to save or spend your money? Why?

Questions for Mages

- What school of Magic do you practice? Why?
- Do you plan to ever learn another school of Magic, as well? Why or Why not?
- Do you plan on learning Formal Magic? Why or Why not?
- What is your opinion of Mages fighting with weapons?
- What is your opinion of Mages fighting with Alchemy?

Questions for Fighters

- What is your favorite weapon form? Why?
- Can you read and write? Why or why not?
- Do you plan on learning Magic and/or Alchemy?

Questions for Rogues

- Are you a “Battle Rogue,” a “Technician,” or a “Thief?”
- How do you define the difference between them?

Likes & Dislikes Questions

- What hobbies do you have?
- Who is your closest friend? Describe them and how you relate to them.
- Who is your worst enemy? Describe them and why you don't get along.
- What annoys you more than anything else?
- What would be the perfect gift for you?
- What's the most beautiful thing you've ever seen?
- What time of day is your favorite?
- What kind of weather is your favorite?
- What is your favorite food? What is your least favorite food?

- What is your favorite drink?
- What's your favorite animal? Why?
- What do you find most relaxing? (Not as in stress relief, but as something that actually calms you down.)
- What habit that others have annoys you most?
- What kinds of things embarrass you? Why?
- What don't you like about yourself?

Intimacy Questions

- Do you ever want to get married and have children? When do you see this happening?
- Will you be permitted to marry where you choose, or will your marriage be a political alliance? Who will choose your marriage partner?
- What was your most recent relationship like? Who was it with? (Does not need to be sexual, merely romantic.)
- What's the worst thing you've done to someone you loved?

Morality Questions

- What one act in your past are you most ashamed of? What one act in your past are you most proud of?
- What do you feel most strongly about?
- What do you pretend to feel strongly about, just to impress people?
- What trait do you find most admirable, and how often do you find it?
- Do you have any feelings in general that you are disturbed by? What are they? Why do they disturb you?
- What's the worst thing you could actually do to someone you hated?
- Are you a better leader or follower? Why do you think that?
- What is your responsibility to your Family, if any?
- What is your opinion of Necromancy? Necromancers?

Miscellaneous Questions

- Do you have a mentor? Who are they? How did you become their student?
- What do you think of the other races on Tyrra? Why for each? (If you haven't met something, do you think it exists, and if it does, is that bad or good?)
- What is the thing that has frightened you most? Do you think there is anything out there that's scarier than that? What do you think that would be?
- Has anyone or anything you've ever cared about died? How did you feel about it? What happened?
- What was the worst injury you've ever received? How did it happen?
- What is your current long term goal?
- What is your current short term goal?
- Do you have any bad habits? If so, what are they, and do you plan to get rid of them?
- How private of a person are you? Why?
- What do you do when you are bored?
- What is the most frightening potential handicap or disfigurement you can conceive of? What makes it so frightening?