

WHAT EVERY NOVEL NEEDS

STORY INGREDIENTS



CHARACTER

Compelling Characters

- Authentic and realistic
- Relatable for the reader
- Likable or understandable
- Mix of strengths and weaknesses/vulnerabilities

Clear Motivations

- Everyone has a motivation that drives them
- Main characters have a prominent, clear motivation shown at the beginning of the story
- Motivations/Desires change at appropriate places as story unfolds

Completed Characters

- Characters change with story experience
- Different at the end of the story

Story Problems That Are Appropriate To Them

- Problems that are in direct contrast to their motivations
- Problems that come from their setting or place in life, something connected to them

Solid Points-of-View (POV)

- POV is clear and consistent throughout
- With multiple POV, each one has a distinct perspective on the story

SETTING

Clear Setting

- Large-scale such as country/city
- Small-scale such as one room
- Consistent details and locations

Integrated Setting

- Sensory details show totality of experience

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SETTING (CONT.)

Integrated Setting (cont.)

Influences character background, types of problems (feels alive)

Consistent Worldbuilding (as applicable)

Well thought-out worldbuilding elements that are consistent and clear

Fantastical elements integrated organically and at the appropriate time in the story

PLOT

Information Given At Correct Place In Timeline

Integrated into the story when appropriate

Organic, Connected Plotline

One event leads to the next and has a natural flow

Conflict In Many Places

Within a character

Between characters

From the outside world

Pacing That Builds Toward The Climax

Tension increases as story unfolds

More problems occur with progression of plot

Appropriate down times for reader to digest story

Explosive, Appropriate Climax

Worst possible scenario for character(s)

Highest tension and conflict

Satisfactory Resolution

Solves most conflict as appropriate

Related to main character's good qualities

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LANGUAGE

Engaging Voice

Storytelling style has recognizable personality

Evokes Feelings From The Reader

Reader goes through an emotional journey along with the characters and storyline

Crisp, Interesting Prose

Clean, tight sentences and paragraphs

Descriptive elements engage the reader

Engaging Dialogue

Moves the story forward

Sounds different for each character

Conventions

Follows standards of convention (such as Chicago style)

OVERALL

Narrative Balance

Narration and dialogue both present in appropriate amounts

Creative And Unique Characteristics

Elements that make the story original and different

You did it!