



FTHR Online Workshop – December 2006

Writing By The Signs: Creating Believable Characters With Astrology

Presenter: Ann Jones-Rodriguez

Course Description:

Do your main characters fall flat and fail or engage your reader? Are your characters 2-dimensional? Does your contest feedback suggest you need more substance for that well-rounded quality to endear your reader to your Hero and Heroine? Knowing and understanding the different traits of the 12 Astrological signs and how they do/don't work together can help give you insight into your characters to write them as fully fleshed-out individuals. In this class, you will learn the basics of each Astrological sign, their likes and dislikes, what makes them "tick," how they interact with other signs and the influences of the planets, sun and moon. Learn to create conflict through better believable motivations, and discover hidden facts about your characters you may not know in this 1 week workshop.

(NOTE: This is a one week workshop taught in 4 lessons and includes several worksheets.)

About the Instructor:

Growing up around ghosts and having written stories since her teens, native Texan and RWA contest winner Ann Jones-Rodriguez is used to things that go "bump" 24/7. She has studied, taught and lectured about Parapsychology for over 25 years, utilizing Astrology and especially Astrological Tarot as a prevalent tool in plotting her stories. She has written many parapsychology articles, once had an Astrology column, and has had artwork and short stories published. With a passion for Science Fiction, anything paranormal, Space Opera, and writing romance, Ann blends these elements into her stories and adds a twist of action and suspense. Ann's personal motto is, "Never give up, never surrender!" and she divides her time writing FF&P and vampire romance stories.

For more information, please visit Ann's website at:

www.AnnJonesRodriguez.com, or www.AnnJR.com.

INTRODUCTION

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Writing By The Signs: Creating Believable Characters with Astrology

by Ann Jones-Rodriguez, © 2005, 2006

Hi everyone, and welcome to my workshop, "Writing by the Signs: Creating Believable Characters with Astrology." I'm Ann Jones-Rodriguez, your instructor. Jean has already posted my background information, but I can always elaborate if you have questions, so just let me know. :-)

This week will be a basic introduction to the 12 Astrological signs and how their traits can be applied to your characters to give them added depth and dimension. You will also learn how to blend the influences and traits of two or more signs for character interaction and conflict to move your plot.

And so as not to bog you down with too much information at once during this busy holiday week, here's how our schedule will run:

Mon - Lesson 1, Info Sheet 1

Tues - Lesson 2, Info Sheet 2

Wed - Lesson 3, Info Sheet 3

Fri - Lesson 4, Info Sheet 4

Sat & Sun - Q & A

This is also an interactive class, so please email in with questions and/or comments about the lessons and worksheets I will be posting for you this week. If you're not comfortable with posting to this list or have questions after this workshop is completed, you may email me privately at "captmann@yahoo.com" (<-no spaces).

Okay, please go ahead and introduce yourselves, tell what you write, how long you've written, your background and why you're taking this class, or

just say "hi!" if you want to. I'll post the first lesson for Monday later this evening.

Thanks again for taking this class, and I hope you enjoy it!

Lesson 1 - WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

As writers we have abundant tools to help us work better, create better plots and more external conflict to move our stories forward. A lot has also been expounded upon regarding "characterization" and whether or not our characters have good dimension and believable interaction in our stories.

So, what exactly is this characterization business? Simply put, characterization are the "distinctive features, qualities and characteristics of an individual" that makes them unique. You've heard the terms "well-rounded," "multi-faceted" and "deep." You've also probably heard "shallow," "two-dimensional," and flat."

This is the area we will deal with today. I know it may seem like a lot, but broken down and put in basic terms, your characters will have realistic reactions and motivations to enhance your stories and engage your readers.

First off, lets find out what kind of character you have. Do you know what their favorite color is? What is their pet peeve, and why? Do they have particular part of their body they don't like or are self-conscious about? Are they a morning or night person? What is their favorite food, spice or herbal scent?

All these things give added depth to a character, because they will act and react to any given situation or stimulus with regard to their feelings (positive or negative) about these seemingly mundane things.

Okay, now you're probably scratching your head and wondering what the heck this stuff has to do with Astrology?

Easy: different signs are pre-disposed to like or dislike certain things due to their innate attributes.

Makes more sense now. Here's an example: An Aries male character (a leader type) will be more likely to take charge in a crisis than a Libra male (balance type). Now, this situation can definitely be tempered by other signs and aspects to the main birth sign (Aries) and how they fall in a natal (birth) chart. However, for the purpose of this class we are only going to focus of

the basic qualities and properties of the signs in relation to a character. Don't worry that the Moon may positively aspect a certain position or that there's a Sagittarius rising or a Gemini Moon sign.

Forget that stuff. Concentrating on only the basics will give enough added depth and substance to your character for a well-rounded quality to endear your reader to them.

Assignment 1

Choose ONE character to work with in your WIP (Work In Progress). Keep this character in mind throughout this entire workshop. It can be your Hero, Heroine or Villain. Write down the few traits this character already has (3 to 4). Then refer to the "Astrology Signs Info Sheet" and figure out what sign they might be. Post your questions to this list, and I'll answer them.

Okay, let's throw away those negative tags assigned to your beloved character, get started and have fun! :-)

Lesson 2 - BENDING AND BLENDING

Now that you know the basic traits of the 12 Astrology signs, and have chosen character, let's get into actions, reactions, and interaction.

Say you have a Cancer heroine, a Sagittarius hero and a Pisces villain. From the information sheet on Astrology Signs, let's choose the first trait for each of these: Cancer (domestic), Sagittarius (truth-seeker) and Pisces (imaginative). The domestic Cancer heroine could be a home-body who loves entertaining and dinner parties. Her new boyfriend, the truth-seeking Sagittarius hero, may be cop and chafe at party small-talk and want to get to know people deeper than they may want. The hero and heroine's Pisces boss may be involved in a secret cover-up in the department.

See the built-in conflict? No? Okay, let's put them in a situation:

Claire (heroine) has a department Christmas party at her newly remodeled home. Paul (hero) enthusiastically socializes, but becomes impatient when Bruce (villain boss) accidentally drops a clue to a missing child whose case has recently been shelved for lack of evidence and leads. Claire is uncomfortable with the discussion because she lost her niece in a car crash and wanted the boy's case solved to give closure to his family. But she really likes Paul, and they are making progress with their new relationship, so she keeps her mouth shut for the moment before trying to change the subject.

Paul itches to find out what information Bruce is hiding, and Bruce becomes wishy-washy when asked bluntly what his involvement in the case is and why he is not pursuing it further.

We have built-in conflict ripe with actions and reactions (internal and external conflicts) to this potentially volatile scene. You can choose to keep it mild or have it proverbially blow up in everyone's faces. And this is only the beginning. We've taken one basic personality trait and mixed them together, then added a second trait for each of their reactions.

You can also add the influence of that sign's ruling Planet, an innate Quality attribute to each sign, plus modify it by what Element that sign is. A "Quality" describe a person's attitudes in life and their approach (Fixed, Cardinal, Mutable), and an "Element" describes our basic nature (Fire Earth, Air, Water). Let's look a little further to make them more of an individual. Again let's choose one trait and blend it in:

Claire - Cancer
Planet - Moon = emotion
Element - Water = compassion
Quality - Cardinal = clever

Paul - Sagittarius
Planet - Jupiter = honesty (for justice)
Element - Fire = courage
Quality - Mutable = resourceful

Bruce - Pisces
Planet - Neptune = intuition
Element - Water = intuition
Quality - Mutable = adaptable.

Here's what we have:

Claire has kindly opened her home to share the joy of the Christmas season (action). She is uncomfortable with Paul and Bruce's discussion (reaction). And she cleverly tries to change the subject and break the tension (interaction).

Paul enthusiastically helps because he like her (action). He becomes impatient when Bruce drops a clue, courageously challenging The Boss with blunt questions (reaction). But he takes Claire's lead and backs off for her sake, knowing his resourcefulness will turn up the reason why Bruce is hiding information (interaction).

Bruce's easy-going nature causes him to slip a verbal clue to his secret involvement in the missing boy's case (action). He knows Paul is determined to find the missing boy, so Bruce covers his verbal slip-up with an excuse (reaction). He also becomes a buddy and praises Paul for already doing everything he possibly could to find the child (interaction).

The different traits of the Signs, Elements and Qualities blend together and bend accordingly to make up individual and unique personalities. What one character likes may perturb another character. What motivates one might be boring to another. These traits together are what makes your characters "tick," add depth and have realistic reactions and motivations to enhance your stories and engage your readers.

Assignment 2

Working with your chosen character and their Sign, think about what Planetary influence, Element trait and Quality trait would be most appropriate. Remember to concentrate on only the basics given. How would they act, react and interact with other characters in your story?

Lesson 3 - THE COMBINATION CHARACTER COCKTAIL

You've defined your character by determining his/her Astrological Sign and blended additional trait of their Element and Quality to give you depth and dimension and realistic actions, reactions, and interaction in our stories. The final component to give your character polish to their distinctive personality is the consideration of the 12 Astrological Houses that make up life.

From the Self and how we feel, to our relationship with our parents, how others see us and our secrets and fears, everything is defined in one of the twelve Houses. When we look at our character in a situation, the innate factors of whatever area a particular House covers comes into play.

Briefly, here's what they are (check the Astrological Houses Info Sheet for more):

1st House - You (specifically), the "Self"

2nd House - Finances (yours)

3rd House - Communication, intellectual endeavors, short journeys

4th House - Your home, parents, family

5th House - Creative self expression, children, romance and love affairs

6th House - Health, job/work environment, domestic pets

7th House - One-to-one close relationships with others, marriage and business partners

8th House - Sexual activities, death and rebirth, the IRS

9th House - Religion, travel to distant lands, higher education

10th House - Your public life and standing in the community, career, higher education

11th House - Groups you're involved with, clubs and organizations, ideals, hopes, dreams

12th House - Unconscious, secret affairs, prisons or any place of confinement

In lesson 2, Claire held a Christmas party for her work colleagues, but used her mind to steer her persistent boyfriend, Paul, from causing too much trouble with their boss, Bruce. Here, we blended the character's Sign with the Element and Qualities assigned to them and bended the product to suit the situation in the scene. To add the last component of whatever "House" each character is dealing with, here's a simple way to find it.

Make your character's Sign the FIRST House and continue through the 12 Signs, starting over with Aries when you get to Pisces. My method of House placement is only for this character workshop and to help develop characterization, not how an actual Natal Astrology Chart is calculated. (Other means and information are required to do that.)

So, we know Claire is a Cancer, and this will be her 1st House:

1st House - Cancer

2nd House - Leo

3rd House - Virgo

4th House - Libra

5th House - Scorpio

6th House - Sagittarius

7th House - Capricorn

8th House - Aquarius

9th House - Pisces

10th House - Aries

11th House - Taurus

12th House - Gemini

Her House of "home" is number four, Libra, and the traits of Libra and it's ruling Planet (Venus) are attributed to it. So we now have a Cancer personality with a Libra attitude about her home. Let's break this down further. Claire's Cancer trait is that she loves her home (domestic). Her Libra Venus home is "beautiful," "balanced," "peaceful" and "harmonious." The confrontation is due to a "work" situation, so we must also look to her 10th House of "career," which has an Aries nature (charismatic/dynamic/charming).

This situation becomes even more believable when we factor in Paul's and Bruce's innate "career" House components:

Paul's 10th House = Virgo (dutiful, investigative)

Bruce's 10th House = Sagittarius (intellectual, knowledgeable)

With this, notice that Bruce's career House is Sagittarius, which is Paul's Astrological Sign. This means Bruce will be able to relate what he wants

easier, as same Signs (or Planets or Elements or Qualities) are for the most part compatible. Paul will have an innate tendency to want to believe Bruce because of this sameness also and will have a more difficult time pursuing his goal.

Now we have believable personalities and motivations for each character, Claire, Paul and Bruce, and have given them unique and distinctive features to create a compelling scene in the story. So if your scenes are slowing down due to a need to beef up your characterization, try adding another facet by utilizing one of the 12 Astrological Houses.

Here are a few extra of my 2-D Busting Tips if you need character depth:

- * Make sure you're not skipping any possibility: don't deprive your character of the facets of their Astrological Sign, Element, Qualities, and House s/he needs to flesh them out. You won't be able to endear the reader to your character is flat or shallow or you want more substance.
- * Don't get stressed if you draw a blank about what to do for a scene. Added traits add dimension to characters. Take a few minutes to figure out what your character's Astrological Sign is by the 3 or 4 trait you already know, and use the Sign as a guide to their actions, reactions, and interactions.
- * Stick to your strategy and GMC (Goal, Motivations, Conflicts), blend the character traits together and bend them with each other for a richer personality for readers to identify with. Trying something new may give you the creative insight to snap out of a boring situation.
- * Take action to help your characters achieve their true potential in your story. Remember, conflict moves the plot!
- * Always keep track of the Astrological traits used for each character so you can develop them further throughout your story. Pace lagging a little? Conflict not strong enough? Need stronger motivation to make your plot more believable? Add another dimension to a weak character trait to get your story back on track.
- * Read books for character trends and know your market.

Try these tips to get things moving again, and you'll see results.

Assignment 3

Using your character's Astrological Sign as the FIRST House, figure out the placement of the 12 Houses on the Astrology Wheel. (See the House Info Sheet and the Astrology Wheel Sheet for reference.) Explore the different areas of your character's life by referencing the Sign that falls into each House plus what you've already figured out about your character. What hidden facts about your characters did you discover?

In our last lesson, we'll take a look at more combinations, plus I'll show you how Astrological Tarot can help with your character. :-)

Additional Lesson 3 Examples

I just want to make sure lesson 3 doesn't confuse you, so I'm adding a few more examples of how to figure out the character's Houses.

List the Houses vertically on a page in their natural order, find your character's Sign and count from there, starting over after Pisces. In the little scenario I've used three characters, Claire, Paul, and Bruce.

Claire's Sign is Cancer ...

Aries
Taurus
Gemini
Cancer - First House
Leo
Virgo
Libra
Scorpio
Sagittarius
Capricorn
Aquarius
Pisces

... And her House order is ...

Cancer - First House
Leo - 2nd
Virgo - 3rd
Libra - Fourth House (home, etc.)
Scorpio - 5th
Sagittarius - 6th
Capricorn - 7th
Aquarius - 8th
Pisces - 9th
Aries - 10th
Taurus - 11th
Gemini - 12th

Paul is a Sagittarius ...

Aries
Taurus
Gemini
Cancer
Leo
Virgo
Libra
Scorpio
Sagittarius - First House
Capricorn
Aquarius
Pisces

... And his House order is ...

Sagittarius - First House
Capricorn - 2nd
Aquarius - 3rd
Pisces - 4th
Aries - 5th
Taurus - 6th
Gemini - 7th
Cancer - 8th
Leo - 9th
Virgo - 10th
Libra - 11th
Scorpio - 12th

Bruce is a Pisces ...

Aries
Taurus
Gemini
Cancer
Leo
Virgo
Libra
Scorpio
Sagittarius
Capricorn
Aquarius
Pisces - First House

... And his House order is ...

Pisces - First House
Aries - 2nd
Taurus - 3rd
Gemini - 4th
Cancer - 5th
Leo - 6th
Virgo - 7th
Libra - 8th
Scorpio - 9th
Sagittarius - 10th
Capricorn - 11th
Aquarius - 12th

You can do this for any character you assign a Astrological Sign to.

Lesson 4 - A FURTHER LOOK

As we have seen, there are several ways a character can be enhanced by basic Astrology, and there are many possible combinations when you factor in the influences of Elements, Qualities and Houses. Another component that can add believability to actions, reactions and interactions is the use of Tarot cards, specifically the 22 Major Arcana cards. In regard to a problem scene

or situation, or if you're unsure about a how a character would re/act to something, using the Tarot can give you additional insight.

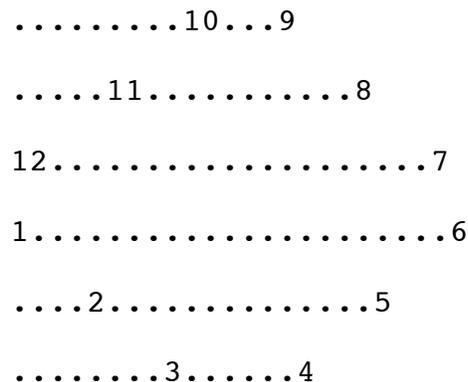
A Tarot deck is split into two sections, the Minor Arcana (symbolically representing the 52 "regular" deck of playing cards) and Major Arcana (representing life, everything around us). The Major Arcana cards are what we will be using, They begin with "0" and go up to "21." Here's a quick look at one of their basic meanings:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 0 - Fool - thoughtless | 12 - Hanged Man - suspense |
| 1 - Magician - creativity | 13 - Death - great change |
| 2 - High Priestess - wisdom | 14 - Temperance - patience |
| 3 - Empress - fertility | 15 - Devil - greed |
| 4 - Emperor - security | 16 - Tower - catastrophic transformation |
| 5 - Hierophant - tradition | 17 - Star - bright prospects |
| 6 - Lovers - partnership | 18 - Moon - warning, deception |
| 7 - Chariot - travel | 19 - Sun - success |
| 8 - Strength - power | 20 - Judgement - accounting for one's actions |
| 9 - Hermit - meditation | 21 - World - completion |

(See the Astro-Tarot Info Sheet for further basic explanations of each card.)

Anyone can use my basic Tarot method to deepen an Astrology-developed character. There is no need to know how to "read" the Tarot cards, or even buy the cards if you don't want to. You can make them on cardstock with just the card number, name and meanings. All you'll do is interpret what they mean to you in what House they fall into.

Okay, using the Astrology Wheel labeled with the 12 Houses, or by simply imagining a big piece of pie with 12 slices, set this in front of you with the First House on the left so the Houses will be counter-clockwise like this:



Next, mix up the 22 cards (or shuffle them) face down, cut them one time and place the bottom pile on top, then (still face down) think about your character and your problem scene or situation. Take the top card from your pile and place it face UP in the First House, then take the next card and place it face up in the Second House, the next card in the Third House, etc., until you have cards face up in all 12 Houses. If a card falls upside-down, turn it properly. (Read all the cards this way, NOT upside-down.) Whatever part of their life your character is dealing with, look at that House (ie: job/career will be the 10th House, money will be the 2nd House, etc.). Use the meaning of the card and the House and blend it together for you answer.

Example: Claire wants closure for the missing boy's family and also doesn't want the conflict at her party between Paul and Bruce. Now let's say the "Star" card landed in her 10th House (career) and "Temperance" in her 4th House (home). My interpretation would be that closure would come slowly and she needs to be patient.

Another example: Bruce (Pisces) is hiding clues and his involvement in the missing boy's case. The "Wheel Of Fortune" lands in his 10th House (career) and "Death" in his 7th House. My interpretation is that a great change in coming to him he will not be able to avoid.

How your characters act, react and interact are totally up to you as the creator of your story, and using Astrology to help create your characters is another wonderful tool to help you discover hidden facts and better believable motivations. Your characters will also gain depth and dimension giving you more possibilities for added conflict and reader endearment.

Assignment 4

Familiarize yourself with the 12 Major Arcana Tarot cards by studying the Astro-Taro Info Sheet. Using your character, try laying out the cards to help you with any problem scenes. Interpret the cards however YOU feel comfortable. Nothing is right or wrong, because you are connecting with your inner Muse for information.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: Do you have any favorite books that you'd recommend for further study?

A: The best book I've found for reference is my "A To Z Horoscope Maker & Delineator," however there aren't any that I've found for Astrological Tarot (my DH keep telling me to write one! :-)). I learned how to do Astro-Tarot readings from a very good friend about 25 years ago, and then I figured out how to apply the process to my writing. The Horoscope book is very complete with lots of information and is a great reference book.

Q: Do you have the dates that correspond to the signs?

A: The Signs change on or about the 21st of every month.

Q: (RE: Lesson 3) I don't understand why Claire's "home" is in the fourth house. Is this standard? Are you just giving us an arbitrary sign?

A: Nope, not arbitrary, and I covered "Houses" in Lesson 3. If you read back through Lesson 3 again, you'll see I've listed the Houses and a few of their basic meanings. In Astrology, one of the main areas of life the 4th House rules is one's home. Also you can check the "House Info Sheet" I posted for additional meanings. :-)

Q: Do you find Sagittarian females seem incapable of domestic activities while yearning for socializing?

A: Nope, I've never encountered this. Sagittarians are adaptable and create their home environment accordingly. As I mentioned, any Sign can be influenced and modified by it's predisposed Elements and Qualities (plus positive and negative aspects in the Natal chart). Any of the 12 Signs can possess the uniqueness to be either a Domestic Goddess or excessively casual.

Q: Say I write my hero as a Taurus but give him something from Leo...like overbearing, opinionated, which would give the hero 'that something' odd about him, can this be done successfully? Anything to watch out for?

A: Absolutely! :-) Your Taurus hero could also show the negative side of his Sign and be over-persistent, stubborn to a fault and/or a perfectionist. These would become of the "overbearing" and "opinionate" traits you're looking for in your character.

As for that "something odd," it depends upon if you're wanting to go quirky, weird or just plain unusual as to what trait you want to magnify. You could take any of Taurus's traits and put a twist on it. Maybe focus on a hobby he enjoys or some aspect of his work/career. Just watch out for going too overboard, LOL.

Q: Is there a resource to break the signs down not only based on the astrological sign but also on the sex of the person?

A: Males will usually (but not typically) be more aggressive than females due to their biological make-up, plus we are influenced by our Western culture and expectations (from ourselves and others). Males "think" differently, because their neurological construction doesn't fire the same as females', therefore they tend to appear different in character. Economics, childhood (how males are raised) spirituality/ religion and demographics also add variances.

You can consider all or just some of these outside influences and factors for your character to give him/her the rounded personality you want. :-)

Q: I don't have any of the characteristics of my birth sign, but many of another. Are the signs caused strictly by astrology or are they manipulated by things like culture and nurturing?

A: The signs are specifically Astrological. Different cultures may have other interpretations, though (like Chinese Astrology uses different animals as their representations) .

Q: Question: When considering an Astrology sign for characters is there one aspect that is more important to focus on than another as I did?

A: I really don't think one trait of a sign is more important than another, just that there are tendencies for all the traits in different strengths. Which one(s) stand out more is up to you and how it/they "ring" true to you as the creator and story-teller.

Q: Please clarify and elaborate a little on the trait listed as "excess." Does this mean the character might exhibit "excess" in some way? Such as "too much" of something? Possibly too much of another trait? Or totally unrelated to another trait?

A: Excess = glutinous or hedonistic.

Q: RE the Sagittarius sign -- two of the traits listed are "patient" and "impatient". Is this correct? Does this mean characters with this sign exhibit constant conflict between these two traits? Or is one more dominant than the other?

A: There is a potential for either or both: a patient person may show the negative trait and become impatient. Not really a conflict, just two sides of the same coin.



ASTROLOGY SIGNS INFO SHEET

(Writing By The Signs: Creating Believable Characters with Astrology

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1. ARIES - first sign

Ruler: Mars

Element: Fire

Color: light red

Watch Phrase: "I AM"

Associated Body Part: head

Traits: leader, charismatic/dynamic/charming, motivator, inspirational, adventurous, pioneering, energetic, fearless, blunt, impulsive, stubborn, competitive.

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2. TAURUS - second sign

Ruler: Venus (known as the “Lesser Benefic”)

Element: Earth

Color: dark yellow

Watch Phrase: “I HAVE”

Associated Body Part: face and brain

Traits: loves recognition, sensual, tender, tactile, artistic, persistent, hard-working, practical, indulgent, excessive (glutinous or hedonistic), materialistic, stubborn, perfectionist.



3. GEMINI - third sign

Ruler: Mercury

Element: Air

Color: light violet, yellow

Watch Phrase: "I THINK"

Associated Body Part: lungs, arms, hands

Traits: changeable/adaptable, communicative, cerebral, intellectual, inquisitive, sharing, bright, quick-witted, social, imaginative, love attention, flexible, dexterous, curious, scatter-brained, restless, fickle, indecisive, sometimes don't complete what they begin.

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4. CANCER - fourth sign

Ruler: Moon

Element: Water

Color: light green

Watch Phrase: "I FEEL"

Associated Body Part: stomach, breasts, body fluids

Traits: domestic, kind, maternal, gentle, nurturing, serene, traditional, social, family-oriented, patriotic, crabby, decisive, tenacious, strong-willed, manipulative, emotional, moody, vindictive.

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5. LEO - fifth sign

Ruler: Sun

Element: Fire

Color: light orange

Watch Phrase: "I WILL"

Associated Body Part: spine (back), heart

Traits: charismatic, magnetic, ambitious, leader, persevering, organized, creative, artistic, talented, social, inspirational, dignified, strong, strong-willed, pleasure-seeking, persistent, intense, dramatic, autocratic, idealistic, stubborn, narcissistic, overbearing, opinionated.

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6. VIRGO - sixth sign

Ruler: Mercury

Element: Earth

Color: dark violet

Watch Phrase: "I ANALYZE"

Associated Body Part: abdominal area (in and out), solar plexis

Traits: attentive, caring, adaptable, dutiful, humane, efficient, methodical, industrious, modest, practical, logical, investigative, detail-oriented, assessing, exacting, picky, critical, self-repressed.

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7. LIBRA - seventh sign

Ruler: Venus (known as the “Lesser Benefic”)

Element: Air

Color: light yellow, indigo

Watch Phrase: “I BALANCE”

Associated Body Part: kidneys, veins, ovaries, lower back

Traits: focused, social, caring, attentive, balanced, a team player, strategist, domestic, fair and just, objective, peaceful, harmonious, companionable, organized, determined, accident-prone, lonely, fickle, indecisive, timid.

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8. SCORPIO - eighth sign

Rulers: Mars and Pluto

Element: Water

Color: dark red

Watch Phrase: "I DESIRE"

Associated Body Part: nose, bladder, reproductive organs, genitals

Traits: serious, intense, investigative, decisive, curious, intuitive, regenerative, fearless, stubborn, determined, success-oriented, persevering, passionate, desirous, secretive, resourceful, controlling, suspicious, overbearing, self-destructive.

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9. SAGITTARIUS - ninth sign

Ruler: Jupiter (known as the “Great Benefic”)

Element: Fire

Color: light purple

Watch Phrase: “I SEARCH”

Associated Body Part: liver, hips, thighs

Traits: truth-seeker, broad-minded, knowledgeable, philosophic, spiritual/religious, intellectual, cerebral, patient, enthusiastic, adaptable, a wanderer (in thought or literally), argumentative, difficult, blunt, impatient.



10. CAPRICORN - tenth sign

Ruler: Saturn

Element: Earth

Color: dark blue

Watch Phrase: "I USE"

Associated Body Part: knees, bone system, skin, teeth

Traits: responsible, ambitious, hard-working, determined, diligent, organized, patient, practical, dedicated, pragmatic, realistic, efficient, innovative, effective, industrious, determined, conservative/conventional, egotistical, domineering, unforgiving.

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11. AQUARIUS - eleventh sign

Ruler: Saturn and Uranus

Element: Air

Color: sky blue

Watch Phrase: "I KNOW"

Associated Body Part: eyes, lower legs (below knees)

Traits: responsible, changeable, altruistic, philanthropic, humanitarian, sympathetic, compassionate, visionary, contemplative, intellectual, progressive, social, collaborative, innovative, freedom-oriented, original, inventive, individualistic, temperamental, childish, impatient, opinionated, stubborn, eccentric.

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12. PISCES - twelfth sign

Ruler: Neptune and Jupiter (known as the “Great Benefic”)

Element: Water

Color: dark purple

Watch Phrase: “I BELIEVE”

Associated Body Part: pulmonary system, circulation, feet, toes

Traits: imaginative, intuitive, honest, focused, spiritual, selfless, empathetic, easy-going, flexible, sensitive, introspective, charitable, dedicated, compassionate, dreamer, secretive, self-deceptive, wishy-washy, lazy, timid or shy.

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KEYWORDS FOR THE PLANETS INFO SHEET

(Writing By The Signs: Creating Believable Characters with Astrology
by Ann Jones-Rodriguez, © 2005, 2006)

Sun - Self, individuality, your ego, personality, your spirit, uniqueness of the individual, how you know yourself.

Moon - emotions, feelings, your soul, instinct, women

Mercury - how you think, your mind, communication, logic and reasoning, intellect, awareness, short trips.

Venus - love and beauty, nature, pleasure (especially with someone else or derived from material possessions), luxuries, the Arts (music, dance, drama, literature, etc.), love and romance, harmony in emotional relations, marriages, friendships and business partnerships.

Mars - sex, accidents, mental capacity, action, passion, drive and determination, energy, confidence, courage, honor, assertion, power, ambition, competition.

Jupiter - honesty, expansion, curiosity, intellect, exploration, philosophy, luck, good fortune, optimism, spirituality/religion, animals.

Saturn - karma, responsibility, order, loss, restriction, older people (seniors), discipline, delay, hard work, conventionality, tradition, authority and wisdom, perseverance, teacher of "life."

Uranus - change, divorce, innovation, originality, inventions, computers, Astrology, creativity, freedom, the unexpected, revolution, dictators, an autonomous state, rebellion, free will, sudden and/or unexpected changes, bohemian attitude, natural disasters.

Neptune - psychic ability, imagination, addiction, abnormality, escapism, delusion, hypochondria, change, illusion, movies, television, theater, fashion and glamour, music, dance and poetry, dreams and sleep, abstract thought, mystery, spirituality (for the betterment of the Self), meditation and insight, trace-like pursuits and activities/exercises, heightened awareness, subversion.

Pluto - psychological, change/death/rebirth (getting rid of things), transcendent, transformation, regeneration, destruction, obsession, kidnapping, coercion, viruses and waste, the underworld, crime, secrets and subversive activities, the subconscious, nuclear/atomic power.

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KEYWORDS FOR THE ELEMENTS AND QUALITIES INFO SHEET

(Writing By The Signs: Creating Believable Characters with Astrology

by Ann Jones-Rodriguez, c 2005, 2006)

The Four Elements

(Based on ancient Greek philosophy, and the building blocks of life. Elements help to describe our basic nature and to define us as a whole and complex person.)

Fire (Aries, Leo and Sagittarius) - physical, enthusiast, uniquely creative, courageous, lively, self-sufficient.

Earth (Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn) - practical, builders, dutiful, dependable, conservative, responsible, materialistic, sensual, logical, stable, reliable.

Air (Gemini, Libra and Aquarius) - intellectual, analytical, abstract thinkers, curious, clever, fair, communicative, perceptive, objective, cooperative, idealistic.

Water (Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces) - emotional, sensitive, intuitive, nurturing, understanding, compassion, artistic, moody, psychic, receptive (they feel things deeply), self-indulgent.

The Three Qualities

(Qualities describe a person's attitudes in life and the way they approach projects)

Cardinal (Aries, Cancer, Libra and Capricorn) - initiators of action and drive, active, quick, ambitious, energetic, enthusiastic, clever.

Fixed (Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius) - persevering, reliable, persistent, determined, stable, resolute, confident, patient, stubborn, self-reliant.

Mutable (Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius and Pisces) - adaptable/changeable, flexible, versatile, diplomatic, resourceful, innovative, sharp, intuitive, sympathetic, resilient, sometimes inconsistent or wishy-washy when multi-tasking too much.

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KEYWORDS FOR THE HOUSES & THEIR CHARACTERISTICS INFO SHEET
(Writing By The Signs: Creating Believable Characters with Astrology
by Ann Jones-Rodriguez, © 2005, 2006)

1st House - You (specifically), your physical body, personality, how others see you, how you present yourself to others.

2nd House - Finances, possessions, personal resources, savings, spending habits, personal values

3rd House - Communication with the environment, routine interactions, information processing, intellectual endeavors, teaching, writing, messages, correspondence, short journeys and commuting, relatives, neighbors, siblings

4th House - Your home, parents, family, roots, emotional security, private self, real estate

5th House - Creative self expression, gambling and risk taking, children, recreation, sports, games, arts, dance, theater, entertainment, investments, romance and love affairs

6th House - Health, job/work environment, readjustments, nutrition, employees, service, domestic pets

7th House - One-to-one close relationships with others, marriage and business partners, legal contracts, litigation, open enemies

8th House - Sexual activities, death and rebirth, joint resources, investments held with others, peak experiences, psychology, subconscious, legacies, wills and inheritance, life insurance

9th House - Religion, clergymen, ceremonies, belief system, ethics and morals, travel to distant lands, foreign countries and people, higher education, teachers, gurus, publishing, law

10th House - Your public life and standing in the community, vocation, profession, career, reputation, social status, higher education, business, achievements, parents, people with power & authority

11th House - Groups you're involved with, clubs and organizations to which you belong, social causes, ideals, hopes, dreams, friends

12th House - Unconscious, retreats from the world, solitude and seclusion, secret affairs, institutions, introspection and self-examination, self-undoing, your shadow self, sleep patterns, hospitals, prisons or any place of confinement

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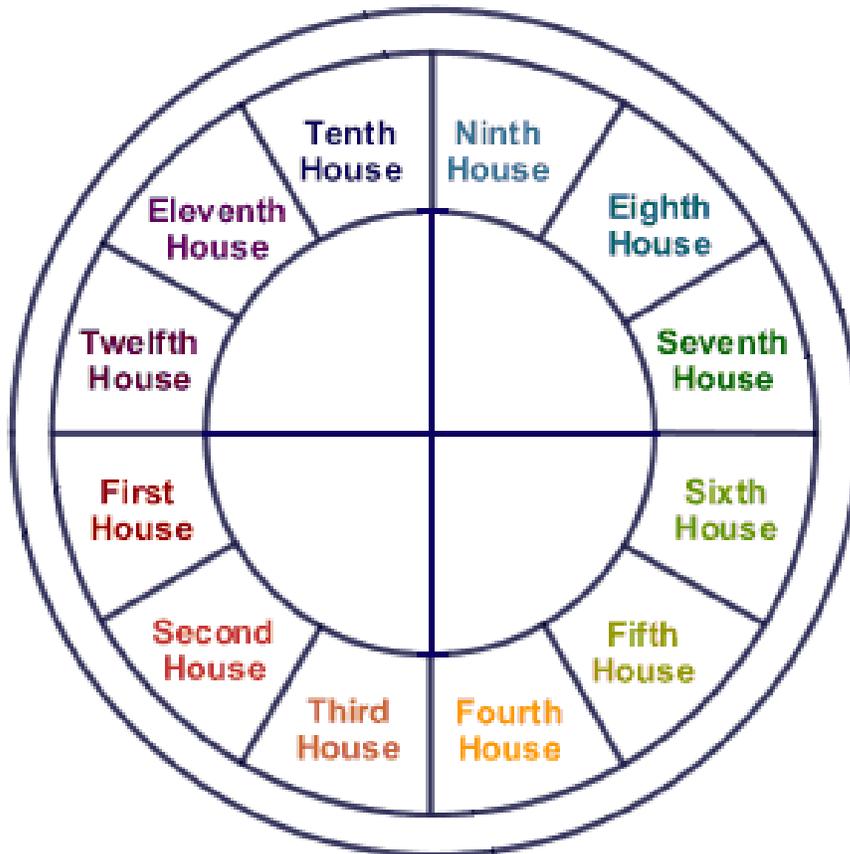
ASTRO-TAROT INFO SHEET

Writing By The Signs: Creating Believable Characters with Astrology
by Ann Jones-Rodriguez, © 2005, 2006

The Major Arcana:

- 0 - Fool - thoughtless, folly, light-heartedness, innocence
- 1 - Magician - creativity, originality, opportunities to use talent, imagination, skill
- 2 - High Priestess - wisdom, practicality, good judgement, mystery
- 3 - Empress - fertility, pregnancy, good advise
- 4 - Emperor - security, stability, success, father-figure
- 5 - Hierophant - tradition, captivity, servitude, inactivity, timidity
- 6 - Lovers - partnership, love, respect, trust, communication
- 7 - Chariot - travel, work, purpose
- 8 - Strength - power, energy, strength, courage, conviction
- 9 - Hermit - meditation, prudence, good counsel, search for truth
- 10 - Wheel Of Fortune - destiny, change, fortune, good luck
- 11 - Justice - fairness, balance, equality, legal matters, the law
- 12 - Hanged Man - suspense, change of point of view, sacrifice
- 13 - Death - great change, rebirth
- 14 - Temperance - patience, frugality, economy, moderation
- 15 - Devil - greed, lust, bondage to an ideal, bad or evil influence
- 16 - Tower - catastrophic transformation, sudden change, destruction
- 17 - Star - bright prospects, hope, faith
- 18 - Moon - warning, deception, hidden enemies
- 19 - Sun - success, accomplishment, material happiness
- 20 - Judgement - accounting for one's actions, rejuvenation, reward, atonement
- 21 - World - completion, success, triumph in the end.

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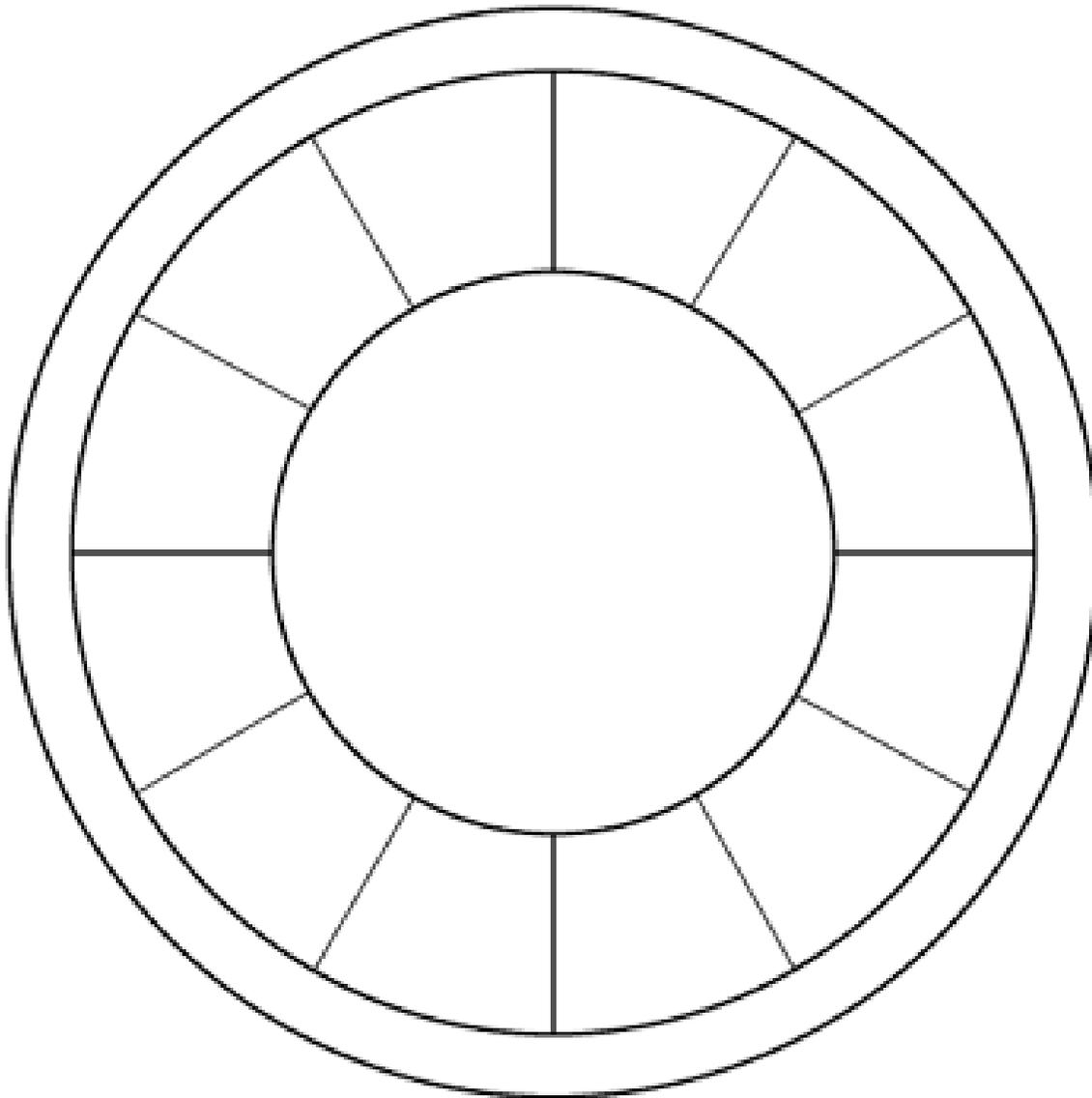
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