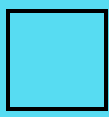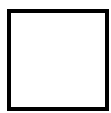# Character Development Checklist
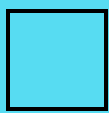
AKA HOW TO CREATE AWESOME CHARACTERS

☐ KNOW THE BASICS

Know your character's full name, age, sex/gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, occupation, social class, education, allergies, and physical description (including height, weight, hair/eye color, hair type/usual hairstyle, body build, skin type/complexion, glasses/contacts, marks or scars, preferred clothing, right handed or left handed)
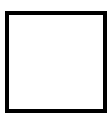
☐ KNOW THEIR FLAWS, HABITS, AND TEMPERAMENT

Is your character constantly biting their nails? Do they get really angry too easily? Are they convinced that they are always right? Are they a slob, obsessively clean, or somewhere in-between? Do they hate giving out personal details? Basically, know their quirks.
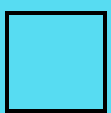
☐ KNOW THEIR RELATIONSHIPS

You should know their parents and how they feel about their parents. While you might not need a full romantic history, you should know the basics or important people. You should know who their best friend is, who they hate the most, and if they have a pet.

☐ KNOW THEIR PAST

Where did they used to live? Where did they go to school? What was their childhood like and how do they feel about it? You don't necessarily need to know every detail, but you should definitely know the things that affected them.

☐ PUT YOUR CHARACTER IN EVERYDAY AND UNUSUAL SITUATIONS TO FIGURE OUT HOW THEY WOULD REACT

Know what your character would do in any given situation. Know what makes them laugh and makes them scared or angry. What would they do if the convenience store they were in was being robbed? What would happen if someone they loved died? What would they do if they suddenly found out they were having a kid? What about if they were accused of lying about something important? What would happen if they found out their significant other was cheating on them? You should know in your gut what any character would do in any given situation. Putting your character in various situations helps you to answer those questions.

FINAL TIP:

How much you develop your characters usually depends on how big of a role they play in your story. You can just know basic details about minor players or cameos, but you should know as much as possible about your main characters. Think about how much J.K. Rowling knows about her characters. You want to know the most obscure details, even if those details don't make it into your work (most of them won't/shouldn't). The more you know, the more believable your character is.