## Hello!

Welcome to your new planning tool and reference sheet!

I’ve stumbled through so many different writing projects and tried to retain every single detail of them all. Obviously not a great technique. As I started looking into planning programs, I found that a lot of them and their endless features really overwhelmed me. Instead, I created this customisable template to sit alongside my manuscript document.

In my time using it, I’ve adjusted it for each project I work on. For example, the story I’m working on now has a lot of formal parties and I have a table to track the outfits my characters wear to each party. It’s not an important section, but it’s helpful. My previous story needed a magic-system section and the one before that needed a table explaining each character’s psychic abilities.

This template has the basics you’ll need to get your thoughts in order. A place to jot down all your thoughts, ideas and notes but also keep them organised. This is not something that will work for everyone, we all have our own systems and techniques, but I hope that you can all take at least one thing away from this template and implement into your own planning.

There are a few resource links scattered through to help further your understanding of each section and why they’re important.

You’ll notice your download came with two files, this one, a breakdown of the template and a blank one. Have a read through this and then jump into crafting your own.

Good luck, have fun and happy writing~

Kirste x

## General

**Title**

* Doesn’t have to be the actual title yet.
* List your ideas here.
* Or just words you associate with your story.

**Plot**

A few sentences about the main plot.

SUB: [Sub plot could be the romantic relationship.] RESULTS: [Result is whether the couple ends up together and how they do.]

SUB: [Generally, you will have more than one subplot, copy and paste this until you have them all.] RESULTS:

**Point of View/Perspective**

Jane Doe and first person POV

[Rebecca Jean | Perspective VS POV breakdown](https://writersedit.com/fiction-writing/what-is-the-difference-between-point-of-view-pov-and-perspective/)

**Settings**

Where are your characters visiting throughout your story?

**Themes**

The central topic, subject, or message.

**Genre**

Be specific! It’ll be important in your future query!

* [ex: young adult/fantasy/paranormal/witches]
* [ex: adult/sci-fi/utopia]
* [ex: young adult/thriller/boarding school]

**Logline**

Two sentences summarising your story. This is your elevator pitch.

**Query Pitch**

250 words summarising your story. This is what you will send to a literary agent, when the time comes. Sometimes completing this first helps people plan the rest of their stories.

* [Alexa Donne | Query Examples (video)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAKVM5tKg_E&ab_channel=AlexaDonne)
* [Amanda Woody | Words to Avoid (twitter thread)](https://twitter.com/findmeediting/status/1405980626935640067)
* [Amanda Woody | Query Tips (twitter thread)](https://twitter.com/findmeediting/status/1411321489572368384)
* [Kyra M. Nelson | Synopsis Tips (twitter thread)](https://twitter.com/KyraMNelson/status/1380904784782184452)
* [K. M. Allen | Notes from #KidLitVic2019 Writers Conference (blog post)](http://kmallan.com/2019/05/31/notes-from-a-writers-conference/)

**Comp Titles**

What titles can you compare your work to? Any stories that inspired yours? Are there elements in your story similar to something that’s been published recently? When it comes to querying, it’s recommended to use two comp titles. This will help your potential agent understand how they can market and pitch it.

* Resources above will help with this section too!

## Character names

* Protagonist
  + Jane Doe [don’t forget to add notes to remind yourself why you chose this name like: *Jane meaning God is gracious*]
* Protagonist’s pet
  + Pirate (Pirate is a one eyed dog)
* Protagonist’s friend
  + [Choice 1] Dane Joe
  + [Choice 2] Joe Dane

## Basic Character Information

Break your characters down. I can guarantee halfway through your book you will forget what colour eyes you gave Harry Houdini, here’s where to keep track of it all.

| Characters | Age | Height | Hair | Eyes | Skin | Birthday | Starsign |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jane Doe | 25 | 5.5 | Wears a pink wig | Gold brown | Forest green | January 10 | Capricorn |
|  | This section is for characteristics (likes, dislikes, fears) and personality traits you want to keep track of. | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## Character Dynamics

This is where you list a bunch of little details about your main characters and their relationships. I write things like family traditions and celebrations, favourite shared meals, who’s the main character closest to, how did they meet their friends, what friends do in their free time, love languages etc.

**Friends**

[Main Character and Secondary Character]

**Family**

[Main Character and Secondary Character]

**Romantic**

[Main Character and Secondary Character]



**Enemies**

[Main Character and Secondary Character]

## Character Arcs

What journey do your characters go on through this story? This is helpful to do for a few characters — not all — but the “main squad” to show what growth they all go through alongside each other.

| [Character name] | Initial Situation:  Where do they begin?  Goal:  Where do they want to be?  Obstacles:  What stops them from getting there?  Stakes:  What are they risking?  No Return:  At what point does your character fully commit?  New Norm:  What is their life like after all of this? |
| --- | --- |

## Plot

Okay, this is the big one. This is your story arc — the *sequence* of the events. This structure has been broken down into three arcs (orange, yellow and green) and each section has three points of plot, which is also known as the “27 chapter” structure. Follow along with the references below.

* [Casey Kerbs | Written Breakdown](https://livingwriter.com/blog/27-chapter-method-made-easy)
* [Katytastic | Video Breakdown](http://youtube.com/watch?v=fe3eodLF_Uo&ab_channel=Katytastic)

| Act 1 (part one)  Exposition  Introduce the world and characters. Where it all begins. | Introductions — characters, setting, world.  Inciting Incident — the moment your character says “yes” to the quest.  Fall out —immediate reaction to thee inciting incident |
| --- | --- |
| Act 1 (part two)  Conflict  Problems the protagonist needs to overcome and how they react to these issues. | Reaction —longer term reaction to the inciting incident, rebelling against the new changes  Action — the “I won’t take this shit laying down” moment  Consequence —the product of the protagonist’s action |
| Act 1 (part three)  Change  The last block creates a lot of pressure and stress | Pressure — the build up (because of the consequences)  PLOT TWIST — TIME TO SHOCK THE HELL OUT OF YOUR READERS.  Push — shove ‘em into the deep-end |
| Act 2 (part one)  Exploration  Suspense. Character Development. | New world — what does the deep-end look like?  Fun and Games — play around, how do your characters develop?  Old Juxtaposition — reminders of the “old world”; balance. |
| Act 2 (part two)  Lost  Right goal for the wrong reason or the wrong goal for the right reason. They must decide what matters most. | Build up — more pressure, leading straight into to the midpoint  Midpoint — protagonist changes from reactive to active.  Reversal — turning point, there’s no going back to the old world |
| Act 2 (part three)  Redefine  Reevaluate and reflect their goals. | Consequence — another reaction/product of the protagonist’s action  Trials — protagonist is being tested in a new way  Dedication — they succeed or leave this trial more dedicated than ever |
| Act 3 (part one)  Out of Reach  Victory seems impossible. Rock bottom. | Calm before the storm —the build up before plot twist 2  PLOT TWIST — RUINS EVERYTHING  Darkest moment — All hope is lost |
| Act 3 (part two)  Fight for Hope  Hype your character up for the finale | Power within — oh shit, never mind. There’s still hope.  Action/Rally — Rally the troops, we’re about to converge.  Converge —all the storylines come together |
| Act 3 (part three)  Climax and Resolution  How do we end it? | Battle — good vs bad  Climax —everything you’ve been leading up to!  Resolution — falling action, wrap up; what will you leave your reads with? |
| The Worst Thing  \*Not related to the elements above\*  What’s the absolute worst thing that can happen to your character and what’s the result of the thing? This will help if you’re struggling with a climax! |  |

## Sub Plot

Like above, this is the sequence of events. Just an extension of above, somewhere where you can clearly see how each of your subplots progress. The more subplots you have, the more confusing it is.

| [Title] | Romance | [Sub Plot 1] | [Sub Plot 2] | [Sub Plot 3] |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Exposition | Jane Doe and Dane Joe meet at the supermarket. |  |  |  |
| Conflict | They both want the last jar of peanut butter. |  |  |  |
| Raising Action | They argue.  A seemingly endless game of rock, paper scissors.  They gain respect for each other being able to match each of their throws and decide to up the ante. |  |  |  |
| Climax | They have a Mortal-Kombat-style battle and destroy everything in the supermarket. It’s a draw. |  |  |  |
| Falling action | They are each other’s equals. |  |  |  |
| Resolution | They share the jar of peanut butter for dinner. |  |  |  |

## Scenes That Need To Happen

I find it really hard to keep track of which order my scenes need to go in and where they fit into the 27 chapters. By using a dot-point system like this, I can rearrange, make a mess and leave gaps when I need to before plugging it into the 27 chapter table

* Jane picks Pirate up from puppy daycare
  + GAP\*\*
* Jane and Pirate are sucked into the spacetime continuum (\*\*how did she get here?????)

## Notes

Random bits and bobs you conjure but have no place for yet. I write a bunch of dialogue quips, running jokes that I need to remember, and lines that I’ve deemed good enough to go in the manuscript.