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rainbowmaker

- Teacher / examiner
- IT specialist / consultant
- Writer AKA Jenny Lawson
 - Textbooks – Mathematics and IT
- Writer AKA Anne Rainbow
 - Poetry
 - Short stories
 - Plays
 - Novels
- Editor
- RedPen Mentor
- ScrivenerVirgin blogger
- Author *EDITING The RedPen Way*
- Guest speaker: virtual events

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Story Arcs and Themes in Fiction and Memoir

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Memoir versus Autobiography

Autobiography

- 1st person account
- Scope = whole life?
- Focus on the celebrity
Facts / History
- Chronological order
Record of achievements

Memoir

- First person account
- Limited time scope
- Focus on the journey
Emotional experiences
- Thematic structure
Record of lessons

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Memoir versus Fiction

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • From memory (!) | • Invented |
| • Real events | • Fictional events |
| • Real people | • Fictional characters |
| • Story = part of your life | • Story = entertainment |
| • Theme = life lessons | • Theme = message to reader |

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Story Arcs in Memoir

- Start
- End
- Over a period of time (not whole life to date)
- Transformational events

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Story Arcs in Fiction

- Narrative arc
 - Who is telling the story?
- Character arcs
 - Role in the story
 - Goals
 - Obstacles
 - Lessons

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Story Arcs in Fiction and Memoir

- Narrative arc
 - Who is telling the story?
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- Start
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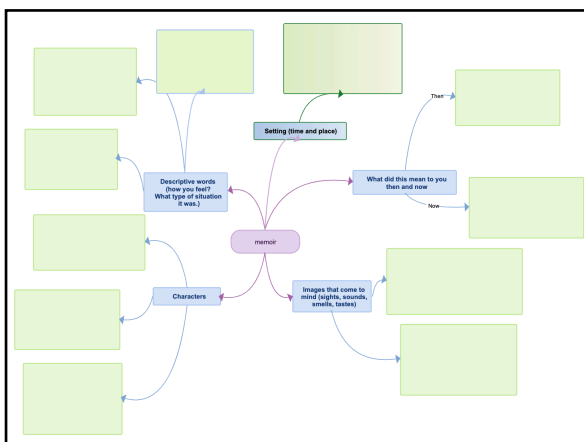
QUESTION TIME

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Why have a theme?

- THEME ties together the events of your story
- THEME is not stated; the reader 'gets it' by reading what you have to say about events in your life and their effect on you
- THEME is shown, not told!

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Examples of THEME

WRITING THE HAWAII MEMOIR

<https://www.darienee.com/memoir-themes/>

Abandonment	Divorce	Living Abroad
Abuse	Dreams	Loneliness
Accepting Change	Envolvement	Loss
Accidents	Ethical Dilemmas	Love
Activism	Euthanasia	Loyalty
Addiction	Faith	Making Choices
Adoption	Family	Marriage
Anger	Fear	Media
Appearances	Forgiveness	Moving
Arts and Crafts	Freedom	Nature
Being Gifted	Friendship	Nostalgia
Belonging	Gender Issues	Parasitism
Betrayal	Good vs. Evil	Peace
Bravery	Gratitude	Peer Pressure
Bulies	Grief	Political Issues
Call to Hawai'i	Growing Up	Poverty
Censorship	Guilt	Preservation
Challenges	Handicaps	Rebirth
Change	Hawaiian Heritage	Relationships
Childhood	Heroism	Religion
Coming of Age	History	Science
Commitment	Honesty	Self-Esteem
Communication	Hope	Sense of Self
Community	Humor	Separation
Cooperation	Identity	Social Change
Coping with Loss	Immigration	Spirituality
Courage and Honor	Initiation	Survival
Cultural Diversity	Innocence	Taking a Stand
Customs and Traditions	Intergenerational	Teamwork
Dance	Relationships	Travel
Death and Dying	Invisibility	Trust
Dementia	Jealousy	War
Discrimination	Jobs	
Diversity	Leadership	

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Theme

OBJECTIVE

- Main theme
- Sub themes

TOOLS

- Journals
- Hindsight
- Wise after the event
- Emotional pits

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QUESTION TIME

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Why treat memoir like fiction?

- Because fiction has a tried and tested formula
- Because fiction provides a guide to memoir writers
- To meet expectations of audience
- To improve your chances of publication
- To improve your chances of sales

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Structure

- 3-acts
 - BEGINNING
Meet the MC
Set up: problems, desires, conflicts
 - MIDDLE
Obstacles – the journey
 - END
Climax & tying up loose ends
Close the circle

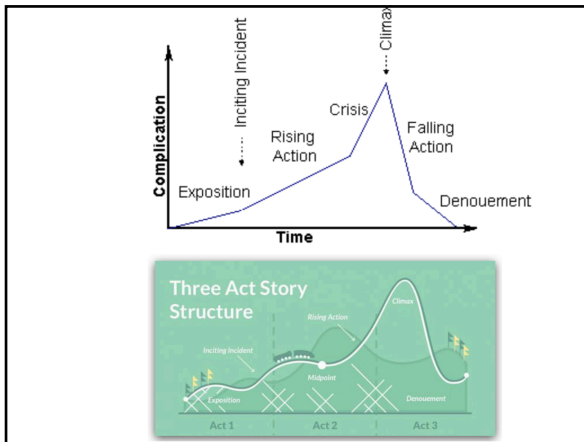
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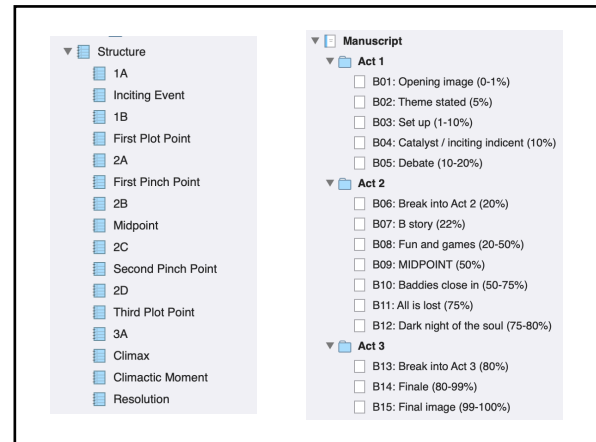
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QUESTION TIME

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STC genre specific plots?

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Whydunnit | 6. Fool triumphant |
| 2. Rites of Passage | 7. Buddy love |
| 3. Institutionalised | 8. Out of the bottle |
| 4. Superhero | 9. Golden Fleece |
| 5. Dude with a problem | 10. Monster in the house |

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Genre specific plots?

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Quest | 11. Metamorphosis |
| 2. Adventure | 12. Transformation |
| 3. Pursuit | 13. Maturation |
| 4. Rescue | 14. Love |
| 5. Escape | 15. Forbidden love |
| 6. Revenge | 16. Sacrifice |
| 7. The riddle | 17. Discovery |
| 8. Rivalry | 18. Wretched excess |
| 9. Underdog | 19. Ascension |
| 10. Temptation | 20. Descension |

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Plot versus Story

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Plot = physical | • Story = emotional |
| • MC's physical journey | • MC's emotional journey |
| • Plot = action | • Story = reaction |
| • Scenes | • Sequels |

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Scenes versus chapters

Novel

- Scenes (and sequels)
- SECOND DRAFT
Group scenes into chapters, according to plot progression, POV presentation, ...

Memoir

- Scenes (and sequels)
- SECOND DRAFT
Group scenes into chapters according to (sub)theme, time periods

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QUESTIONS?

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What can go wrong?

- Factophilia
- Trees – no woods
- Stockholm syndrome
- Overwhelm

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Recommendations

- Enjoy the process of exploring your past
- Be prepared for emotional discoveries
- Invest time in researching the period
- Continue to journal now
- Focus on the writing
Not publication, fame and fortune!

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