Creative Writing 1

Day 30
November 26\textsuperscript{th} 

- Fiction Starter: He was afraid, but he called upon all his courage as...

- Agenda:
  - Fiction Starter
  - Conflict
  - Plot
  - Plot Outline
Today’s Objectives

• I will know different types of conflicts.
• I will know the different parts of the plot rollercoaster.
• I will be able to describe potential conflicts for my characters.
• I will be able to complete a plot outline for a story or novel.
Field Trip to Joslyn Art Museum

• Meet in the B Area at 1:00 on Wednesday.

• If you have 4\textsuperscript{th} lunch, you will be excused to go to 3\textsuperscript{rd} lunch.

• Bring paper and pencil (no pen!) with you as you will be writing while at the museum.
Creating Conflict

Okay, so you know who your characters are. Excellent. Now it is time to figure out what your characters are going to do. Most stories are ultimately about the same thing—the journey a protagonist goes on to get what he or she wants. Whether his or her goal is to get the girl or cure cancer, the journey is never easy, and your character will encounter many setbacks along the way. Though they’re painful for your protagonist, these obstacles are what will make your novel exciting to read.
Imagine a story about Jim who wants a sandwich more than anything in the world. How boring would the story be if all Jim had to do was walk from his bedroom to the kitchen, make a sandwich, and then eat it? That story is so uneventful it can be told in one sentence. But what if Jim is seriously afraid of the dark, the power is out in his house, and he has to walk down a dark hallway to get to the kitchen? And, once there, he has to fight his bratty younger sister, Emily, for the last slice of roast beef.

Though it may be simple, this story has both **external conflict** and **internal conflict**.

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**External Conflict**

The external conflict is the one between a protagonist and antagonist. In the above story, the protagonist Jim has a goal (*to eat a sandwich*), but a motivated antagonist Emily has her own agenda (*to also eat a sandwich*). The struggle between Jim and Emily over the last slice of roast beef is the external conflict in this story.

**Internal Conflict**

The internal conflicts are the fears and insecurities that a protagonist has to overcome in order to get what he or she wants. In the story above, Jim has to overcome his fear of the dark in order to get the sandwich he wants so badly.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufO8LbwTdu0
Review your character questionnaires, and respond to the following:

• More than anything, my character wants...

• But he/she is afraid of...

• And his/her greatest weakness is...
If you have a physical antagonist in your story, answer the following about him/her:

• More than anything, my character wants...

• But he/she is afraid of...

• And his/her greatest weakness is...

If you have an abstract antagonist in your story, respond to the following:

• The antagonist in my story is not a living, breathing being. It is...

• If my protagonist does not battle against this antagonist, it will eventually (ruin his/her life, cause death, etc.)...

• My protagonist is battling against this antagonist by...
Plot Rollercoaster
The Set-Up

What kind of rollercoaster are we getting on?

Though some novels begin with an “inciting incident”—which you will read about in just a second—many of them start by telling the reader a little bit about the characters, the setting, and the conflict before jumping into the action. Just like you'd want to know what kind of rollercoaster you're getting on before waiting in line, a reader wants to know what kind of novel he or she is about to read before committing time to it.
The inciting incident launches your protagonist into the adventure whether he or she is ready or not. It can be a pretty scary moment for your main character. Once it happens, there's no turning back.
Rising Action

Climbing the big hill

This will be the longest section of your novel. You will develop your characters, deepen their relationships with one another, and carefully pace all the important things that happen to them before the **climax**. Think of the rising action as the biggest hill on the rollercoaster—the higher you go, the more suspenseful it gets. The rising action is made up of many events, each of them building to the most exciting part of your story: the climax.
This is the moment at the very top of the rollercoaster, right before your high-speed drop. This moment doesn’t last long, and neither does the climax in your novel. It can be as short as a couple paragraphs—just enough to make your readers hold their breath in suspense and ask, “What’s going to happen next?!”
The high-speed drop

The falling action is what happens next. It is the fast-paced, action-packed part of your novel. You’re finally speeding down the tracks of the rollercoaster with your hands in the air! Does the antagonist get defeated? Do the protagonist’s dreams finally come true? If so, how?

Keep in mind however that just because the falling action is fast-paced, it doesn't have to be over quickly. In some novels, the falling action actually takes place over whole chapters. What's important is that the action is paced to feel exciting whether it spans mere minutes or whole years of your characters' lives.
The resolution, which is also sometimes known as the "conclusion" since it comes at the very end of your novel, is how things work out in the very end after your protagonist gets (or doesn’t get) what he or she wants. It has been said by creative writing sages that your characters—especially your protagonist—must change over the course of the book. This change happens gradually as your character battles his or her fears, defeats villains, and forges friendships and relationships with a cast of amazing characters. All of these adventures will end up changing the way your main character sees the world and his or her place in it. Try to use the final scenes to highlight those changes.
Plot Outline

1. Describe Your Set-Up

In one to two paragraphs, describe a scene that introduces your characters, your setting, and the main conflicts in your story. You may want to review your Conflict Worksheet before you do this.

2. Describe Your Inciting Incident

In one paragraph, describe the event that causes your protagonist to begin his or her adventure.

3. Describe Some of Your Rising Action:

Write a list of five events that build up to the climax of your novel. Don’t forget to include all of your supporting characters!

4. Describe Your Climax:

In one paragraph, describe what will happen in the climax of your novel.

5. Describe Your Falling Action:

In one to two paragraphs, describe what happens after the climax. Does your protagonist get what he or she wants? Does the antagonist get defeated? How?

6. Describe Your Resolution:

In one to two paragraphs, describe how everything works out in the very end. Is it a happy ending? Sad? Remember to show how your characters changed because of their journey.
FINAL NOTE ON PLOT!

As you probably know, not all rollercoasters have the same track. They all have different hills and drops, twists and turns, and loops and tunnels. The same goes for novels. That is what makes them different and exciting. Sometimes they begin with the inciting incident or work backwards from the resolution to the beginning. Novels are filled with flashbacks, flash-forwards, and unexpected plot twists. And novels don’t have to have happy endings either. Just like life, sometimes things don’t work out exactly the way you planned them to. In November, experiment with the plot you create by thinking beyond the “typical one-hill rollercoaster” formula. Rearrange events, add some twists, and flip that resolution on its head. You’ll be surprised at how much this can energize your story.
Write a 2-5 page story

• Write a story based on the plot outline you just completed or pick the mini-story you like most and make it longer. Consider flashing back to relevant events in your narrator’s earlier life.

• Study your new draft and consider the following: Do the characters seem real? What motivates them? Is there some suspense? Does the setting contribute to the story line?