

The Seasons of Paris



Author Name

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Prologue

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Chapter 1



“Plan and build your story in a way that helps you start (and keep) writing.”

Developing a narrative is important for both novelists and nonfiction writers, but it can be daunting. Here are some ideas and strategies from experienced authors.

It can be useful to ask yourself a few questions:

- **What is the engine of my book?** What gives your story momentum and compels readers to keep turning the pages? Is it a tense, dramatic plot, or is it emotional investment in the fate of a character who evolves over the course of the story? In nonfiction, this might be your key argument or a shocking revelation. Where is the climax?
- **How do I want things to end?** How do you want readers to feel when they finish your book? What needs to be resolved to deliver a meaningful, satisfying conclusion to your narrative?
- **What are the qualities of popular books in my genre and how does mine stand out?** Is it the way the characters are developed? Unforgettable narrators? Suspenseful plots? Or maybe it's the accessible way sophisticated concepts are explained, or the memorable way past events are reconstructed. How can you bring that same power to your book?



Once you understand the basics of narrative, you don't have to follow all of the rules. In fact, some of your favorite books that you enjoy as a reader might break away from typical narrative structure. As the writer, you have the freedom to structure your book in whatever way feels most powerful and effective, even if that means breaking some of the rules.

“Every book needs a structure, but that structure is going to be very different depending on whether you’re talking about fiction or nonfiction. Also, depending on which genre of fiction you’re talking about,” said author and publisher Noah Lukeman. “Romance might have its own demands versus mystery versus thriller versus science fiction.”

“Structure is definitely very important in a book, especially if you’re new,” said author Barbara Freethy. “... There’s a reason for the structure. There’s a reason why you want to have plot points at certain points in a book and you want to have a sense of excitement. I think when you first start out sometimes you’re doing it by instinct. I know I was.”

About the Author



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