

The November Novelist's Essential Toolkit

Edited by NewMexicoKid
<http://naperwrimo.org>



Hitchcock's
Axiom: A good story is life with the dull parts taken out.

"Good writing is supposed to evoke sensation in the reader—not the fact that it is raining, but the feeling of being rained upon." -- E.L. Doctorow

If there's a book you really want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it.
~ Toni Morrison

Disclaimer: This kit is not official NaNoWriMo content and has not been reviewed by National Novel Writing Month:
www.nanowrimo.org

You can take for granted that people know more or less what a street, a shop, a beach, a sky, an oak tree look like. **Tell them what makes this one different.** ~ Neil Gaiman

I try to leave out the parts
that people skip.
~Elmore Leonard



20 Master Plots, Ronald Tobias
<http://tinyurl.com/rtobias20>

Quest	Underdog	Discovery
Adventure	Temptation	Wretched
Pursuit	Metamorphosis	Excess
Rescue	Transformation	Ascension
Escape	Maturation	Descension
Revenge	Love	
The Riddle	Forbidden Love	
Rivalry	Sacrifice	

How to Write a Book in Three Days:

Lessons from Michael Moorcock, by Eric Rosenfield

1. have everything properly prepared;
 2. use a formula as your base;
 3. have an event every four pages;
 4. prepare a complete structure so you know what problems to solve at every point;
 5. have a list of fantastic images;
 6. imagery before action;
 7. important objective + limited time;
 8. once started, keep rolling!
 9. plant mysteries because you might need them later.
 10. start with a mystery. Every time you reveal a bit of it, do something to increase the mystery.
 11. immediate goal + immediate time constraint + overriding time element.
 12. Everything must have a narrative function; no action without information coming out of it.
 13. Introduce all main characters in the first third; intro all main themes in the first third, develop in the second third, resolve in the final third.
 14. sidekick to make the responses the hero isn't allowed to make.
 15. When in doubt, descend into a minor character to keep the narrative moving along.
- Ref: <http://www.multiverse.org/> and <http://tinyurl.com/bookin3days>

Editing advice from AmaranthMuse:

1. Read the story out loud. Rephrase stumbling spots.
2. Search for places to put concrete detail.
3. Get rid of adverbs, stock adjectives that mean nothing, unnecessary brothers and sisters of "said."
4. Make sure every paragraph starts and ends with tension. first and last sentences are always the most important.
5. Paint the background of your scene so the action isn't happening in a white room.
6. Remove unnecessary beats.
7. Ask yourself how your main character would react--don't let them be passive! Decrease repetition of ideas.
8. Replace tired descriptions with fresher ones.
9. Visual pacing (paragraph vs. dialog).
10. Possible to make it more difficult for the MC by introducing more conflict in this scene.
11. Make sure chapters and scenes have a beginning, middle and ending. also, ensure there is conflict in every scene.

Writer's Block Doesn't Exist, by J.J. Lancer

1. know the final destination for your characters: the end goal, the big payoff. Know your story!

2. Writing is not so much about writing as it is about rewriting; intend perfection but don't expect it.

Ref: <http://tinyurl.com/tyrolancer>

Useful References

Online resources, book recommendations, more: <http://naperwrimo.org/wiki>



How to hurt your character, adapted from Chuck Wendig.

Use the antagonist. Increase the **high stakes**. Confirm **heroism** against tough odds. Give MC diametrically opposed **choices**. Give MC an **untenable secret** to protect. Throw **roadblocks** in MC's path but give them small successes. What does MC **fear**? What does MC not want?. Have MC's victory prove itself a hollow one. Identify what MC treasures and take them away. Put MC under **time pressure**. Physically wound MC. Have someone **betray** MC. Shatter MC's life. Pull the rug out from under what MC believes. **Love triangle**. Force MC to **lie and deceive** others. Dramatic irony: **misunderstandings**. Have MC make a **terrible decision** or a mistake. Threaten MC's loved ones. Have MC become something that he hates. Exploit MC's weaknesses. Threatening/dangerous setting. MC's past catches up with them.

A Simple Novel outline: 9 questions for 25 chapters, H.E. Roulo (<http://tinyurl.com/roulo9>)

1. Why did you choose your hero? What's so special?
2. What is the hero doing right now? Enter the story as late as possible
3. What outside force changes everything for the hero?
4. What is the hero's goal?
5. What are the obstacles along the way? Things must get worse after every obstacle.
6. What qualities of the hero help or hinder them to overcome these obstacles?
7. How will the hero change over the course of the story?
8. What are you trying to say? Why are you writing this particular story?
9. What sacrifice levels the playing field? The hero must demonstrate she/he is worthy to win. This is the moment of black despair— drag it out

Janet Fitch's 10 rules for writers

by Carolyn Kellogg

<http://tinyurl.com/jfitch10>

1. Write the sentence, not just the story: *make your sentences unique by providing music, lots of edges and corners to the sounds*
2. Pick a better verb
3. Kill the cliché.
4. Variety is the key: *change up your sentence length/structure*
5. Explore sentences using dependent clauses.
6. Use the landscape: *establish the emotional tone of the scene.*
7. Smarten up your hero: *keep them observant and thinking.*
8. Learn to write dialogue.
9. Write in scenes: *make something happen!*
10. Torture your hero *in their greatest vulnerability and fear*

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NaNo String Instructions!

1. Tie a knot in the string for each day you make your daily word count goal!
2. Use it to set a trap for your internal editor.
3. Writing too quickly? Try it with one hand tied behind your back...
4. Use it to lasso some plot bunnies - or set a snare for them.
5. Use it to hang a sign from your doorknob when you are noveling ("Novelist at Work" "Writing - Do Not Disturb")
6. Sneak up behind your friends, then use it to capture them and do not let them go until they promise to join you in noveling/force you to work on your novel.
7. Use it as a leash when you take your plot bunnies for a walk (and use them as bait for other plot bunnies)
8. Tie it around a convenient part of your body to remind yourself that you should be writing (kind of like the string around your finger trick to remember something, except a bit bigger).
9. Loosely tie your hands together so you can still type/write but so that you can honestly tell any friends who call that you're tied up right now.
10. Use it to play cat's cradle with a fellow writer (a productive break).
11. Dangle something sparkly from your string and use it to hypnotize yourself to break a habit of editing while you write.
12. Wrap it tightly around your pencil for a pretty decoration.

