



Fiction Writing Essentials

A 2-HOUR WORKSHOP ON
THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FICTION WRITING

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Hello, world, it's me



Every life is a story, and every writer is a storyteller.

- ▶ Please introduce yourself briefly: who, what, where
- ▶ Ice Breaker: If you could be any character in a book, who would you be?

Why didn't I think of that?



Every journey begins with one step, and every story starts with an idea.

Where do story ideas come from?

- ▶ A poster on a phone pole
- ▶ An abandoned house on a country road
- ▶ A conversation overheard in a diner

Where do you get your ideas?

I have an idea: now what?



Character is story ... story is character.

Who do you need to tell your story?

- ▶ Who is your protagonist?
- ▶ What do they want?
- ▶ Why must they tell this story?
- ▶ What is at stake?
- ▶ Who will try to stop them? A villain? A holder of secrets? A jealous lover? What or who is the equal and opposing force?

Genre: So you want to write a [romance, mystery, thriller, short story, novella ...]



- ▶ Every genre has basic rules and formats
- ▶ Learn the rules before you break them
- ▶ The hero (almost) always wins
- ▶ Readers have expectations: don't leave them feeling cheated
- ▶ Romance is ruthless: happy ending or else
- ▶ A word on literary fiction

Inside the outline: Using your trusty map



- ▶ Know your ending (or at least your destination)
- ▶ A little outline? A lot? A hybrid?
- ▶ Flexibility: An outline is not a straight jacket
- ▶ What next? An action point list
- ▶ “Writer’s block” and how to get unstuck
 - Word count (if it’s your thing)
 - Timers, reminders, and other useful methods
 - The ‘WHAT IF’ list (imagine that!)

He said, she said, I said, we said: Point of View



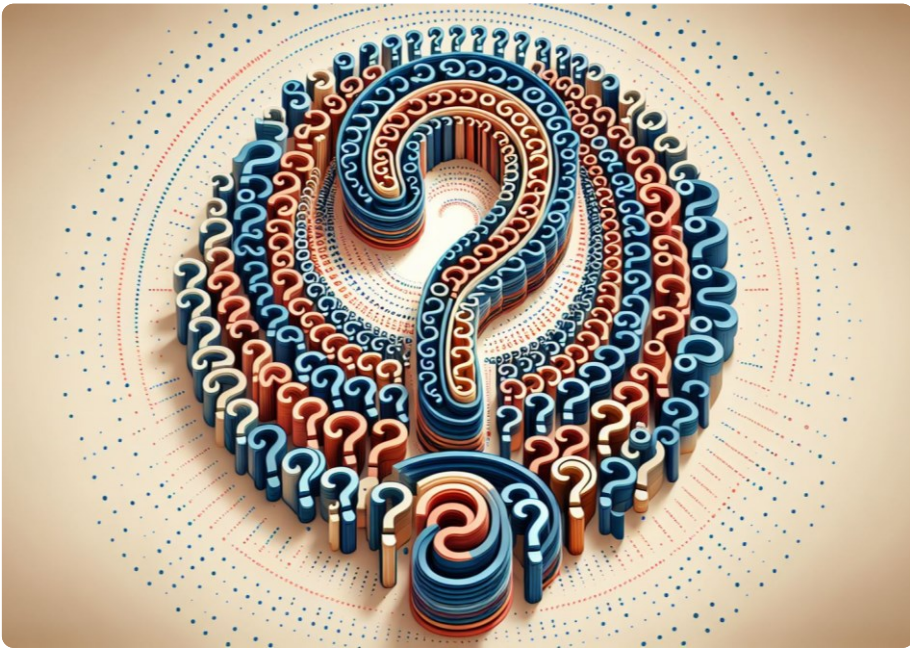
- ▶ What is Point of View?
- ▶ The I's have it: third person or first person?
- ▶ Alternating POVs
- ▶ Exposition: information and scene setting - don't overdo it (handout)
- ▶ Dialogue: the illusion of conversation (handout)
- ▶ Sparing the details: clear, clean, precise
- ▶ It's the economy: less really is more
- ▶ A word on continuity

Side plates: Getting input, mentors, and peers



- ▶ Choosing who reads your manuscript
- ▶ Everyone's a critic
- ▶ The importance of mentors, classes, teachers, and peers
- ▶ Writing is re-writing: polish, polish, polish
- ▶ And then it flew away ... knowing When to end

I Wrote a Book And All I Got Was This Manuscript ... Now What?



- ▶ Self-publishing or a 'traditional publisher'?
- ▶ Exclusivity versus wide distribution
- ▶ Marketing and promotion / paid and free
- ▶ Fasten your headphones: a word on audiobooks
 - Royalty share / pay per hour / self-narrating
- ▶ And then the robots came for me: AI

Diving Deeper: More writing workshops



This has been a fiction essentials overview. If you would like to go deeper into some of these topics, learning the 'how' of fiction writing and honing your writing skills, check out YourWritePath.com/fictionplus.

Upcoming topics:

- ▶ Unraveling the Mystery of Writing Mysteries
 - Includes thrillers, horror, and the art of suspense
- ▶ Character is Story: Writing Bios, Creating People
- ▶ Self-Publishing: Having It All (and Working For It)
 - Includes an audiobook production how-to

Online and in-person

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