

Cyclopedia of Literary Characters

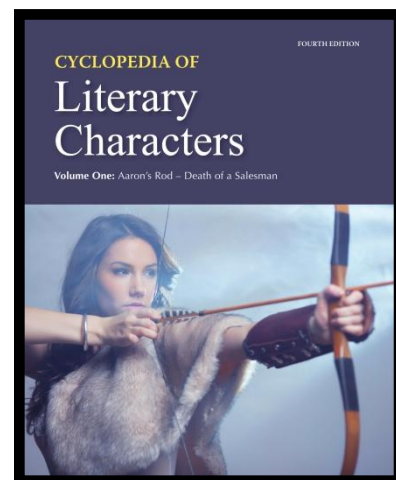
“The first edition of *Cyclopedia of Literary Characters* was published as two volumes in 1963, using material from *Masterplots*; it contained descriptions of 16,000 characters from 1,300 novels, plays, epics, and world literature. Subsequent editions of *Cyclopedia of Literary Characters* incorporated not only material from *Masterplots* but also from *Masterplots II* which covers twentieth-century North American and Latin American literature. The current edition of the cyclopedia covers **3,500 literary works and more than 29,000 characters in five volumes.**

The arrangement of the entries makes information easy to find. Tables of contents appear in each volume, along with a list of contributors and a pronunciation guide. The articles appear alphabetically by title of work, and there are guide words at the top of each page. The titles of books appear in bold and are followed by author, date the work was first published, genre, locale, a classification of the plot (pastoral, psychological realism, historical, etc), and a time period. Character descriptions follow the ready-reference data—important characters receive more lines of text. **The entries appear to average about a page in length. While the work could be used alone, it makes more sense to use it in conjunction with a resource like the *Masterplots* series, especially for those readers unfamiliar with the plot or main themes of the works in question.**

Three indexes in volume five (which take up nearly 200 pages) round out the work and allow searches by work title, character, or author.”

—ARBA Staff Reviewer

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Pub. Date: February 2015
ISBN: 978-1-61925-497-8
List Price: \$495

SALEM PRESS

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