

Materials Needed:

- Access to Heartstopper graphic novels (physical copies or digital versions)
- Notebook or paper
- Pen or pencil

Lesson: Writing with Heart - Character & Dialogue

Hi there! Ready to dive into some writing fun inspired by one of your favorites, Heartstopper? Today, we're going to look at what makes the characters like Nick and Charlie feel so real and how Alice Oseman uses their conversations to tell us so much about them and their relationship.

Part 1: Exploring Character Through Dialogue

Think about Nick and Charlie. How do we know what they're feeling? Often, it's not just what they say, but *how* they say it, and what they do while they're talking (or not talking!). Alice Oseman is fantastic at 'showing, not telling'.

Activity 1: Scene Study

1. Choose one of your favorite short scenes from any Heartstopper volume where two characters are talking.
2. Read the dialogue carefully.
3. Now, pay close attention to the artwork (even though we're focusing on writing, the art shows actions!). What are the characters doing? What are their facial expressions?
4. In your notebook, write down:
 - What the dialogue tells you about each character's personality in that moment.
 - What the dialogue tells you about their relationship.
 - How their actions or expressions add meaning to their words (or show feelings they **aren't** saying).

Example thought: Remember when Nick is texting Charlie early on? His careful wording and maybe slight hesitation show he's thinking a lot about how he comes across and might be nervous.

Part 2: Writing Your Own Heartstopper-Inspired Scene

Now it's your turn! We're going to write a short scene (about a page) focusing on dialogue and character actions. You can either:

- Write a scene with Nick and Charlie (maybe a 'missing moment' between scenes we see in the books).
- Create your **own** pair of characters inspired by the themes and style of Heartstopper.

Your Goal:

1. **Develop Character:** Use the dialogue and actions to show the characters' personalities and feelings. Are they shy, outgoing, nervous, happy, confused?
2. **Realistic Dialogue:** Make it sound like real teenagers talking. Think about pauses, interruptions, slang (if appropriate), and how different people speak differently.
3. **Show, Don't Tell:** Instead of writing "He was nervous," write something like, "He fiddled with the

strap of his backpack, avoiding eye contact."

4. **Emotional Connection:** Try to show the emotional heart of the scene, just like in Heartstopper. What's the underlying feeling or connection between the characters?

Get Writing! Take your time and have fun with it. Think about a simple situation: maybe they're meeting up after school, studying together, texting, or just hanging out.

Part 3: Reflection

Read over the scene you wrote. What do you think works well? Is the dialogue realistic? Do the actions help show the characters' feelings? What was challenging about writing this scene? Jot down a few thoughts in your notebook.

Great job today! Exploring characters like Nick and Charlie help us become better writers and understand people " both fictional and real " a little bit more.