

Outlining Resources

Kelly Jensen | Pocono Liars Writers Workshop 10/21/2023

- Outlining is about writing faster and producing more useable words.

Tips for Writing Faster

Make writing a habit.

- Write at the same time every day.
 - Choose a time that works for you, both creatively and within your schedule.
- Schedule time away.
- Track your progress.
<https://www.pacemaker.press/>

Know What You Want to Write.

- Make notes at the end of a writing session.
- Give yourself a launch point for the next session.
- Read over what you've written most recently.
 - If you do this: don't stop to edit.

Write All the Way to the End.

- All a first draft need do is exist.

Your book will pass through several editing stages:

- Developmental or story edits.
- Line edits for prose.
 - Choosing better words and stronger verbs. Some character and plot refinements.
- Copy edits
 - Ideally, are focused on grammar, repetitive words, redundancies, continuity errors, and fact checking.
- Proof read

An Outline.

Always know what you're going to write every day—and because you have a grasp on the whole story, you should be able to write all the way to the end without significant stops.

Preparing An Outline

Outlining isn't intuitive to everyone.

- Find a format that works for you and then let it change.

What's the Story I Want to Tell?

- **The "What If..."**
- **A Summary Paragraph**
- **The Synopsis**
 - This nearly always means you need to know about your characters goals. See attached character development notes at the end of the handout.

Finally! The Outline

- **Acts**
 - **Scenes**
 - **Details**
 - The more detailed the outline, the easier writing can be that day.
- But you don't need to know all of it before you start writing.

Spend Ten Minutes a Day Plotting

Sometimes outlining can start to get in the way of telling the story. You might not know what's going to happen after a certain point, so don't waste time planning for a scene that might never eventuate.

- Outline, then write, then outline a little more, then write.

Rachel Aaron

- <http://thisblogisaploy.blogspot.com/2011/06/how-i-went-from-writing-2000-words-day.html>

Not Following Your Outline

- **An outline is a guide not a commandment.**
- **Day by Day, Scene by Scene.**
 - Stuff Happens TM is never enough.

Final Notes

- Knowing the story before you tell it is the key.

Workshop Exercise

Spend fifteen to twenty minutes writing a summary of *your* story. Think of it like a movie you've just watched and tell us what happens. Don't agonize over character descriptions and locations. Now is not the time for world building—though you can always leave yourself notes in the margin.

Just think about the *story* part. The action from beginning to end. What happens?

Try to limit yourself to a few paragraphs or a page.