

Broad Editing and Services VIEWS ON WRITING

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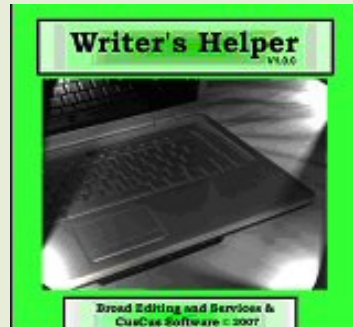
Dear Writer,

There are some new and exciting changes in store for Broad Editing and Services where you get to reap the benefits. It's coming soon so stay tuned.

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Views on Writing:

Key Points to Writing a Short Story

By Tracy Miller © 2009

BES Writer

Ready to write a short story? Pen poised, blank paper crisp and expectant? Before you start just remember, you have limited pages to introduce characters, develop a storyline, create a mood, involve the reader, and wrap it all up in a sensational ending! Now that you are all

it all up in a sensational ending! Now that you are all sufficiently panicked, remember that writing a short story is actually a lot of fun. There is no lengthy drawn out character analysis, no having to go through intensive detail describing scenery or back histories. These are generally mentioned, but the rest is alluded to. Beware though dear writer, this does not mean you mustn't do your research! A short story or novella lacking in depth, and appearing shallow will soon leave the reader uninterested in the storyline. You must convincingly portray sound knowledge of location, genre, and persona.

Below are some guidelines to follow when constructing a short story:

- Have a clear idea in mind of where the story is going, and how you want it to end.
- Jot down ideas on characters, their back histories, their location, and their personalities. While you may not use all this information, the knowledge created will show through in the characters you are developing.
- Remember, you only have a short amount of space to capture a reader's attention. Make your opening paragraph interesting that grabs (or hooks) the reader.
- Be imaginative. A love story may be easy to write, but a predictive ending can also quickly lose the interest of a reader.
- Do not get lost in too much detail, but ensure enough is maintained to assure the reader of authenticity.
- Keep it relatively simple. There is simply not enough space in a short story to introduce a vast array of characters and their prospective storylines. Readers need to meet, familiarise, and know the characters so that they may relate to them. Too many characters in a short space, and readers may well find it hard keeping up with who's who.
- Know your own characters. A reader needs to know the characters are believable and their actions a result of their personalities.
- Follow a clear structure of introduction, body, and conclusion - and don't forget to check your work!

One issue seen time and again with writers is their inability to speak from a character's perspective. Syntax (local language), idioms, and customs all come through in a person, so these need to be accounted for. A young teenage boy will use language and have ideas far different to his father or grandfather. Similarly, a character based in India may well have beliefs peppered with religious and local customs than that of someone based in outback Australia. Be exact in your characters

based in outback Australia. Be exact in your characters. If they display a mixture of conflicting mannerisms, ensure this is due to an obvious cause, such as the character having grown up in two different countries.

One final point I would like you to consider, there are three ways in which an author may portray his story: in the first person (I), in the second (you), and in the third (they).

Examples:

I tiptoed quietly to the door, my heart beating furiously in my chest.

You tiptoe quietly to the door, your heart beating furiously in your chest.
She tiptoed quietly to the door, her heart beating furiously in her chest.

Usually the third person is used in stories; however, if you decide to write in either of the other two, make sure you remain consistent! There is nothing worse than reading a paragraph that chops and changes within the narration.

This is a very obvious example, but the point is made:

She tiptoed quietly to the door, my heart beating furiously in her chest.

There are many ways in which to write. Whether it is to be a short story, a novella, or a novel, let the story flow naturally. Many authors feel inspired by music; when picturing scenes in their minds, music invariably accompanies it. If this is the case with you, then get that stereo going, wrap yourself in a cloak of imagination and write, write, write!

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