

# How to Write a Short Story

Need:

- 6 “How to Write a Short Story” homework
- 6 of this paper
- 6 “Other ways to say said”

Where:

- Tyler’s Classroom

Class Schedule:

- Quick welcome
- What is the focus of a short story? A turning point
- Lecture over the short story material
- Point to “Remembrance” as an example
- Hand out “How to Write a Short Story”
- Hand out “Other ways of saying said”
- Prayer
- Dismiss

Lesson:

- 1) Focus on a turning point
  - A story is about a hero who wants something (a goal), sets out to attain it, but faces an obstacle that stands in his way (conflict), and as the result of achieving or failing the goal, grows or learns something. This is a lot to get done in a short story so make sure that your plot isn’t toooooo complicated. You can do this by FOCUSING ON A TURNING POINT IN THE HERO’S LIFE. Turning points provide you with emotional significance that makes reading the story worth it.
  - What is a turning point? A moment in the character’s life where something happens that makes them grow, change their perspective, challenge their beliefs, realize something important, or impacts their life in some other way. (example: Katniss volunteering for Prim’s place or Hagrid coming to get Harry)
- 2) It’s okay to tell
  - Telling in a short story is acceptable, but don’t tell everything. The narrator is your friend!
- 3) Be careful to not bite off more than you can chew as far as world-building is concerned. Don’t run off without your reader, but don’t allow your writing to be held back by your reader’s ignorance. If it would take a lot of explanation, it is best to try a different storyline.
- 4) Simplify!
  - Fewer settings, scenes, and characters. Make a simple, easily understood world.
  - Choose your words well!
- 5) Your reader doesn’t need to know everything about your characters
- 6) Start your story strong and interesting! Don’t wait to throw in the interesting sentence two paragraphs in.

- 7) Use scene breaks sparingly if at all. Try to keep it all in the same time-frame if possible.
- 8) Don't change the point of view of the story (from first to third or vice versa)
- 9) Don't leave your reader wondering without all of the facts of the story. This will just give you an angry reader.
- 10) You can always threaten to take away what is most important to your character
  - Decide what is most important to your character and then play the "what if" game to see what could happen to take that thing away
- 11) Always have a core message or mood, allowing everything in the story to build up to that.
- 12) Have a common string that runs throughout the whole story like the sound of rain pattering or a specific place that means something to the character at the beginning and then something else to them at the end.
- 13) Steps to writing a good short story:
  1. Think of an intriguing scenario.
    - Something that allows for a range of possible developments and symbols. This is the idea or image that sets the story in motion and opens possibilities for story
  2. Find the story's focus before you start
    - What are your motivations for writing this story? What do you want to say? What is the moral? What is the God point?
  3. Outline the character and setting details
    - This helps your writing stay structured and consistent
    - We know about how to make a character already, but where will the story take place? What is significant about the setting for the story?
  4. Choose a point of view
    - VASTLY important!!! First person can make a character sound strong while second person can make them less powerful. (for instance, if you were to write a story about a slave, making the point that slavery is wrong because no one should control another person's life, you would want to write it in third person rather than first because first would make it seem like the slave was controlling the story rather than being controlled by the story.)
  5. Write the story as a one-page synopsis, like spark notes.
    - Helps you to flesh out your story before actually writing it so that you can see if you will have a strong or weak climax and if the story is even as intriguing as you think it would be.
  6. Write a strong opening
    - Just put your pen to the paper. Don't worry what comes out. You just need to get started.
    - Ways to get started: foreshadow the events of the story by introducing core subjects and themes; pique the reader's interest and elicit questions; don't waste time. Jump straight in!
  7. Write a strong close
    - It can be a twist
    - Open ended, leaving the reader to piece together the final pages' implications
    - Resolved, outcome is clear

- Returns to the beginning, an opening image or action returns, giving the story a circular structure.
- 8. Rewrite for clarity, concision, and structure
  - You fulfill all expectations that you set up on the first page
  - Most if not all questions are answered
  - Cut scenes and characters that don't contribute to the main story focus
  - Make sure that each line adds something significant to the story
- 9. Pick an intriguing story title
  - Something that creates intrigue and curiosity in your readers
  - Something that establishes the key characters, subjects, symbols or objects of the short story

<http://inkandquills.com/2016/03/19/write-a-short-story/>

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<http://thewritepractice.com/short-story-mistakes/>

<http://www.fabfreelancewriting.com/blog/2015/02/18/writing-short-stories-an-easy-strategy/>

<http://hannahheath-writer.blogspot.com/2015/10/6-reasons-you-should-be-writing-short.html>