Hagen's NINE questions for Character Study

The following questions must be answered for each character study in order to define your role with as many specifics as possible. Consider these questions as research questions and continue to add answers and details as you explore and rehearse your character. Your responses should be in your actor’s notebook.

1. WHO AM I? (All the details about your character including name, age, address, relatives, likes, dislikes, hobbies, career, description of physical traits, opinions, beliefs, religion, education, origin, enemies, loved ones, sociological influences etc.)

2. WHAT TIME IS IT? (Century, season, year, month, day, minute, significance of time)

3. WHERE AM I? (Country, city, neighbourhood, home, room, area of room)

4. WHAT SUROUNDS ME? (Animate and inanimate objects – complete details of environment)

5. WHAT ARE THE GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES? (Past, present, future and all of the events)

6. WHAT IS MY RELATIONSHIP? (Relation to total events, other characters and to things)

7. WHAT DO I WANT? (Character’s need, the immediate and main objective)

8. WHAT IS IN MY WAY? (The obstacles which prevent the character from getting his/her need)

9. WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT? (The action: physical and verbal, also action verbs)
Hagen's Six Questions for Character Study

The answers/responses to the following questions about the character you are playing should be in your actor's notebook. Respond in the first person.

1. WHO AM I?
What is my present state of being? How do I perceive myself? What am I wearing?

2. WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES?
What time is it? (The year, the season, the day? At what time does my selected life begin?) Where am I? (In what city, neighborhood, building, and room do I find myself? Or in what landscape?) What surrounds me? (The immediate landscape? The weather? The condition of the place and the nature of the objects in it?) What are the immediate circumstances? (What has just happened, is happening? What do I expect or plan to happen next and later on?)

3. WHAT ARE MY RELATIONSHIPS?
How do I stand in relationship to the circumstances, the place, the objects, and the other people related to my circumstances?

4. WHAT DO I WANT?
What is my main objective? What is my immediate need or objective?

5. WHAT IS MY OBSTACLE?
What is in the way of what I want? How do I overcome it?

6. WHAT DO I DO TO GET WHAT I WANT?
How can I achieve my objective? What's my behavior? What are my actions?