

Nadia's Comprehensive Writing Guide

Nadia's Comprehensive Writing Booklet:

How to print:

Go to file -> print -> A4, 1 page, print on short side. change pages -> 1

Notes: The booklet is written to be printed, and it's in the right order. You will see a line between the pages. This line should not be printed as it will be in black and white, so you can ignore this.

I recommend you get a high quality printer to do. I've given extra margin so you can relate to your own book, ect. I hope you like this.

THE TOPICS

- ENGAGING WRITING
- BRAINSTORMING
- WRITING REALISM
- PLANNING AN IDEA
- TROPS
- 3ACT VS 5ACT VS 7ACT
- MAKING WRITING MEANINGFUL
- WRITING THE FIRST DRAFT
- WRITING THE FINAL DRAFT
- EDITING
- FINAL EDITING
- DIALOGUE
- FIGHTING WRITING BLOCKS
- TIME MANAGEMENT
- WORD COUNTS
- WHAT TO KEEP AND WHAT TO CUT

QUESTIONS (AND ANSWERS)
SOURCES AND RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

Hello and welcome to my website! I am a writer and editor, and I have been writing through the writing process and editing process for over 10 years. I have a passion for creativity. I am an independent author, and I have published my debut book Amethyst- Time Traveler's Guide to the Past and Future. I have also written for various publications, including an anthology. Additionally, I am a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. But I'm not here to tell you about my writing career. I'm here to help you with your writing. It's a broad question and there are many ways to approach it. It's a process that takes time and effort, but it's also a rewarding one. I have learned a lot over the years to fully unravel, but here are some tips that have helped me. I'm not an expert, but I can help other aspiring writers find their voice. These tips are mine, but others are theirs. I apply almost all the techniques I have learned, but I also have my own unique style. I hope you find this website helpful and informative. Thank you for visiting!

Not all advice is made for everyone, so take my words (and everyone's tips) with a grain of salt.

I do include some examples of my work, but DO NOT COPY MY WORK or ideas, unless specified that you can. All non-original ideas are clearly stated, and anything I am happy for you to use is also shown. I have been generous enough to show my own examples, and I want to reiterate that none of my original writing can be copied, unless I specifically say it in *Italics* and Underlined. Thank you for understanding.

SOURCES AND RESOURCES

If you found this helpful, here is the link to my other guide

 [Nadia's Comprehensive After-Writing Guide](#). Or, if this guide is printed, you can find it on my website: nadia793.wixsite.com/teenagetales.

Here are some links to some amazing youtubers with incredible tips and helpful apps:

[Abbie Emmons](#) (author of 100 days of sunlight who talks about internal conflict and posts videos every Wednesday).

[Charo Lyn](#) (YouTuber who mainly works in short-form content, giving ideas about character designs, and ways to develop your writing).

[Pinterest](#) has so many authors and readers, and there's an infinite supply of knowledge to gain there.

[CritiqueCircle](#) the perfect place to find other writers who'll critique your work, and learn by reading others' work.

[Alyssa Matesic](#) (Youtuber and developmental book editor. Super helpful for avoiding common mistakes).

[Bookfox](#) (super helpful youtuber who posts twice every week, and teaches amazing writing skills).

[Reedsy](#) is a place to write your books, find lessons on writing, discover editors and more! [The Hero's journey](#) an easy way to plot your book around your character's journey.

[Milanote](#) (an app to help plan, organise and make to-do lists, with amazing templates).

[Character Developmental Journals](#) characters are. I recommend you them further.

ENGAGING WRITING

What is the definition of engaging? Charming and attractive. How do we apply that to writing? We create what people want to read. People read books to go through emotions and go on a transformative adventure. There are five main key points to write something engaging:

A good plot (pretty self explanatory- create some conflict your main character has to solve, or a trip they have to go on. Make it something cool, unique, fun, but don't be afraid if it's 'clique' because your perspective on it is important and valid. Write a story you would like to go on).

A journey for your main character to go on (what will keep your reader interested is relating something common like not fitting in, feeling hated, body dysmorphia, anything relatable, and it could just be how they think or the experiences they go through. Your main character needs to have something they're afraid of, a goal- though it doesn't have to be a tangible thing, more like a purpose- and something they wrongly believe about the world or themselves. They will learn across the journey and overcome this misbelief. I'll get into this more in later chapters, but if your character doesn't change as a result of the plot, there was no point in the journey, and you will have disappointed readers. Please don't do this).

A new perspective (no one wants to hear the story of cinderella again, but if you add a spin on it, and make it into something new, adding your own experiences or unique ideas, mixing it with other story elements, and you'll have a best-selling book- if you include the other elements of engaging writing).

Good writing (this might sound a bit odd, because this guide is meant to be comprehensive, but not stating the obvious. But, you want to include interesting words or phrases or quotes that will stick with a reader. You could also leave scenes replaying in their head- if you did, you succeeded as a writer- however you don't want to give too much good writing. Then you're trying a bit too hard. Include some cool verbs like 'unveil' or 'embrace', instead of 'show' or 'hug', but you don't want it to sound like a foreign language, because then they'll put your book down. This is something I learnt on youtube (the best

resource for writers, after books, interesting or more important, don't want plot-developing scenes in EVERY scene to include at least developing plot, developing characters in unison, for example, giving scenes past together seamlessly).

Explain don't describe (this is important). Are you describing what the character is doing as your main character walks

basketball, you can read all about it but you can't perfect your aim without actually shooting a basket. That being said, here is a quote I want to leave you with: "Writing isn't about telling a story. It's about showing it and making the reader feel it, and for them to learn an important message you believe they need to know from the wonderful experience that is your book."

It's never the right time to write your book. Do it now! Go! Write!

shimmer above them, guiding
read an essay on how the love
how it feels beneath the main
their eyes are. They want to re
battle their enemy, and they ha
it. Like with good writing, sp
serve them another course aft

ACTIVITY 1:

I want you to look at two diff
and see how many features yo
(beware one came from my fi

We open our eyes to pure darkness from heaven. Just pure darkness, no rushing feeling or renewed sense of life. It feels unreal as it feels like we're still in the same time. We miss being together, the body we had to share. Pushing through the ground, fresh air punching us in the chest. Stand and look at our grave: cold, dark, and empty. The gravestone, but what did we expect?

Our eyes flutter open, only to
an unwelcome embrace, stealing
angelic light we have been living
take control of our fingers, the
time away from it. Bracing out
our mortal body, we stumble
that grapples to keep us in our
struggle, turning to look at our
knees and horribly aware of our
We note, though it shouldn't
didn't even get a coffin.

Most importantly, engaging with what you are proud of, and enjoy writing, can be overwhelming them.

That can be written in ten minutes. Slow and steady wins the race.

My motto when writing (well, mottos) is "I am making my own rules" and it has stuck with me since. You have to make sense. It doesn't have to make sense the first time, it can be edited later. But writing is a process. You have to brainstorm, plan, write, edit, and repeat. Don't let someone tell you you're not good enough. Especially if you're a teenager, you may compare yourself to those from the 80s and 90s. It's normal to compare yourself, but don't let it bring you down. You share your story. Don't write it down, don't publish it. It's an experience. And it's an experience that makes someone better and wiser. You can't write masterpieces. Yes, you need a good idea, but you also have to go easy on yourself and not expect perfection. You're making your own rules. You are making little decisions that will shape your future self.

Not all the advice I gave here
your book. The best way to le
anything else: you can only le

RANDOM TIPS

If you're stuck on what to write later, for example {trauma due whatever you need, or if you do

When it comes to music, it's generally advised to listen to music without words while writing, but I, personally, don't like this and I think many of the readers of this guide might relate to this. Find songs that feel like your book and are interesting. Everyone is different when it comes to focus. I, for example, focus better when there are distracting sounds than when there are distracting views, but everyone will be different.

Write whenever you can. It will pay off. Three minutes a day or fifty words a day (completely reasonable) is 18.25 hours or 18,250 words a year. That's a lot. And if you increase it just a little? 150 words a day?

ACTIVITY 2:

Try and write your own short, yet engaging, paragraph. It can be about anything. Just have fun writing. (Top Tip! Write in pencil first, then in pen, so you can do some edits whilst rewriting it).

BRAINSTORMING

QUESTIONS! (ANI)

This section is updated whenever I hear a lot. If you want to (linked below) and chat to me your questions, and hopefully

How do I think of a title? It can be infuriating, but there are a few main character(s) name(s), the or distinguishing factors. It's what fits, and remember, you first ever story, Red and Green was a 'red girl' and 'green girl' together, and it clicked! America after the main character, but came about naturally as I real

book. (And very honestly, I needed an extra way to distinguish my book because 'Amethyst' would keep showing up as the purple crystals instead of my book).

How long did it take you to write your book? Nine months. No! I'm not crazy. All the ideas were there before, and the concept had been floating around for like 3 year prior. Work at your own pace. Book two, on the other hand, is taking more like a year and a half. Each project and person is unique, so your process will be different to mine.

If you don't like it delete it. So ask someone else, and if they essential to the plot, rewrite it something that a reader loves. You're in charge! If someone edit it until you love it too. That you don't like it, the reader will surprise in the reader" -frost,

ACTIVITY 13:

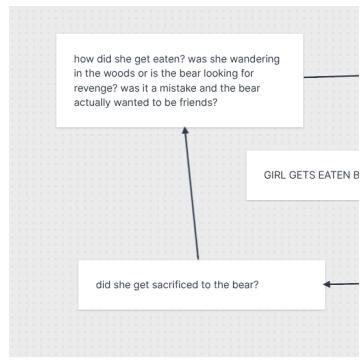
Go to your latest read (or you a section you thought there wasn't enough and you wanted to do it in your book if you don't scan with a phone and paste it before printing out. Just a tip down. That's a big reason why

Here are some examples of my own brainstorming:

- The ancient Egyptians referred to themselves as "rmt" (pronounced remetch), which means "the people" or "the people of Egypt." They also used the term "Kemetu," which means "the people of the Black Land," a reference to the fertile soil along the Nile River.
- We always dislike the unusual. The standard is beautiful because it is the standard. It's what we see, but true beauty is found in what is different, but no one sees it as beauty.
- Max's secret: _____
- Emerald's secret: _____
- "maybe we'll see each other again some day"

As you can see, these bullet points don't make much sense, especially since I got rid of the secrets of my characters (they're only for me to know *wink*), but you can include quotes you've thought of, themes, scenes, secrets and words related to the idea. The more the better! Then, you can pick your favourite parts to keep, and get rid of the ones which sound like insanity. On one of my recent projects, I wrote a whole history book to understand the world: most of it won't make it to the final book, but it's there in my head so I can understand.

Now, if you have no idea what you want your book to be about, only a single moment is captured in your head, or you have a single concept like ‘girl gets eaten by bear and survives’, I also have tips for you. I recommend reading lots of books, in the genre you want to write in if you know it already, and make links to different existing plots. No story is completely new, it is retold and reshaped, and it’s NOT copying if you change it. Do you know just how many retellings there are and they are accepted? You can scroll through the most popular books on Amazon, or look at booktok or booktube and look for ‘writing prompts’ and something might hit you. Adding onto the mindmap idea from earlier, start with what you know and branch out. If you start with ‘girl gets eaten by bear and survives’ think of the five Ws and figure out some sort of story. You can also name related stories, for example Little Red Riding Hood or Goldilocks, and figure out what made those stories be propelled. I would personally add to a mindmap of ‘girl gets eaten by bear and survives’: (made using [Milanote](#))



Now this is just a fun, random copy, but I don't think it's win.

WHAT TO KEEP A

Less is more. Quality > quantity is obvious: it consumes the attention. Information creates a poverty of attention efficiently among those that might consume it." -Herb Caen. What does this mean? The more information you give, the more they will be lost and DMC will be overwhelmed. It is especially essential in Chapter 1 to not overwhelm your reader with a large cast of characters. Some of the best books have a single protagonist, and one overarching plot, with several smaller adventures to develop themselves.

I just wanted to do a quick m
about them. You can aim for
they don't define your book.
(think Christmas Carol), now
Potter). Word counts are only
much pressure on you, turn t
with a piece of paper in Word
and what's most important is
words. Don't think your boo
you want to: there is someone
day before the deadline, but t
ahead).

ACTIVITY 12:

Plan out your day today or tomorrow. Find what you have to do try out some apps and figure out what you like (right now, because it'll probably change). And then, try your best to follow through. For now, just one day. If you like it, keep it. If you don't, change it up where you find there is a need, or change system. You don't need a system to succeed, but you should have *some* way to remember what you have to do. Good luck!

if you write this book can you i
However, this is the sort of thin
works in all genres.

In non-fiction (I'm not sure about the first piece of non-fiction work, and why you should share it, then, you might just write something from there. Here is my example of WRITING, BRAINSTORMING).

If you don't have ANY IDEAS, re-think why you want to write. don't do that: the market is huge, write it, play off that. If it's a subject you have you experienced or heard of, interesting?"?

The most important takeaway is that it's not just a process for you to do, it's something that other people have to see it, and even if you don't have a team, you have to have a way to communicate it to other people.

ACTIVITY 3:

Try and make a bullet-point list of exactly 10 ideas. You decide how much detail goes into each. Try and include each of the five Ws.

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way, or you might not be ready to write or do homework at specific times. Experience, acknowledge, adapt. One week, you might have a lot of exams you have to study for, then focus on school.

There are many places which I could recommend for organisation, but I'll keep the list as short as I can: notes, excel, calendar, google calendar, a planner, Notion, OneNote, Word, Google Docs, Sheets, Ticktick, ect. All that matters is that it works. I have a digital system on excel/sheets and physical in my school planner. It works, and you should explore all your options to find out what's best for you.

After all this, are you still short on time? This means it's time to relax. Get rid of something, whether you pause writing for a month, or you don't do 110% on your homework. Make sure what you need to do is done, but then think *do I want to do this?* And *do I actually have the*

time for this? Sometimes, we need a break. We're all human later. Focus on yourself, and your sleep, enjoyments (or save perfect grades. You can get it when you want to do now.

Lastly, remember to prioritise (like go to school or *sleep*). I know the hardest, most important thing is to calm down and take things at

Time	Monday	Tuesday
6:00	write	write
7:00	prepare	prepare
8:00	prepare	prepare
9:00	school	school
15:00	home	home
16:00	h/w	h/w
17:00	club	club
18:00	club	club
19:00		club
20:00		
21:00	read	read
22:00	sleep	sleep
23:00	sleep	sleep

I love to colour code my things. Remember, you don't have to

PLANNING AN IDEA

There are many ways to plan, all. The different types are tra

However, I believe it is a scale; you start with those who knows every single scene they are going to include, moving towards those with a chapter-by-chapter breakdown (that's me!), to those with a story act structure, to those with a mindmap to those with a single climax they're trying to build to, and lastly those with zero clue what is going on. The last one is often the case of someone tasked to write a story as an assignment or thinks being an author will make them rich. Let me reiterate: it won't make you rich overnight. It is a very difficult market. With that being said, let's plan your story.

First, take out your messy brainstorming and put it into a pile (or a few if you have loads of ideas), and highlight or re-write your favourite few points. I recommend 4 or 5 key points of your book. This will be difficult after I just told you to write loads of ideas, but this will give you the general direction. Then, you have a few choices. I personally (and this won't work for everyone): write a synopsis with the things I definitely want to include, varying in details as I get to better understanding of different parts, a bit like a blurb or a general plot overview you would give an agent or publisher. Make this into the 5-Act story structure, making sure to have each part clearly fleshed out, especially the resolution, because I personally rush through it usually.

Lastly, I change this into a chapter-by-chapter breakdown, writing a sentence or two about each part, or as much as I feel appropriate. This is usually when I get a word count idea, and how long I want the book to be, so I can decide how fleshed-out I should make my final writing.

I am biased, but I do recommend doing everything I just described. If not, at least get an idea of the journey your protagonist is going to go on throughout the course of your book.

Here is a list of my favourite ways you can plan your book: mindmaps, character arc graphs, story act structures, blurbs, chapter breakdowns, summaries and 3, 5 or 7 act story structure plans.

Whilst I'm writing this, I'm planning five books (I know. Crazy.) and they span different genres, so each of them looks a little different. For example, for my high-fantasy dark-academia, I have a whole notebook of brain dumps, and I'm working on detailed analysis on each of the characters. However, for my viking-inspired book, I have started with a 150 word summary/ idea and then started to write out what I know

will happen, then filling out the extended summary. This will flesh out the plot. On the other hand, I have mixed the 3, 5 and 7 Act story structures, and I am now going to explore specific ways to do this. The point is, planning will change as you go.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Everyone has 24 hours. Every author has different ways of managing theirs. Do you manage yours? There are ways to manage yours (and there are ways that don't work). I have to do a lot of things: write (just like you!) plus read, go to writing groups, do lessons and homework. I'm sure you have a lot of things on your plate, so I'm going to give you some tips on how to manage your time. Find my blog post on [Simplifying Your Writing Life](#) for more tips.

Firstly, cut out social media (and other things that distract you). How much time on tiktok, youtube, instagram, etc. do you spend each week, each day, each hour? How much time do you spend writing? Secondly, find out how many words you write in an hour. Use 1,000 words as a reference. For me, it's 1,000 words an hour, but maybe more if I'm distracted. This is a good average. Find your time to write. This will not only help you to know how much time to write, but also help you to know how many words you can write in 30 days how long it'll take you to write a book.

Thirdly, time block. This is one of the best ways to manage your time. You can do everything. But remember, time blocks don't just exist. Don't over-pack your schedule. Make time for sleep. Here is an example of what my schedule looks like.

make you feel like you're working towards a goal and not wandering aimlessly.

Listen to music! On spotify, there is DJ or you can turn on a rando writing playlist, and listen to the songs carefully. Do they fit the mood of your story? Sometimes, it just takes the right song to get you re-inspired. If you like these sort of things, make a playlist for your books, characters, scenes, whatever you like. Associating songs with your writing can help you think of ideas and write or just get in the writing mood.

Take a break, listen to your mind and body. You have all the time in the world, this project won't run away, and time will always make it better.

Some say to write what you know. Others say to write what you don't know. Choose one of these and roll with it. Choose your deepest fear and write it out. Choose an emotion you struggle with, or something you don't understand about the world.

ACTIVITY 10:

Write a 30 word scene about your favourite character:

That's actually great, because it means you aren't copy-pasting your stories, and are growing as a writer. Well done!

Even if you don't like plans, I would do a little bit to keep you on track, and not be like 'what is the story even about?' a third of the way into your writing. When writing anything, you basically have to figure it out as you go along, and learn from your mistakes. However, I believe planning is (unfortunately) the section of writing that requires this the most, because everyone is so different, and its purpose is for *you*, the writer, to understand the plot, and no one else can do that for you.

ACTIVITY 4:

Figure out how you want to p
steps you want to take (you d
you a format for this because

ACTIVITY 5:

Write a 100 word summary of your book.

FIGHTING WRITE

Don't fight it: conquer it. Or is inevitable; it's like school and the other. You can either write (which is definitely better for blocked for a reason. But always is it writer's block, or am I bored? you're not excited to write it, But you can make it into your time, you may be itching or going to go, despite being so excited. listed tips.

Writer's block can sometimes happen every day. No, it doesn't have to be words, or planning. Just sometimes, you don't want to overwork yourself, and come to this point of 'ugh.'

that will help them. To make them a sarcastic moment, or not actually answer. Something that was meant to happen. Look at your story based around expectation vs reality.

Another way to make a situation you don't want a thousand times more interesting is to have a character Emerald (in my second book) give the girl Ankhesenpaaten, so she can't be killed, a 'disrespectful' nickname that means 'disrespectful'. I mean it's not nice using it, but the receiving end

fun ways to add intrigue to your dialogue, and show how well each character knows each other, and their personalities. Just make sure you don't go crazy, or your reader will never remember the nicknames.

Lastly, let it flow. Read over the dialogue and think, *how can I make this funny?* And the answer will often come to you.

WORLD-BUILDING

This is one of my favourite parts of writing (the one that I'm expanding): world-building. Creating a world for your characters to exist in is so fun but it can be overwhelming. If your world is set in the real world, you still have to imagine it in your writing. In this section I will go over the basics of world-building. It's a giant umbrella term, and not all of it will apply to you. You only want to give what is relevant to your story, not long, dry descriptions.

Physical World

This is quite obviously something you're going to need to consider when writing. Where is this taking place? If you're writing a story set in the real world, you pretty much already have this sorted. If you're writing a story set in a place that's not real, where did you get your inspiration from? If you're writing a story set in a place that's not real, you don't want to do that, you want to create your own world. You can just the land in general by picking a place you like. This is really fun and can add so much detail to your story. What are the details such as woodlands, buildings, animals, plants, etc? Do the people in the story live in a city or in the countryside? What makes your world unique?

Magic Systems

Magic is fun, and there are many ways to create it. You can take inspiration from other books, TV shows, and movies, or create a world with a unique magic system by yourself. When creating a magic system, you need to decide what type of magic there is. There are many different types of magic systems: you start with the basics, like fire, water, earth, and air, and then decide how strict the magic rules are. You can decide whether there is one type of magic, or many. You can decide whether only one type of the magic will be used, or all of them will be: elemental, alchemical, or technological. You can decide whether there is a time limit for the magic, or if it's permanent. You can decide whether there will be different 'houses' (House of Fire, House of Water, etc) or if there will be Gods or a single God. You can decide whether the magic is pre-established, given at birth, or if it's something that the characters have to work for.

people will have magic? One? Everyone? A select few? Most? Will magic exist and you have to 'take' from it? *Just a few ideas for you to use.*

Place names

My favourite way to do this is to take a word related to the place (let's take the example of 'snow') and either translate it to another language; snieg (snow, in polish, but I don't personally include accents as there aren't any accents in the languages of my worlds). Or I like to take the word (snow) and use an A-Z code, meaning A turns to Z, B turns to Y, C turns to X, and so on. For example, snow would be Hmld, and then them if they are there to show a character's uncertainty. But make sure to not overuse it, even then.

1. Give a few characters unique speaking traits. For example, my main character Max stammers at the beginning of each sentence, along with the letters 't', 'g', 'k' or 'c', when they are at the beginning of a word. His stammer is stronger when he's more nervous, and diminishes when he's more confident. On the other hand, my protagonist Amethyst says 'ya' instead of 'you'. Something like that can be great to identify who is speaking and reduce the need for dialogue tags.
2. Fit the scene. If someone died, no one is going to be making jokes. Hopefully.
3. Don't get character A to tell character B hope to make a specific potion if they both already know it already. If you need the reader to know how the potion is made because the information will be needed later, introduce character C who learns it or tells your main character(s) this fact if they don't know it already. I hope that makes sense.
4. Make someone laugh in a serious scene. This breaks the tension unexpectedly and will often make the reader laugh too (when they find out what was so funny. There has to be a reason.)

But how do we make it funny? Expectation vs reality. We want character A to think when they ask a question, they'll get a response

DIALOGUE

I think one of the things I do funny and entertaining dialogue speaking in real life for this (I Dialogue is all about reflecting and adding some *fun*. It's es the characters think of thems want them to think). Well, di character's hidden motivation everyone's goal, even if it's to for you.

1. Watch real-life people in interviews, or in any other situation. Bonus points if the people are interesting.
2. Write it down. Just start talking to your characters. It doesn't have to be perfect, maybe it's so brilliant that you can use the conversations by putting them in your book, adding an extra side character or something like that.

Cut out any 'ums' 'likes', etc. that make the dialogue boring and slow down the pace. You can add some vowels to make it sound more natural. *Names are ok to use. They're part of the story.*

Languages

I'm creating a language right now. I've been working on it for a long time. What I would say is that you should focus on relevant words, not go through the grammar system and just think of the grammar system and the words.

The Inhabitants

People? Creatures? Faes with wings? Aliens? Aliens with wings? but not? You have to figure out what the world is like and what the world is like or vice versa.

The inhabitants will also have different customs, traditions, celebrations and beliefs, which will be reflected in the dialogue.

polar landscape, they will likely wear thick fur, eat seals or other polar creatures, and possibly celebrate the sun. If it's magical, do specific magic 'groups' live in specific areas? Are creatures different in various places? Just simple things. Best thing (to me) is to get the map I made earlier and split it into North, South, East, West and Cold and Hot and work from there.

ACTIVITY 6:

Answer these questions to figure out how much world-building you need. You will choose A, B, C or D with A being 1 point, B being 2 points, C being 3 points and D being 4. There won't be option D for all the questions, only where I feel is appropriate. At the end, your total points will tell you how much world-building you should do. (basically, this is like a fun quiz!)

How fictional is your setting?

- A) This place is 100% real. Everyone knows of it, and visits it.
- B) It's inspired by a real place/ it used to be a real place.
- C) I made it up. Maybe I took inspiration, but not consciously.

Is there magic?

- A) Ew. Magic isn't real and people who like it are crazy. (How dare you?!)
- B) Kind of?? It's complicated/ only a few people have magic.
- C) There is a lot magic, but it's not the main point of focus.
- D) Yes. magic is the basis of my whole world. It's essential.

When is it set?

- A) Nowadays/ a few years ago.
- B) In the past.

“Is it because we finally adopted the human system of monarchy and we are getting our first Queen today?” Uki replies sarcastically, and perfects her outfit, her mind a million miles away.

So, in summary, there are four steps: copy and proofreading. There are additive and excisive. You need to do one edit per type, and you need to be essential! And, I highly recommend that you can to get the true reader if possible.

ACTIVITY 10:

Try and edit this paragraph. See if you can then rewrite it, and edit again. This will help you to improve your editing skills. If this is not enough, you can always write your own paragraphs, or use a grammar checker to help you with your style. Or you could even look for mistakes that have been overlooked.

Uki and Zosia dress in their finery for the coronation. It is to be a spectacle, and is supposed to be the most brilliant. They are to prepare, Uki and Zosia confess,

“Did you know this is meant
Millenium?” Zosia asks, tight

- A) In the future.
- B) My world has their own

Where is it set?

- A) An everyday place. A
- B) It's set in a hidden pla
- C) In a mythical land far

Who lives there?

- A) People.
- B) People, but who have
- C) There are some magic
- D) No people. Just magi

What language do they speak?

- A) English (or a commonly spoken language today).
- B) A dead/ extinct language, or a dialect of what we use.
- C) Some use our languages, some don't. Depends.
- D) Their own language, of course!

Last question: How good is your imagination?

- A) I can imagine eating dinner. Sometimes.
- B) I get lost in thought sometimes.
- C) I dream vividly and can make stuff up.
- D) I live in my imagination. Reality means nothing to me.

7-11 points. You don't need much. Maybe just a little to have a sense of what sort of place this is, but not much more is needed. If you want to world-build, feel free, but if it's London, don't waste too much time on it.

12-17 points. You have a few things you already know you have to sort out, but you can do it. Just an evening (maybe two) will be enough to make sense of everything. Good luck!

18-21 points. Drawing a map might be a good idea, and remembering to follow this time/place's rules are very important, so you (and your reader) don't get lost. Remember to write down the things you think, because no matter how hard you try, you won't remember them.

22-26 points. Get out the notebooks. It's time to plan. Open all your documents because you have a lot to figure out. Your world doesn't follow our regular rules, and you need to work out how to make your reader engaged and not confused. How can you show them just how incredible your world is?

No matter what you got, do what you think is needed for your understanding and your reader's.

writing. Additive does this by adding detail to develop the text to convey mood and message better. It is not adding unnecessary

paragraph-long descriptions. that stops the reader from getting however, that doesn't mean you needed, sometimes both together while. Maybe only rewording

But how do you actually edit and use a pen to do everything with one pen. I like to print it out and once for proofreading) and a highlighter to go through everything. Anything green is perfect; any system works for me, it might I do recommend printing it out.

I recently learnt you can export so I'm doing that with book 2.

Additionally, on your Google Drive, the spell checker and other tools are built in. It's not perfect, but it's good, with the basic options in editor. But don't rely on them, because a lot of the time, the spell checker won't catch grammar errors (at least not for a very basic grammar rules you never knew existed). It's the most stressful part of the process.

Proofreading. If you want any feedback, you can use a beta reader or a proof-reader. This is the perfect way to catch errors you and your beta reader might have missed. You can also proofread your book, and you want at least two people to do it (one editor), but get as many as you can. You can also use my manuscript (either with my manuscript or with a publishing platform) and read it out loud.

Now, of course, you don't have to do all of this. You can do multiple edits. There is no problem with doing a whole book alone with one edit. I usually do one edit, but to me they can be done at once.

You might have to do five developmental edits and two copy edits. It all depends on you. But I would say, you do need developmental and proofreading (mixed with line editing). These are essential to make sure your book flows right, and it's very hard to work on them together.

Along with these, there are two types of editing techniques: additive and excisive. Both are different ways to bring clarity into a piece of

WRITING REALISTIC CHARACTERS

Not everyone believes in astrology and I acknowledge this! You don't have to believe it to use it though: it's simply a fun personality tool that is very useful for writing characters. People usually have a mixture of the different characteristics of zodiac signs, so feel free to mix and match as you please. Here are the twelve zodiac personalities:

ARIES: Bold, energetic, charismatic, funny.	Goal: to be a leader. Fear: losing control.
TAURUS: Stubborn, dependable, good listener, food-loving.	Goal: stability. Fear: change.
GEMINI: Playful, curious, quick-witted, independent.	Goal: to learn new things. Fear: being bored.
CANCER: Intuitive, emotional, protective, compassionate.	Goal: to create a home. Fear: rejection.
LEO: Arrogant, confident, ambitious, confident.	Goal: to be admired. Fear: being ignored.
VIRGO: Logical, hardworking, judgemental, observant.	Goal: to be organised. Fear: making mistakes.

LIBRA: Indecisive, romantic, sophisticated, gossipy.

SCORPIO: Passionate, competitive, fierce, mysterious.

SAGITTARIUS: Individualistic, wild, optimistic, impatient.

CAPRICORN: Driven, melancholic, helpful, sincere.

AQUARIUS: Friendly, idealistic, unpredictable, restless.

PISCES: Sensitive, patient, gullible, mature.

As you can tell, some of these (which can create great characters) should fulfil each other's needs in a relationship)

you can change it, but don't do it! Doing developmental editing, voice of your story, making sure it makes sense.

Line editing. This is the time to edit like the name suggests. You change the text when the writing is read. Is the prose rigid? Is the phrasing awkward? Is the pace too slow? You can change it slightly with developmental editing (but you want to make sure continuity is maintained from previous edits), and keep the character's personality. Your character is doing things that make sense. And cut weak words! Stuff like 'suddenly' is very boring and clichéd. There are alternatives, but don't go overboard. Like when something is actualised.

Grammarly decided to check it. Just proof that these words are weak). But even then, try and show, not tell that it's 'very surprising'.

Copy editing. This entails: SPaG (such as commas, using consistent English-English or American-English, etc.), clarity, readability, fact-checking, accuracy, consistency, and style. It's all about getting the little things right, fixing anything that needs to be. This is your last chance to make any adjustments to your writing. Afterwards, nothing major will be done (and shouldn't have to be). We're diving into the

think you're only as good a writer as your book is popular. All that matters is that you love it. You can't judge one's ability to write a murder when reading a contemporary romance. Your book is incredible, but taking advice will help others see its beauty.

That being said, there are a few types of editing you'll have to go through: developmental editing (the main story chunk and will probably be done first), line editing (refining style and language), copy editing (grammar, spelling, punctuation) and proofreading (final edits to make sure your reader has a flawless experience with your book). I'm going to break them down, and help you calm your nerves. This is a big task, but you can do it. It'll all be worth it.

Developmental editing. This is focusing on the big picture, working on the plot, character arcs, pacing, themes and cohesiveness. The goal is to make sure the story is good and achieves the intended effect. This is the time for feedback, whether from a developmental editor (as a teen, I don't think you need these) or beta readers. If you don't know what beta readers are, they are early readers for your book who'll give you feedback and sometimes a review. Honestly, I highly recommend you find people to read your book pre-release (the editing stage doesn't really matter) because readers will read your book, and you want to make sure they enjoy it. Back to developmental editing, this is not a grammar check. That is later. You don't have to go line-by-line to catch every mistake: you're reading through to get rid of plot holes or the guy winking four times in a chapter. If you notice something small,

Each character (main, secondary, tertiary, etc.) should have certain traits. I'm going to break them down:

Main- goal, fear, misbelief, background, weaknesses.

Secondary- goal, (some sort of) fear, misbelief, weaknesses.

Tertiary- goal, personality, strengths.

I have already covered goals and fears. Goals are linked to fear. For example, if a character's goal is to become a writer, their fear/misbelief will be that they have no talent. If a character's goal is to help others, their fear will be rejection, they may believe that they won't be liked or that others won't help them grow as a character.

A backstory is essential for the character. It can be the reason why they are how they are, why they have the fears they do, why they can't remember their past, etc. It's important to remember that backstory is not just for the character's benefit, it's for the reader's benefit as well. So make sure to still think of the reader when writing backstory.

My best tip for realistic characters is to act like them, speak like them (in my opinion, this is the most important tip), and listen to them or listen to the music they like.

being an actor: you have to practice this without another character.

A quick note on writing relationships. Relationships are unique, what do they have in common, what do they have that's different, what do they differ? What do they like? What do they dislike? What did their relationship change over time? How did their relationship change over the course of the story? How do they interact with each other? All very important to the story. But with every relationship, there are two sides. There's the character for the plot, it's there for the story, it's there for the character, it's there for the reader.

Lastly, when writing characters, consider the positive or negative change they undergo.

resources for this is Joseph Campbell's hero's journey. You might have heard of it (I personally knew of it from school, forgot about it, then remembered when my uncle asked me about it) and you can find it anywhere online, but there will be a link in the resources section. It is very self-explanatory and it can be used in union with the 3/5/7 Act Story Structures.

EDITING

I'm editing too. But my first note about it is: don't rush it! Writing your book gives you what happens and editing is what makes it good. An unedited book will never do well. I'm sorry to say, but you have to go through the painful process. But, you don't have to think of it as painful. You can make it fun, and you should. You especially don't have to rush it because you are young, and there is no rush to publish it by this-and-that date. You don't have to be a teen author, you can be a teen writer. But, if it's the right time for you, go ahead.

In one of my blog posts I mentioned critiquecircle.com, which is a site where you can post parts of your books and get amazing feedback from other writers. This has been extremely helpful with my second book, and I wish I had known about it for my first one too. This is especially perfect if you don't have real-life reader or writer friends, and you don't want to pay an insane amount of money to be on 'professional' beta reader sites. In my opinion, the best beta readers are the ones who are likely to read your book out in the real world. Family is good too, along with friends, but they can be hesitant to give you some of the advice you need sometimes. Find someone who can be brutally honest, or go to critique circle.

I want to hold your hand when I say this: critiques of your writing, do not mean you are bad at something. Alternatively, you are being amazing for reaching out for advice and implementing it. Please never

For epilogues, these should be kept short, like prologues, unless there are too many unanswered questions, then you should write another book which explains these answers, or explore them in the plot of the one you were already writing. Don't write long epilogues. When the

story is done, you may want to add characters, but it doesn't really need to be done. It should be used to tie up loose ends that don't have a chance at a last chapter and the epilogues shouldn't be. However, they are both aiming for the same way. An epilogue can skip a chapter (but I recommend if you should do that as an epilogue, the world and characters have changed since the climax).

Remember, you shouldn't need to add characters to the story. This is like an afterword, they actually live happily after the story ends, they don't fit in with the story.

ACTIVITY 7:

Feel free to fill out this quick questionnaire (you can skip sources).

Role:

Goal:

Fear:

Misbelief:

Insecurity(s):

Best friend(s):

Enemy(s):

Other relations:

Appearance:

Other details (powers, disabilities, etc.):

next book. Consider what you finished the book, and make sure the ending has the right genre you're writing and what main character has a positive

A positive character arc will make characters accept themselves, the world and others better. This is the 'hero's journey' arc. However, you can also have a negative character arc, showing that the events can cause a character to misbelieve and decide they don't deserve the goodness of goodness has changed. In the *Time Traveler's Wife* series there will be a positive arc (which book) and this will continue through the book. But, a negative character arc can show a message along the lines of "the world will be y." This can be to show the reader that the person, or you should avoid them.

When writing your final chapter, make sure it follows what you established earlier in the book (such as a prophecy or something that was set up and fulfilled).

WRITING THE FINAL CHAPTER

This is the last thing your reader will see, so make a good impression and leave a good ending. If they are hooked, but when they finish the book, they won't review it, recommend it or pass it on. A ending which falls flat will get in the reader's mind. There are many types to end your book: a cyclical ending, a different ending, a cliff-hanger (best used for series), an unexpected ending, an ending where the reader is unsure what happened at the end (good for a standalone), a tragic ending, a

making the reader wish there was more), expanded ending (an epilogue. More on those in a minute) and a reflective ending.

When you're writing a standalone (or the last book in the series) you want to wrap up loose ends and show us how the main character has changed as a result of their journey. Why did all that matter? How did they overcome their fear, achieve their goal or stopped believing in their misbelief? That's what the whole story is about. Readers want the answer to that question, and if you can't think of one, the reader will wonder why they spent hours reading your book for the character to go through some challenges and learn nothing from them. When writing a series, you want the final chapter to springboard into the

AVOIDING BAD CHARACTER TROPES

I'm going to split this part into two sections: males and females. This is because there are completely different cringe tropes for both genders. Try to avoid them or make sure to un-cringe it by putting your own spin on it and not falling into the patterns of previous writers. I'm also including ways authors just make the characters so unrealistic.

MALES: Claiming she's his enemy when she isn't (give them moral differences). he smirks all the time, the doorframe lean. "Who did this to you" (actions speak louder than words). excessive use of pet names. A disrespectful man. the not-so bad boy who's only nice to her. being weirdly protective. over-describing his body. making him too self-aware. focusing too much on hotness. same emotional responses as a woman. never allowed to be vulnerable. overly-descriptive observations. a group of guys who are heartfelt.

FEMALES: Competitive masculine energy. Hollow threats of violence. "I hate you." She says whilst kissing him. Love interest is her whole life. The BFF with no life of her own. Making her a damsel in distress. Making her all-powerful. She's only there for the male protagonist. Over-describing her body. Failing to balance light and dark feminine energy. Strictly male or female hobbies. Using her head more than her heart. Emotions equal weakness. Having no flaws.

I want your main takeaway from this to be: don't make just any character fit this box. Make them have flaws, be complex

contradictions (because all people make human.) and have a purpose start to prop up when your character the two most fundamental parts also be part of the reading experience. MMC or FMC, remember that others. And lastly, let them feel emotions, even if some are being

Check online: there are so many overdone. This is something you also readers who have experienced

ACTIVITY 8:

Research what are the top 8 tropes related to your characters (e.g. can avoid them (or twist them)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

PROLOGUE

Now, for a prologue, I like to set up the feeling of the book but also (which is important to remember for prologues). Make sure they are relevant to the character's life story. Let it be relevant to the climax. You want everything to be relevant later, especially for the reader's feeling 'why did I read that?'

When is a prologue necessary? When information the reader needs to understand the plot of the story. For example, if you're writing a story about the past and you need clues about

only there to show how the character's childhood was like, you probably don't need it. Of course, it is all up to you, and you can ask beta readers if they find it necessary. It is a case-by-case basis, and don't add it just for the sake of it, because like I said, some people skip it and it has to be well-done.

7.

Lastly, don't start (or end) with 'it was a dream' or a dream sequence. It takes out the stakes of the situation and is so unsatisfying.

8.

Next, you have to write the rest of the chapter. This is an important time in your writing, as you're actually starting to write. Here are some tips to help you:

- Don't be afraid- you can always edit
- Set up your story's premise
- You're throwing your reader in a white room
- Description but not too much
- Not too many characters and don't give attention to inconsequential characters.

In the first chapter, you have to introduce your protagonist's internal conflict and who they are. What do they want? What are they afraid of? How could they change throughout the course of the book? Don't overload the reader with backstory, sprinkle it in, at this point they don't care yet! Give the first chapter a plot, a purpose of where this story is going. Don't confuse the reader. Confusion only leads to frustration. In the first chapter we need to know: who, where, what. You can give us three different senses to ground the reader in the scene.

Don't start with a bunch of exposition about the world, magic system, ect. It is so boring and overwhelming. Don't 'save' the good stuff for later. Show it now to hook us in. Whether it's internal conflict, where they are, what they are. This ruins the image the reader automatically builds in their head, and you'll never get through to them to change it.

5.

6.

3 ACT vs 5 ACT vs 7 ACT STORY STRUCTURES

Not everyone will want to do this, especially if you didn't enjoy the chapter on planning an idea. If so, then this chapter is not for you and I give you permission to skip it.

I just found the seven-act story structure, which I haven't used yet on its own. This is how I found the set-up of it online: Act 1- backstory. Act 2- catalyst. Act 3- big event. Act 4- midpoint. Act 5- crisis. Act 6- climax. Act 7- realization. I will update this part when I learn more about it, however.

I can tell you about the five act story structure more, though. This sort of structure was used in Shakespearean plays, and consists of: Act 1- Exposition. Act 2- Rising Action. Act 3- Climax. Act 4- Falling Action. Act 5- Resolution.

In my latest project (let's call it... project feather) I decided to mix all three of these story structures so you don't have to try it. Honestly... this might be what I use from now on. To me it makes sense, and I hope it helps you too.

1. The back story haunts the central character.
2. The catalyst gets the character moving. It's part of the story's setup.
3. The character starts to pursue their goals.

WRITING THE FIRST CHAPTER

My friend is currently writing the first chapter of her first book ever! I'm so excited and proud of her! That has nothing to do with this section, other than it's amazing to write the first chapter. It's such an important time in your writing life, but it's also quite a bit of pressure. This is what your future reader will base their opinion of the whole book on. So, you need to capture the feel of your story, whether it's mysterious, funny or adventurous, and also make an amazing first impression. Sounds impossible, but it's not. I'm going to take your hand and guide you through it.

You have five minutes to capture your readers attention. That is the time they will spend checking your book (if they are the type to start

reading a book before buying focus, even if they're bored.

First, you want a line that creates questions. Because the average reader is curious, and it's also a key message of your story. It's well-known that time is a precious resource, and that he is a cruel being and not afraid of pain." (This is in the prologue, but I will add more detail in a second). The reader hooked, so choose it well, and then move on with the book down.

any social media platform, but especially on Instagram, because it is easy to get distracted. Get someone to keep you accountable, and to give you tough love (for me personally, this is especially useful if they also write). Whether it's to become a best-selling author, or to share your story, and remember that if you work towards it. No one can stop you, unfortunately.

Keep an accountability buddy, or a fellow writer, and she asks me for feedback, and finding someone to read your work for you. If there is no one in real life, there are many places where you can meet other writers online, like Pinterest or youtube or websites. On youtube, there are many youtube channels that you can also chat with fellow writers, and get feedback and meet writers like yourself.

Most importantly, writing should be a break or switch projects. I know I have a million WIPs, but it's fine! You can write whatever mood you have. Just keep writing until you reach the end, and even if it doesn't, you can always go back and edit it.

4. The big event changes the story.

5. The midpoint is the point of no return or a moment of deep motivation.
6. The character thinks they have achieved their goal, tension is at its highest.
7. The crisis is the low point or an event that forces the key decision that leads to your story end.
8. The character must face consequences and the author should put doubts in the readers' heads about the outcome of the story.
9. The climax is the final face-off between your central character and the opposition
10. The realization occurs when your character or audience sees that the character has changed or realised something.
11. Tie up loose ends, complete character arcs and have a happy or tragic ending.

There are other people online who explain the 3, 5 and 7 Act Story Structure better than me, and this is just an overview for you to see what you like the look of. I will link them in the resources section at the end. I'm keeping this section short because I'm not an expert on this, and these other writers will give you much better advice.

ACTIVITY 9:

Here is a story mountain to wor

Exposition

Denouement

MAKE WRITING WORK FOR YOU

Writing is fun yet challenging; you are creating a whole world and trying to take it from your imagination and putting into a few thousand words on paper. I want to be the one to tell you, no matter what stage you are at, you are where you are meant to be. Writing is an art that takes years to master (which I can't say I have achieved yet) and it'll come in time. This project doesn't have to be finished, but if you keep pushing through it, it is possible. Anything is possible if you put your mind to it.

I know better than anyone that motivation comes and goes, but you don't always have to be productive. Writing for five or ten minutes each day, whether it's lore or the main story or some bad bonus scenes or backstory, each minute gets you closer to your writing goal. Ways to increase your motivation will be different for each reader, and will come naturally with time (like most parts of writing. I know it's SO annoying to hear, but time and experience will be your best friends in the end) but here are some ideas: listen to a specific song, playlist, or chew a specific gum flavour when in the writing mood, and this will trick your brain into associating that specific experience with inspiration. You can also build a writing habit or writing at the same time for the same amount of time each day: this makes you get used to it, and it'll become natural and you won't even need motivation. Additionally, you can watch lots of motivational videos on youtube or