Creating a Character
with author Robin Yardi

My new book, *The Midnight War of Mateo Martinez*, is filled with cool kid characters… just like you. When I create a character I start with something real, mix it with something made up, and add something awesome. It’s like a recipe, or a math problem. I can make my characters funny, or weird, or cool, and so can you! Let’s read these descriptions and then you can work on creating an awesome character too...

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**Name:** Mateo Martinez  
**Born:** in San Diego, California  
**Age:** 9

**Likes:** Mateo likes building stuff. He once made a catapult using only bungee cords, duct tape, and a garden hose. It worked pretty great, but he got into a little trouble. Okay, a lot of trouble. On days he’s not in trouble his mom makes him chocolate chip pancakes for breakfast and tamales for dinner. He loves playing with, I mean using, his dad’s tools.

**Wants:** He wishes he could be a knight, like with a sword and armor and a shining steed. It would be cool to protect stuff, and to have honor like his dad.

**Hates:** Mateo hates being wrong. Also, almost everyone he knows speaks Spanish, but he doesn’t. That kinda feels like being wrong too.

**Random Facts:** He used to be best friends with Johnny Ramirez, but that was before Johnny got a new BMX. Anyway, that’s a long story. You’ll have to read the book.

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**Name:** Mila Martinez  
**Born:** in Santa Barbara, California  
**Age:** 5

**Likes:** Mila likes magic tricks, polka dots, her black cowgirl boots, and figuring stuff out. She likes it when Mateo holds her hand when they cross the street on the way to school and pretends it doesn’t bug her that he won’t do it once they get there. Her favorite breakfast is cinnamon buns, or she thinks it will be if she ever gets to try them.

**Wants:** Mila wants to learn to read. Once she figures out how her brother Mateo won’t be able to keep secrets from her.

**Hates:** Mila hates being left behind.

**Random Facts:** Even though she’s five, she still sleeps in footie jammies. She doesn’t really like dolls, but she has a cool doll stroller that she pretends is a grocery cart, a rocket ship, and Santa’s sled.
Name: Johnny Ramirez
Born: in Puebla, Mexico   Age: 9
Likes: Johnny likes stuff that glows in the dark: glow in the dark pajamas with bones, fireworks, flashlights, and that awesome algae that glows in the ocean. He can do cool tricks on his new BMX bike and he loves his new baby sister Noemi. But his little brother, Emiliano, dude, he bugs.
Wants: Johnny wants some more of that spicy candy that Danny Vega brought back from Mexico after Christmas vacation. He only got ONE lick.
Hates: He is seriously scared of lizards. He picked one up once on a dare and it bit him.
Random Facts: He kinda wishes he and Mateo were still best friends.

1. Now it’s YOUR turn! What is your character like?

Name: __________________________

Born: ____________________________ Age: __________________________

Likes: ___________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Wants: __________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Random Facts: __________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. Oh, and what does your character look like? Use a separate piece of paper and draw a detailed picture showing as much about your character as you can! Drawing what their room looks like is a fun way to find out more about them...