

Story Bible Checklist

Overview

Premise:

(Use the Spiderwebbing Your Way To a Story Premise Worksheet. Write your premise out to keep you on track as you work – does everything in your outline support this statement? Is your protagonist the one solving the problems? If the answer is no, revise your outline, or change this “thesis” statement.)

Theme:

(Use the theme worksheet. Write the theme out to keep you on track as you work – do your plot events and character arcs work together to make the artistic statement you intended?)

Stakes:

(From your premise, determine what is initially at stake in your novel, both for the character personally and for the rest of your story world. Write the stakes out to keep you on track as you work – as you go through the outlining process, come back and add to this section. The stakes should get more intense as the story progresses.)

Personal:

Public:

Character

Named Characters:

(Use the character differentiation chart. List out all your named characters and fill in their basic role in the story. Are there any characters who fill the same role and should be combined to increase their impact? Are there any characters for whom you can't find a clear purpose who are cluttering up your story? List your remaining named characters below. Note beside each one if you will create a vital stats chart, do a character interview, or create a Pinboard relating to that character. Follow up with these activities. Note if there is any additional information, such as research into a character's hobby or medical condition, or if you have written out their backstory or relationships to other characters. Update your list as necessary.)

Plot

Key Scenes:

(Use the Plot Circle or W-Curve Worksheet to rough out the basic plot events. Refine this using the Beat Sheet Worksheet. List below the key scenes for which you will do further planning. Note beside them what aspects you need to work on. Update this as you work. Use the Storyboard Worksheet to sketch the most important visual aspect of each of these scenes.)

Setting/Worldbuilding

Worldbuilding:

(Keep an organized running list of everything you develop about the story world. Did you develop a currency and name it? Create an imaginary line of Taxi cabs? Write it here. If there is additional information (timelines, charts, graphs or detailed explanations of how something works) that won't fit in your list, note what it is and where it is located.)

Big Picture Location:

(Provide details about the Country, Planet, or Geographic Region where your story is set. Update this as you work.)

Small Picture Locations:

(List each interior or exterior location in your story. Think carefully about whether you need them all or if any could be combined. Use the Setting Worksheet to generate details about each one. Update your list as you work.)

Graphics:

(Make a list of any maps, diagrams, schematics, coat of arms, sketches, interior layouts, etc. you will need. Note what raw ideas you already have for these. Follow up on creating them. Decide how you will keep track of them. Note beside each one where it is located.)

Timelines

Timeline:

(Draw out any timelines important to your story – surrounding history, personal character milestones, etc.)

Research

Bibliography:

(Keep a running list of each resource you consult to verify information as you work. This will come in handy when you go to re-check things or find related information.)

Questions:

(Keep a running list of things you need to know. Start with the initial world-building questions you need answered, but also jot down things as you write. That way, you won't interrupt your writing flow, but you also won't forget to go back and verify things later.)