



Julia Amante Resources

Worksheet: Develop Distinct Voices for Your Characters

Companion to “The #1 Dialogue Mistake Killing Your Novel”

Step 1: Character Voice Snapshot

Pick 3 main characters and answer the following for each one.

Question	Character 1	Character 2	Character 3
Name			
Age			
Occupation			
Background/Culture			
Primary emotion when speaking (e.g., anxious, sarcastic, commanding)			
Sentence length (short, long, varied?)			
Vocabulary level (simple, slangy, formal, poetic?)			
Filler words or speech habits (e.g., “you know,” “honestly,” “right?”)			
Tone (warm, cynical, rushed, dry?)			



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Step 2: Voice in Action

A. Write the same line of dialogue in three different voices.

Prompt: "I don't have time for this."

- Character 1:

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- Character 2:

-

- Character 3:

-

B. Expand a short scene

Write a 3–5 line exchange between two characters. Focus on making the voices so distinct that you wouldn't need tags.

- Character A:

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- Character B:

-

- Character A:

-

- Character B:

-



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Step 3: Dialogue Self-Check

Answer Yes or No:

- Can I tell who is speaking without reading the dialogue tags?
- Does each voice reflect background, emotion, and personality?
- Are speech patterns consistent throughout the scene?
- Is one character dominating unnecessarily?
- Would a reader be able to identify this character from a random snippet of their dialogue?

Next Steps:

Do a “Voice Edit Pass” on one chapter of your manuscript. Highlight lines of dialogue in different colors based on which character is speaking. See if patterns emerge—or if voices are too similar. Rewrite as needed.