

Plan a Novel in an Afternoon

Think of an environment. Fill in the relevant details: where is it? Which time period?

Think of three characters who live or work there. There is some kind of unease going on in this world - something isn't right.

An big event occurs. Things get shaken up - make it bad and make it a definitive event.

Pick one character to focus on. Have the specific problems they face relate to the environment they are in or on the big event that takes place.

Now come up with twenty-five problems – things that could go wrong in their world.

Next, under each of the following headings (that are designed to get worse as you go) rearrange your twenty-five problems into the order you want them in your novel.

Start small and get bigger and make every problem specific. For example, bad day could mean: loses car keys, gets soaked in the rain, misses kids' bedtime.

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| 1. Bad day | 13. Hardship |
| 2. Gut feeling | 14. Struggle |
| 3. Niggle | 15. Fight / conflict / argument |
| 4. Bother | 16. Major problem |
| 5. Annoyance | 17. Multiple major problems |
| 6. Irritation | 18. Catastrophe |
| 7. Worry | 19. Crisis |
| | 20. Major loss |
| | 21. Injury / sacrifice |
| | 22. Fight / conflict / argument |
| | 23. Struggle |
| | 24. Difficulty |
| | 25. Hope at last |
- Big event shakes up their world HERE.
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| 8. Difficulty |
| 9. Hurdle |
| 10. Obstacle |
| 11. Barrier |
| 12. Multiple barriers |

Now go through each problem and note down how the character you've chosen responds to each problem. Hint: they should be more proactive than a so-called 'ordinary' person would be in these circumstances.

Now the fun bit – rearrange so that the problems lead one from the other somehow.

Spend some time reviewing, redrafting and polishing your list – make your plan sparkly.

Congratulations - you've just planned a whole novel.

For more ideas like this, check out my Udemy course Find Time to Write Your Novel:
<http://udemy.com/find-time-to-write-your-novel/>