


# A BEGINNING, MIDDLE, & END

5 PLOTS TO WRITE  
YOUR STORY

Writing Projects

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## DEAR FELLOW AUTHOR,

Welcome! In this writing project, we will focus on two parts—**writing** and **storytelling**. You will be presented with five plots in different genres with the beginning, middle, and end of the story. Your mission (if you choose to write it) is to create the story around these details to craft a complete story from start to finish. You will have a defined set of characters with open-ended questions for some creative edge. Additional characters and plot twists to reach the end are encouraged.

**The goal of this writing project is to:**

- learn how to expand on details
- develop a solid story structure process
- dabble in multiple storylines to build confidence in writing
- strengthen your writing skills by working with multiple genres
- become comfortable with building a writing process that works for you

Before we begin, you will be presented with some tips to help develop and outline the story structure, so you can plan your story for one or more of the plots provided. Then it's your time to shine to use that colorful imagination and vision of yours to fill in the rest!

**What legacy will you leave today?**

Remember the most salient story you can write is your own.

Happy writing, friend!



Victoria A. Witkewitz  
Author & Founder  
Red Bicycle Books, LLC



“

Explore a story that tugs at your mind and tickles the tips of your fingers as you bring it into existence.

-Victoria A. Witkewitz



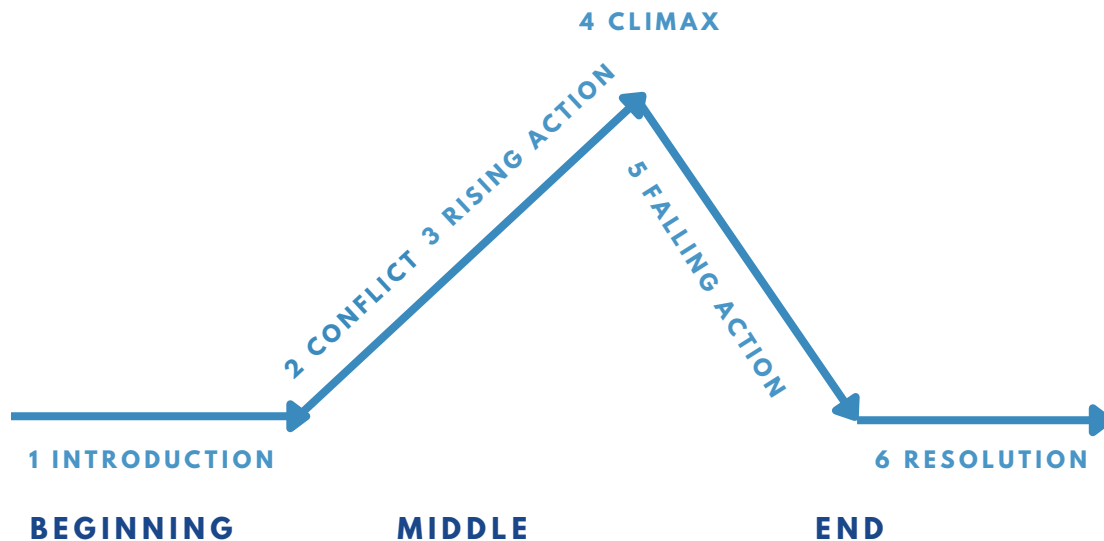
# WRITING A STORY

Writing a story is a lot like developing a roll of film. It takes the time necessary for all of the colors to come together uniformly before a complete image emerges to create a photograph. Once you do, this visual can leave a lasting impression.

A story is broken up into three parts: the **beginning**, the **middle**, and the **end**. Between these main parts are details that support the objective or plot of the story. Depending on the amount of detail an author includes to create the story will dictate the duration of each portion of the story. A story should be written with the appropriate level of detail for the audience to comprehend the meaning of your story.

## FREYTAG'S PYRAMID

Gustav Freytag developed this concept that visually walks you through how a story unfolds to demonstrate the critical junctures of a story composition.



We will discuss this in more detail in a moment, but first, let's talk about story components necessary to compose a story.

# STORY COMPONENTS

## SETTING

Time (past, present, and/or future) and place.

## CHARACTER(S)

Main key players of the story. Characters can be people, objects, animals, forces of nature, fictional creations such as beasts, goblins, elves, etc.

Characters propel the story. They are faced with conflicts and struggles that result in actions taken.

## PLOT/CRITICAL KEY MOMENTS

The events of the story that unfold in sequence. This includes the introduction, identifying the problem(s) to solve/conflict, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

## CONFLICT

What is/are the character's main goal(s)? What is/are the character(s) trying to solve?

## THEME

The mood, feel, emotion, and sensation for the reader to transcend their imagination. The theme also sets the tone of the story. For example, you would know the difference between reading a textbook versus a fiction horror book.

Now, let's discuss how we can use these elements to move the story along.

# STORY ARC

## STEP ONE

### INTRO/SET THE SCENE

Introduce character(s).

Set the scene, mood, time, and theme.

## STEP TWO

### PRESENT THE CONFLICT(S)

Provide the reader with the question(s)/problem(s) the character(s) is/are faced to solve and their goals. Initiate the conflict and lead into the rising action.

## STEP THREE

### RISING ACTION

Build story pace and tension, continue unfolding the central conflict, with significant events (plot points/Critical Key Moments) that require the character(s) to resolve the conflict.



Build interest and intensity to unfold the story to reach the climax

## STEP FOUR

### CLIMAX

The intensity of the story is revealed. Think of this as your “battle scene” and the critical turning point for the characters to lead to the resolution of the story.

## STEP FIVE

### FALLING ACTION

The events that occur after the bulk of the story is revealed. The reader should have a solid understanding and comprehension solving the main idea of the story.

Guide the reader to the conclusion by tying up any loose ends for the reader in a gradual progression.

## STEP SIX

### RESOLUTION

Provide key takeaways/morals/lessons learned to wrap up the story.

The conflict is resolved and/or leads into a new development (such as content for a sequel).

# OUTLINING A STORY

Before you begin writing, spend ample time planning to outline the flow of the story. Find a tool that feels natural for you to express your ideas without judgment. Whether you use notecards, a cluster map, or another tool, brainstorm your ideas. Check out this Authors' Notes article for more ideas [Outline Mapping Your First Book](#).

## CRITICAL KEY MOMENTS

Critical Key Moments are the important plot points that link a story together. In this project, you are presented with the beginning, middle, and end of the story, which, in essence, represent a large portion of the Critical Key Moments of a story.

## LIGHTBULB EFFECT QUESTIONS



To write a memorable story, the goal is to leave a lasting impression with your reader. To achieve this, define and write answers to the Lightbulb Effect Questions.

What should the reader **know** by the end of the story?

- This is the end plot result.

What should the reader **acknowledge** by the end of the story?

- This is the character and conflict resolution.

What should the reader **understand** by the end of the story?

- These are the key takeaways you want the reader to understand including underlying messages, morals, beliefs, (if applicable).

The Lightbulb Effect Questions connect with your reader to establish meaning and grasp the intent of your writing.

# SET THE SCENE

When you are writing a story, think about setting the scene for the reader to create the details that bring the story to life.

## TIME



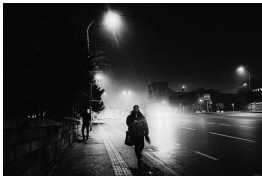
## LOCATION



## SOCIAL CONDITIONS (IF APPLICABLE)



## MOOD/TONE (GIVE THE READER A SENSE OF WHAT TYPE OF STORY THIS IS)



## CLIMATE/ENVIRONMENT (IF APPLICABLE)



# CAST CHARACTERS & DETAILS

Cast your characters and their roles. Include important details to make the character feel realistic. Use context (such as backstory, if applicable) and clues to help your reader piece the story together to follow along.

## CHARACTER DETAILS

Below is a quick list of character details to help bring a character to life.

- Personality traits, quirks, or expressions that project the character to stand out (i.e. extrovert, courageous, hilarious, unconscious habits such as cracking their knuckles)
- Emotional characteristics
- Physical appearance
- Motives
- Intentions
- Thoughts, morals, and/or beliefs
- Age
- Hobbies
- Occupation
- Pet peeves
- Favorites (books, movies, music, etc.)
- Habits (smoker, drinker)
- Skills

As a recommendation, only include relevant details to build the story. For example, a character's hobbies may not play a factor in a crime story, but may have relevance in a memoir.

Your goal is to differentiate between the characters so they are easily identifiable to a reader even without a name provided.

# DEFINE CHARACTER ROLES

Below are the types of character roles. Note, not every story will include all types of character roles. For example, a story does not have to include a love interest.

## CHARACTER ROLE TYPES

- Protagonist (hero)
- Antagonist (adversary)
- Supporting characters
  - **Love interest**
  - **Confidant**-a supporter of the protagonist who may act as a trusted advisor or friend. (Dr. McCoy as a main support to Captain Kirk).
  - **Foil**-a character who contrasts another character, usually the protagonist who helps to further enhance the character's strengths, weaknesses, and motives. (Draco Malfoy is a foil character to Harry Potter). Foil characters don't have to be adversaries. They assist the reader in understanding character distinction by emphasizing specific points and qualities.
  - **Tertiary characters**-characters that play a limited role in a story that typically do not appear more than a few times in the story. (Tommy Ryan in *Titanic*.)



# CREATE ESSENTIAL STORY DETAILS

Remember to communicate any relevant details important to tell the story. Think of this as a trail of breadcrumbs of essential clues to help the reader solve the story. Relevant details include, but are not limited to:

- **Backstory** such as their childhood, a previous event or past trauma that affects the character's motive and logic. This can also determine their approach to decision-making.
- **Scene details** that may be helpful to establish the mood and the tone of the story. For example, in a scary story, you may want to play on the reader's fears, phobias, to create that chilling effect.
- **Physical surroundings** that can challenge the character's goals, for example, a snowstorm.
- **Psychological factors** that may directly impact how the character responds to situations/challenges.
- **Sensory details** such as tastes, smells, or what a character sees through their perspective can enhance the story.

## PROJECT WRITING TIPS

- Read the plots carefully. Determine how you want the story to evolve around the beginning, middle, and end. For example, feel free to create a backstory about the characters.
- Spend some time brainstorming and outlining different methods to reach each juncture in the story.
- Create additional character attributes to bring your characters to life and make them relatable to your reader.
- Don't judge yourself or worry about making mistakes. Allow yourself to write freely without passing judgment.
- Remember the Critical Key Moments. Add pivotal details to support the plot points.
- Feel free to experiment with subplots by adding contrasting characters.
- Answer the Lightbulb Effect Questions.

# WAYS YOU CAN START YOUR STORY

- Compelling character dialogue
- Major scene disruptor, such as a natural disaster (i.e. storm, earthquake) or a crime scene
- Character monologue
- Strong sensory details of time and place
- Pose a question to the reader
- Set up a problem to solve
- A cryptic statement/hook

## LET YOUR MIND FILL IN THE BLANKS

Once you have outlined your story, let's discuss how you start. Think of yourself in a dark room. Slowly begin to provide light to all the components you want the reader to experience. Engage and equip all your senses, from sight to sound, taste to smell. Set the scene in your mind, then begin writing.

## LET'S GET STARTED!!

# A BEGINNING, MIDDLE, & END RULES

- Aim for at least 1,000 words or more.
- You must include the beginning, middle, and end story suggestions/components of the plot and the characters provided.
- Feel free to express your creativity and experiment by adding characters or additional supporting plot lines for some twists and turns!

**MOST OF ALL...HAVE FUN!**





## AIM FOR THE FINISH LINE

We recommend starting with one plot to write a full story. The more comfortable you are with writing, the more stories you will be able to write.

**AIM FOR EACH OF THE TITLES BELOW. YOU'VE GOT THIS!**

### ONE COMPLETED STORY

“THE CRUISER”



### TWO COMPLETED STORIES

“THE SPEED DEMON”



### THREE OR MORE COMPLETED STORIES



“THE BLAZER”



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# A BEGINNING, MIDDLE, & END DIRECTIONS

## STEP ONE-READ THE PLOTS

Read through each of the five story plots to get a general sense/feeling of the genre. You will be provided with the characters, the beginning, the middle, and end plot points of the story. Determine which plot you build a strong connection with. This will be the first story you write.

## STEP TWO-CREATE YOUR OUTLINE

Using the story development process (Freytag's pyramid) as a guide, create your outline. Map out the Critical Key Moments (plot points) and develop specific details relevant of the characters in the story, including their motives, challenges, and goals. Define your answers to the Lightbulb Effect Questions.

Visualize and plan your story. Use notecards or an outline to help you explore avenues of thought of how you come up with point A to point B and so forth before arriving to the end.

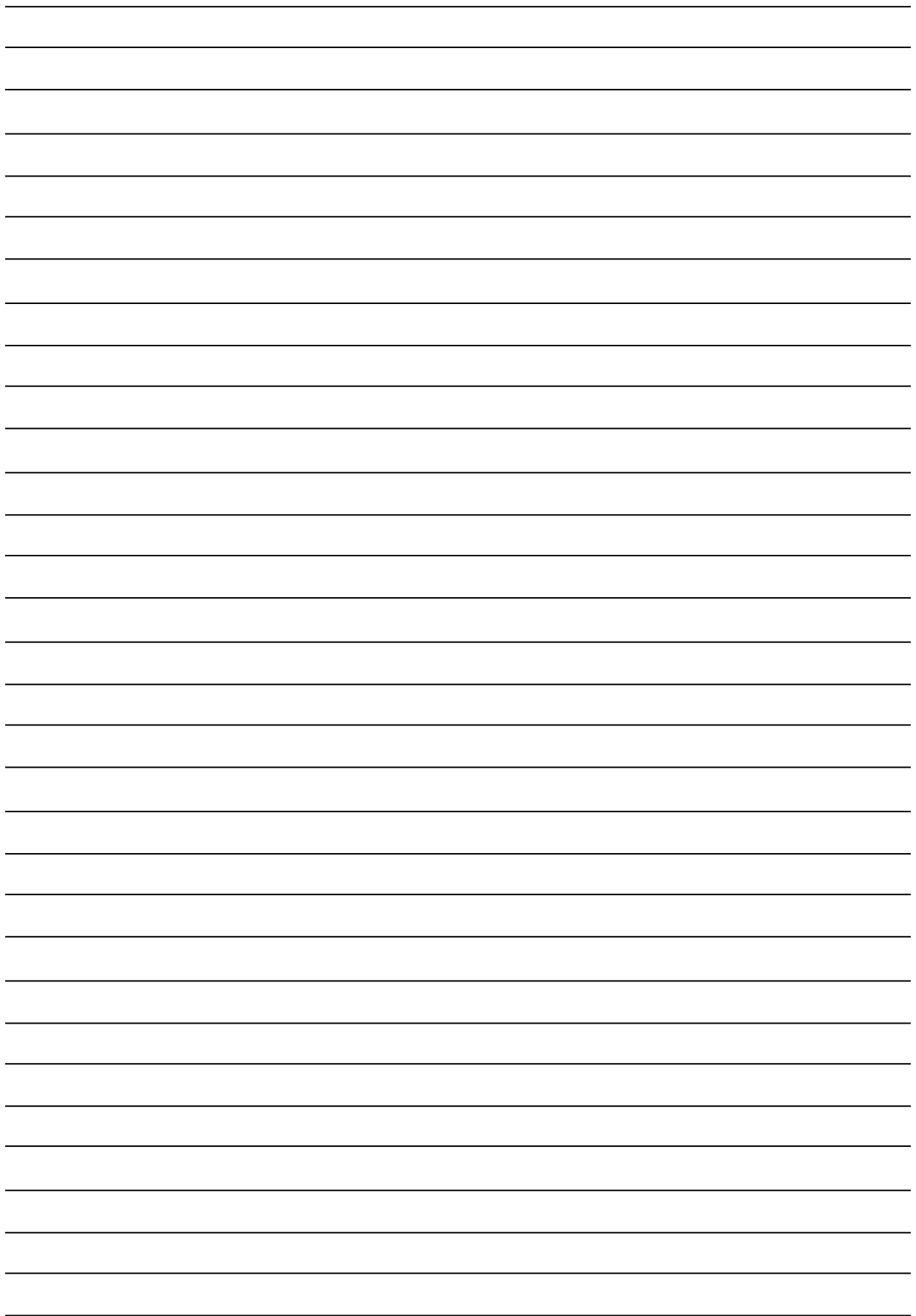
## STEP THREE-START WRITING

Use your own paper, or print out several copies of the template provided on the next two pages. Start crafting your story using the beginning, middle, and end plot points as your guide to arrive at a complete story. Read, reread, and refine until you are happy with your story. Provide a title for your story. Once you have created one of the plots, challenge yourself by choosing another plot to start writing until eventually you finish all of the plots.

## STEP FOUR-STORYTELLING TIME

Share your story with friends, family, a reader's group, and us! Storytelling tips are available on page 26 to create an extraordinary experience!







**PLOT ONE:  
A ROMANTIC  
TEARJERKER**



## **PLOT ONE: A ROMANTIC TEARJERKER**

### **CHARACTERS**

Sue, Paul, James

### **BEGINNING**

College life. Sue must travel 10 hours to dorm as a freshman nursing major at Ballingford University. Transitioning from puppy love to a long-distance relationship with James, her high school sweetheart, she is hesitant to leave him back home. As time progresses, Sue falls in love with one of her fellow classmates, Paul who is hiding a secret that can make or break their budding relationship.

### **MIDDLE**

After Sue learns about Paul's shocking secret, she knows their relationship will never be the same. Can they withstand this revelation? Will she explore a fiery romance or a cold departure?

### **END**

With the untimely passing of Sue's mother, she is forced to return home, unprepared to face James. Will this reunion rekindle the spark that burned so strongly between Sue and James? Will she accept Paul to follow her heart in an intense but uncertain romance? Or will she end up alone nursing her own wounds?

A black and white photograph of a person wearing a hoodie, with a dark, textured background. The person's head and shoulders are visible on the right side of the frame, wearing a dark-colored hoodie with a ribbed collar. The background is dark and appears to be a forest or a similar outdoor setting with vertical lines, possibly trees or poles. The overall mood is mysterious and somewhat ominous.

# **PLOT TWO: A SHOCKINGLY HORRIBLE NIGHT**



# PLOT TWO: A SHOCKINGLY HORRIBLE NIGHT

## CHARACTERS

Darren, Mitchell

## BEGINNING

It's 1995, the hit mainliner rock band Vallender performed an explosive sold-out concert. After experiencing the night of their life, Darren, the designated driver, is responsible for taking him and his friend Mitchell safely home. With an unexpected lane foreclosure requiring a turn off the highway, Darren gets lost accidentally directing them to a seedy part of town.

## MIDDLE

A maze of construction debris causes a tire to blow. Trying to find the nearest payphone for help, Darren and Mitchell face more than car troubles as they end up in a bad neighborhood to witness the murder of a young woman.

## END

After facing the most terrifying night of their life, Darren and Mitchell finally return home, but will they ever be the same again? Will they report the crime? Are they safe or will they become the next target?



# PLOT THREE: A FANTASTIC FANTASY

# PLOT THREE: A FANTASTIC FANTASY

## CHARACTERS

Mortimor, Sally

## BEGINNING

The year is 2079. The renowned chemist, Mortimor Garrett, has just completed research on his latest scientific discovery. Nevula, a special formula offers humans the ability to compete with AI in terms of productivity in attempt to prevent the obsolescence of humans. His new serum enables humans to stay awake without tiring, an alternative to caffeine. As Nevula takes to the market, something strange begins to happen within the next year to all who consume this guaranteed pick-me-up.

## MIDDLE

Despite Mortimor's clinical trials resulting in success, something has gone terribly wrong with Nevula! Sally, the first test subject and spokesperson, and advocate, notices her DNA is mutating and evolving into something that is not quite human. What variables did Mortimor fail to include in his experiments?

## END

Earth is overrun by mutated humans, turning into a war of catastrophic proportions—save AI, save the humans, or save the beasts?



**PLOT FOUR:  
LIGHTS, CAMERA,  
AND A WHOLE LOT  
OF ACTION**

# PLOT FOUR: LIGHTS, CAMERA, AND A WHOLE LOT OF ACTION

## CHARACTERS

Violet, Jacob, Devon (detectives)  
Peter (defense attorney), Belinda  
(prosecutor)

## BEGINNING

The city bank is robbed by a criminal outfit leaving behind an injured patron and a dead security guard. Violet, Jacob, and Devon are newbie detectives eager to solve their first case. However, one of the detectives has an ulterior motive. Acting as an informant for the criminal underground who committed the robbery, the stakes are high.

## MIDDLE

As the investigation is underway, suddenly another robbery is committed. A highspeed chase leads the detectives into a bigger, perplexing puzzle. Who's hiding evidence to cover their tracks? Where is the money being kept? Who has the most to gain?

## END

The informant is discovered. Leading to an intense court case, will the informant bring down the crime ring or protect them?

# PLOT FIVE: A MYSTERIOUS MYSTERY





# PLOT FIVE: A MYSTERIOUS MYSTERY

## CHARACTERS

Detective Vardier, Anna (the victim), John (Anna's boss) Mark (Anna's boyfriend)

## BEGINNING

It's 1940. Detective Vardier receives a late-night call from an anonymous tip that a woman was murdered in the back alley behind a busy pub on Maple Street. With no blood, and no witnesses (other than the caller), leaves a tough case to crack.

## MIDDLE

Detective Vardier identifies the body as Anna. Interviewing Anna's circle to track her movements the previous day and evening, he learns Anna recently had a fight with her long-time boyfriend Mark over finances. Losing her job at Calamasis Insurance Agency over an accusation that Anna was stealing company funds, Detective Vardier wonders if there is a third possible suspect. Could Anna have been in the wrong place at the wrong time?

## END

Was it an accident? Could it be revenge, or a case of mistaken identity? Who was covering their tracks and why?

“

Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas in the world.

-Robert McKee

## STORYTELLING TIPS

- Bring your audience into a circle if reading face-to-face.
- Raise or lower your voice around critical key moments with vigor to bring the story to life.
- Use verbal cues, body language, expressions, and props (if needed) to capture your audience.
- Present dialogue using contrasting tones or voices to differentiate character interaction.
- Create an even, consistent pace by not reading too fast or too slow.
- Lead into suspenseful story points by emphasizing particular words that evoke a response (i.e. surprise, fear, excitement).
- Read the room and adjust your tone as needed. The more curious faces you have, the better. Keep your audience wanting more.
- Clearly communicate your key message you want your audience to remember about your story. Use repetition if needed to hone in on a particular point.

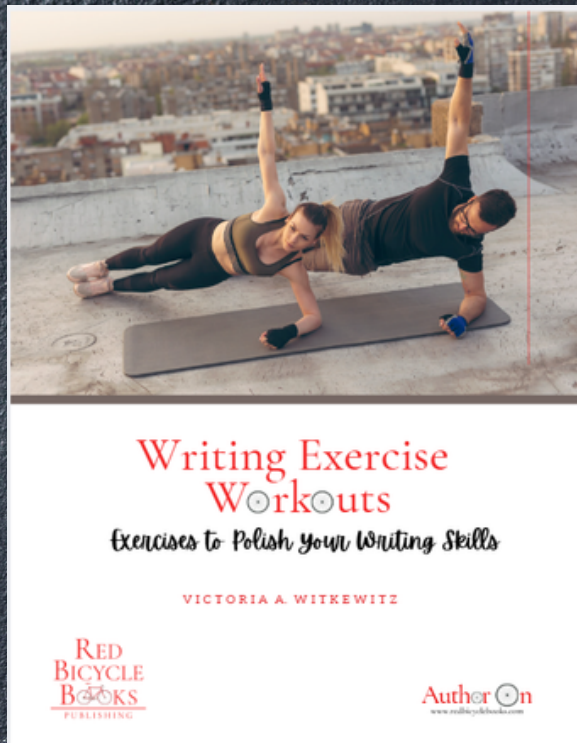
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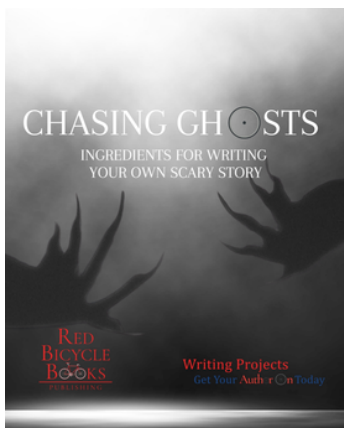
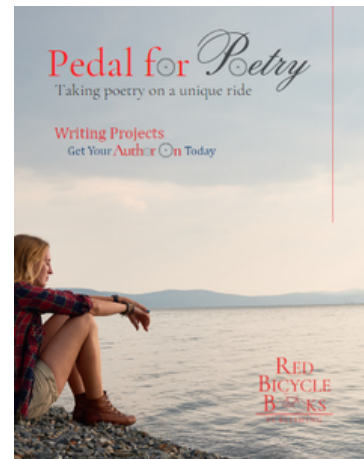
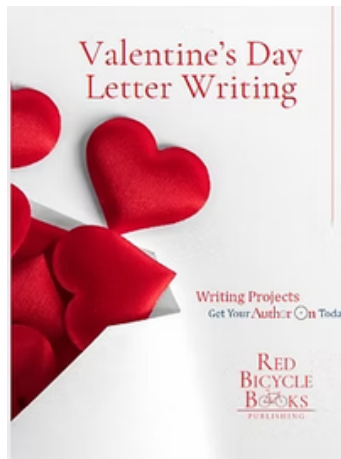
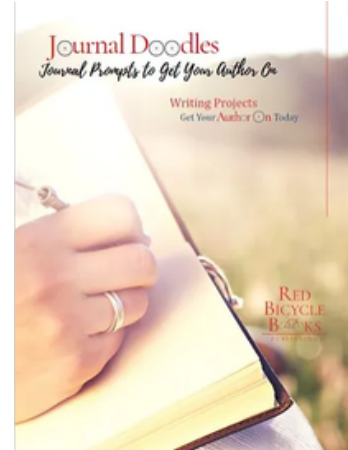
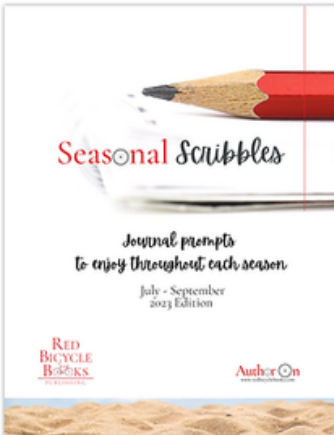
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