

AGILE WRITER SEMINAR UDEMY CLASS

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<http://AgileWriters.com>

OVERVIEW

- The Agile Novel
- The Story Abstract
- The Hero's Journey
- The Hero Abstract
- The Agile Storyboard
- Agile Writers Clubs

WELCOME

*Knowing Me,
Knowing You.*

WHY?

- Because it's scary to be a first-time writer
- I have this little idea – is it any good?
- How long will it take?
- How will I know when to introduce the hero?
- How many pages will it be?
- My spelling & grammar stink!
- I've never done anything like this.
- I don't even know how to get started!

WELCOME

YOU CAN DO IT

- Everyone has a story to tell
- You already have what you need to tell it.
- You don't need a Master of Fine Arts (MFA)
- You've been reading & watching stories your whole life.
- You KNOW a good story when you see one.
- What you may not know is what makes it a good story.
- Agile Writers will fill that void.

WELCOME

ABOUT GREG SMITH

- 2001: Family Documentary: What makes a great story?
- 2005: The Chesterfield Writers Club
- 2011: Agile Writers Workshop & the Agile Writer Method
 - Over 30 first drafts have been created
- Software Engineer & Computer Scientist
- Published
 - Agile Writer: Method
 - Reel Heroes Volume 1 & 2

WELCOME *OPENING SURVEY*

- Who Are You?
 - Name
 - Writing Experience (one sentence)
 - What do you want from this seminar?
 - How did you find out about us?

WELCOME

WHY DO PEOPLE READ NOVELS?

- To Escape
- To Feel Companionship
- To Gain Perspective
- To Walk a Mile in Someone Else's Shoes
- To Relax
- To Be Entertained!

WELCOME

WHY DO PEOPLE READ NOVELS?

- At Agile Writers we believe
- People Read Novels
 - To experience emotions
 - Through the lead character in the novel.

WELCOME

WHY DO WE WANT TO WRITE A NOVEL?

- To Express Myself
- To Help or Educate Others
- To Release My Imagination
- To Have an Influence on the World
- I'm Influenced by my Favorite Authors
- Therapy
- IMMORTALITY!

WELCOME

WHY DO WE WANT TO WRITE A NOVEL?

- At Agile Writers
 - We Write a Novel
 - To Tell a Story
 - Someone Else Will Want to Read.

WELCOME

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- Who will read your book?
 - Genre
 - Age Range
 - Gender
 - Educational Level
- Are you writing to please your audience?
- Or are you writing to please yourself?
- You must do both!

WELCOME *SUMMARY*

- You already know a good story when you see one
- People read novels to feel some emotion
- You should be writing to please
 - Your Readers
 - And Yourself
- Know your audience

THE AGILE NOVEL

Know your Genre

THE AGILE NOVEL

WHAT IS A NOVEL?

- The Agile Novel
 - is a Fictional Narrative
 - is Genre Fiction
 - is Hero-Based
 - is 60,000 words (or 250 pages)
 - is Commercially Viable

THE STORY ABSTRACT

Know Your Audience

Know Your Story

THE STORY ABSTRACT

- 1-Page description of your story.
- Defines your audience
- Asks you to think about the point of your story
- Helps you to define what your story is about
- A necessary beginning to the Agile Novel

THE STORY ABSTRACT

ONE-PAGE STORY DESCRIPTION

- Story Title
- Author's Name
- Audience
- Message
- One-line Description
- Elevator Speech

THE HERO'S JOURNEY

Mythic Story Structure

THE HERO'S JOURNEY

OVERVIEW

- Joseph Campbell
- All cultures share the same stories
- The stories of Heroes teach lessons
 - How to act within the culture
 - How to resolve differences
 - Values
 - History

THE HERO'S JOURNEY *OVERVIEW*

- The Hero starts in their Ordinary World
- “Something Happens”
- They are cast into a Special World
- The Hero meets friends, allies, and enemies
- The Hero Overcomes some great obstacle
- Achieves the Goal
- Returns to their Ordinary World
- Having learned from their experiences.

THE HERO'S JOURNEY

VOGLER'S 12 STAGES

1. The Ordinary World
2. Call To Adventure
3. Refusal Of The Call
4. Crossing the First Threshold
5. Meeting the Mentor
6. Tests, Allies, Enemies
7. Approach to the Inmost Cave
8. Ordeal
9. Reward
10. The Road Back
11. Resurrection
12. Return with the Elixir

THE HERO ABSTRACT

(Secret: The Reader is the Hero)

THE HERO ABSTRACT

- Name
- Sympathetic Qualities
- Flaws
- Initial Goal
- Missing Inner Quality
- Main Goal
- Mentor
- Allies
- Opposition
- Enemies

THE AGILE STORYBOARD

Where do things happen

PLOTTING AND PACING

PLOT IS PLOT

- We borrow techniques from Screenwriting
- Movie Plots are No Different than Novel Plots
- Scripts are Dialog-Heavy
- Novels balance Dialog and Narration
- Following these patterns will
 - shape your plot and
 - solve pacing issues

THE AGILE STORYBOARD

INTRODUCTION

- Our main tool for Plotting
- A Structured Outline
- Draws upon Screenwriting Techniques
- Creates a FRAMEWORK
- For Your Novel

THE AGILE STORYBOARD

INTRODUCTION

- Chunks Up Your Story
- Think About Your Story Beforehand
- Easier to Change Your Storyboard
 - Than to change your manuscript
- 8 Stages & 7 Turning Points
- Each Stage is 30 Pages Long

THE AGILE STORYBOARD

SIMPLIFYING ASSUMPTIONS

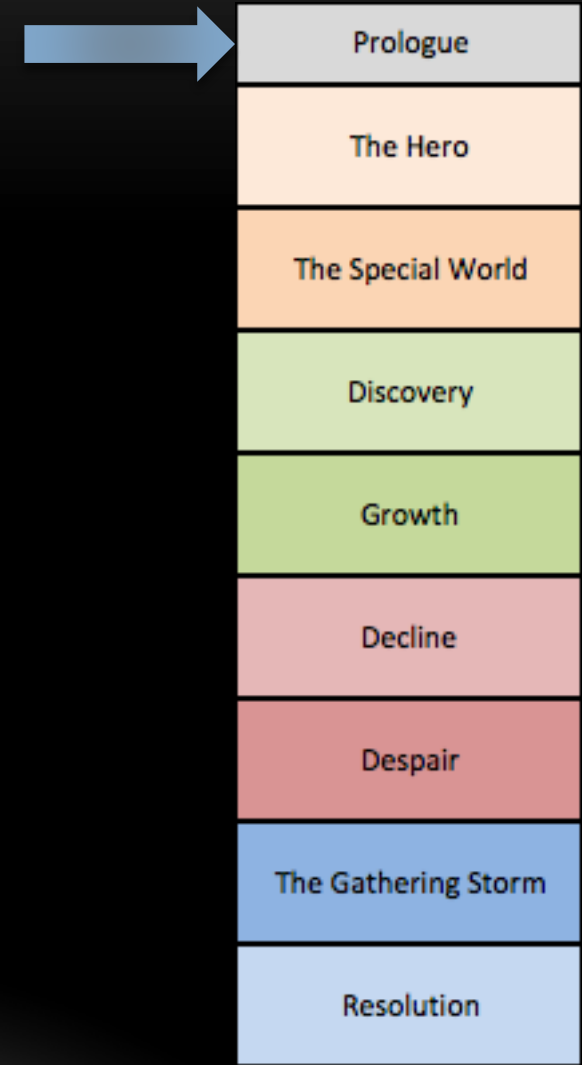
1. You are going to write a novel of 250 pages
2. You are going to write 250 words per page
3. About 60,000 Word Total
4. Times Roman 12-pt, double-spaced, 1-inch margins
5. You will write 10 pages per week
6. For 25 weeks
7. Resulting in a First-Draft novel in 6 months

The Agile Storyboard

Pages	Stages		
	Prologue		
10	The Hero	Act 1	
20			
30			
40			
50	The Special World		
60			
70	Discovery	Act 2A	
80			
90			
100	Growth		
110			
120			
130	Decline	Act 2B	
140			
150			
160			
170	Despair		
180			
190			
200	The Gathering Storm	Act 3	
210			
220			
230			
240	Resolution		

STAGE 0 - THE PROLOGUE

- We hate Prologs
- Homework for the Reader
- Just Boring Backstory
- DON'T WRITE PROLOGUES!
- However, if you must....
- GET TO THE ACTION!
- Set up the Hero's Special World
- Make sure it is NOT pure backstory



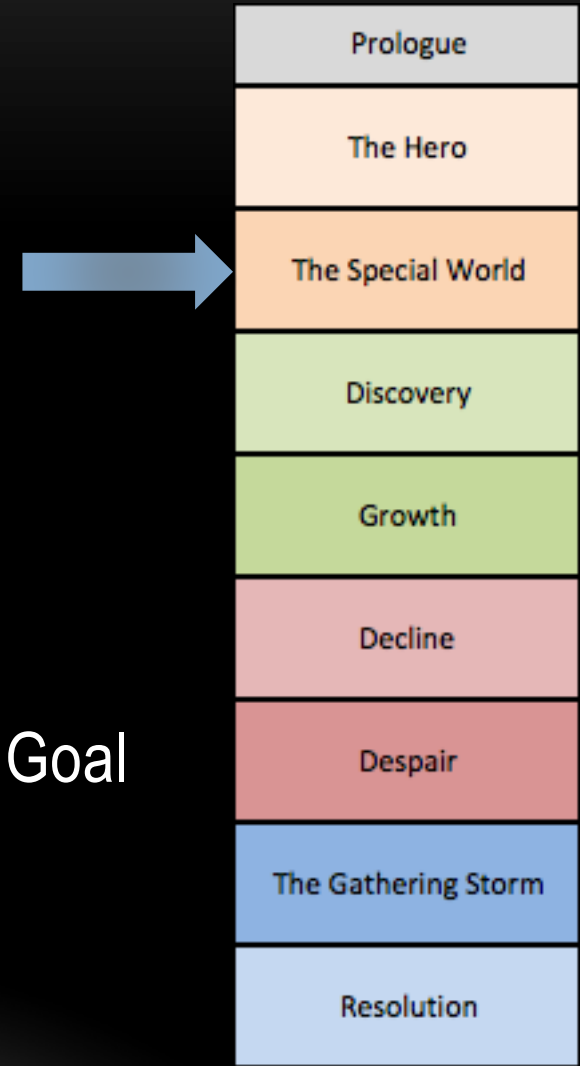
STAGE 1 – THE HERO

- Meet the Hero in the Ordinary World
- The Hero's Initial Goal
- The Missing Inner Quality
- Turning Point: The Inciting Incident
 - Transports the Hero into a New Situation
 - Meeting the Mentor
 - The Call to Adventure
 - The Refusal of the Call
 - Crossing the First Threshold



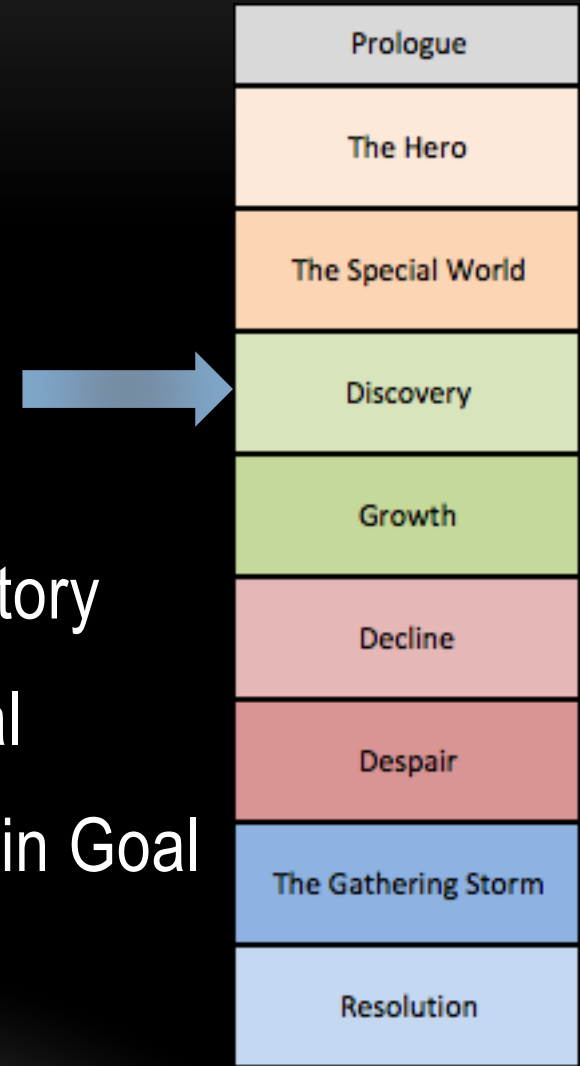
STAGE 2 – THE SPECIAL WORLD

- A Physically Different Location
 - Or New Situation
- Learn the Rules of the Special World
- Meet the Opposition for the first time
- The Hero makes new Friends and Enemies
- Turning Point: The Main Goal
 - The Initial Goal is Replaced w/ The Main Goal
 - It MUST be a tangible desire
 - The Critical 25% Point in the Story



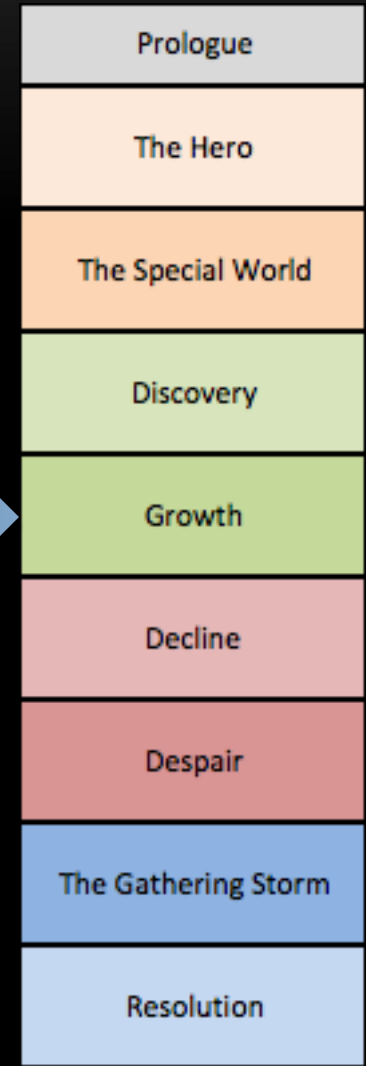
STAGE 3 - DISCOVERY

- The Hero is Discovering Himself
 - in the Special World
- The Rules have been learned
- Turning Point: The Reminder
 - A lot happens to the Hero during the story
 - Things that distract from the Main Goal
 - We must remind the Reader of the Main Goal



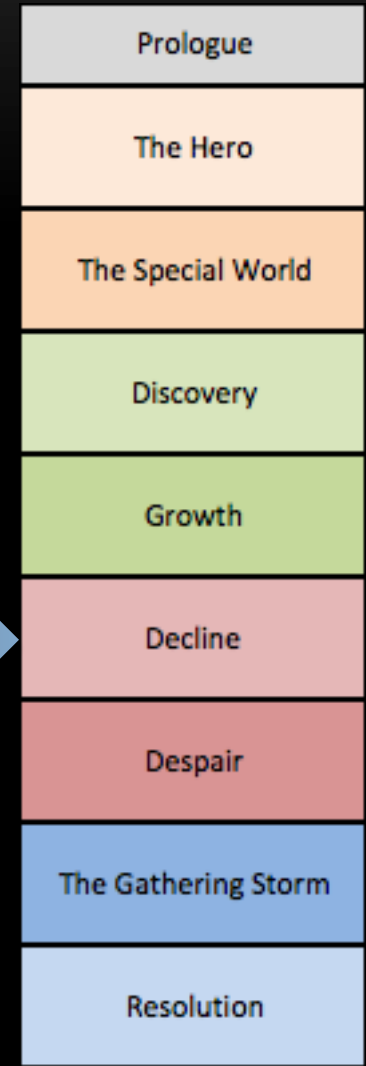
STAGE 4 - GROWTH

- The Hero is Mastering the Special World
- The Hero is Tested
- Turning Point: Commitment
 - To Go Forward or Go Back
 - The Hero must now be COMMITTED
 - Going back is no longer an option
- This is the 50% Point
 - Things Get Complicated From Here



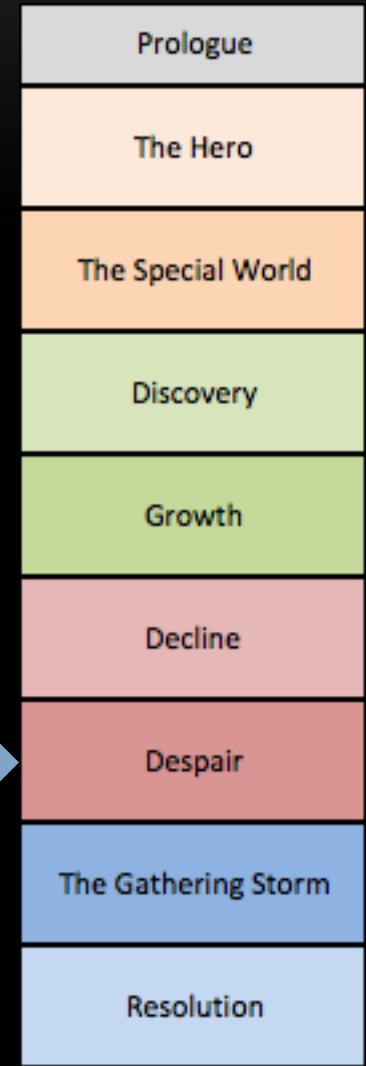
STAGE 5 - DECLINE

- Things start to go badly for our Hero
- The Hero has to overcome problems
- Plans toward getting the Main Goal are failing
- Turning Point: Why Are We Here?
 - As before, a lot is going on in our story
 - Remind the Reader of our Main Goal



STAGE 6 - DESPAIR

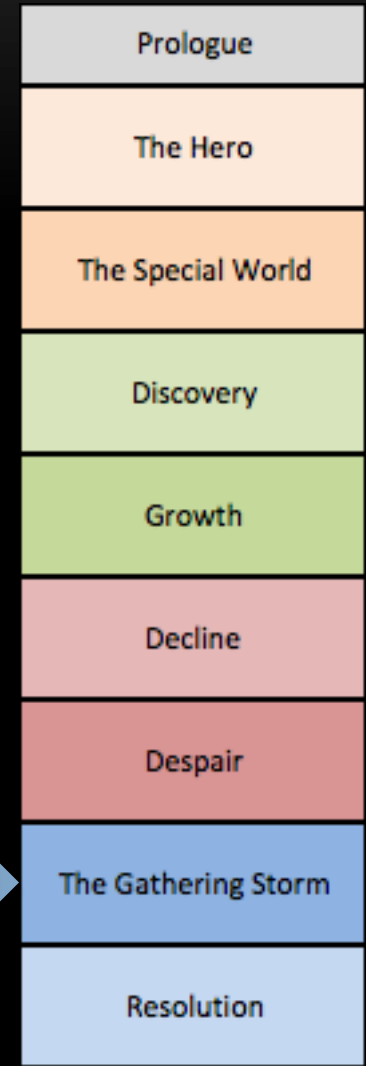
- Things are getting desperate for our Hero
- The Hero suffers setback after setback
- The Opposition blocks our Hero at every turn
- Turning Point: Death or Disappointment
 - Someone close to the Hero may die
 - Achieving the Main Goal is Impossible
 - In Christian / Inspirational stories,
 - the Hero suffers a crisis of faith



STAGE 7

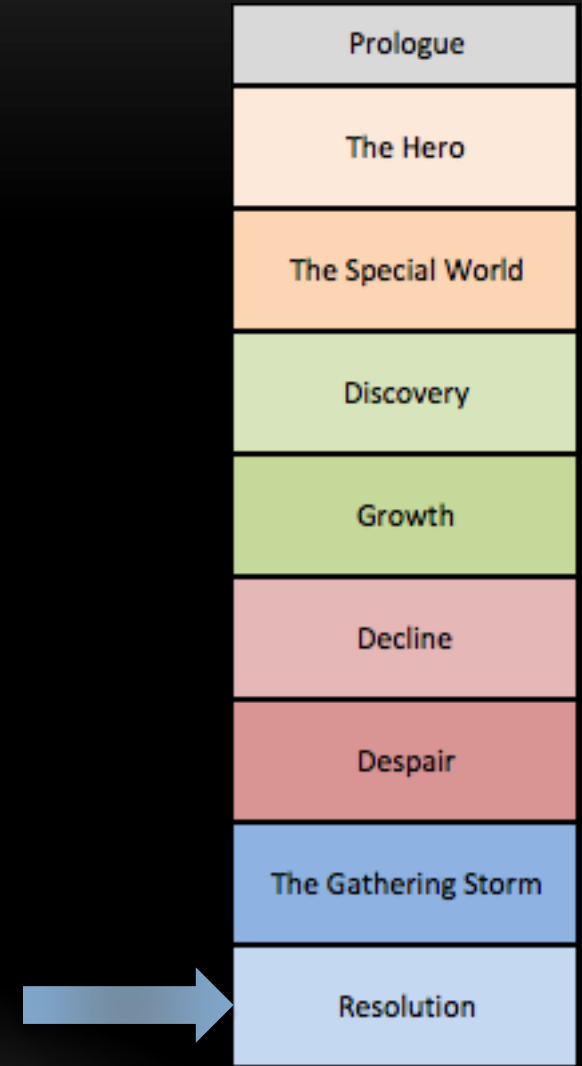
THE GATHERING STORM

- The Hero and Allies Come Together
- They Create a New Plan to Get the Main Goal
- Turning Point: The Climax
 - The Hero Faces the Opposition
 - The Hero Acquires the Main Goal – or not
 - The Missing Inner Quality MUST be found
 - AND Must be used in resolving the Main Goal
 - There May Be A Split Climax



STAGE 8 - RESOLUTION

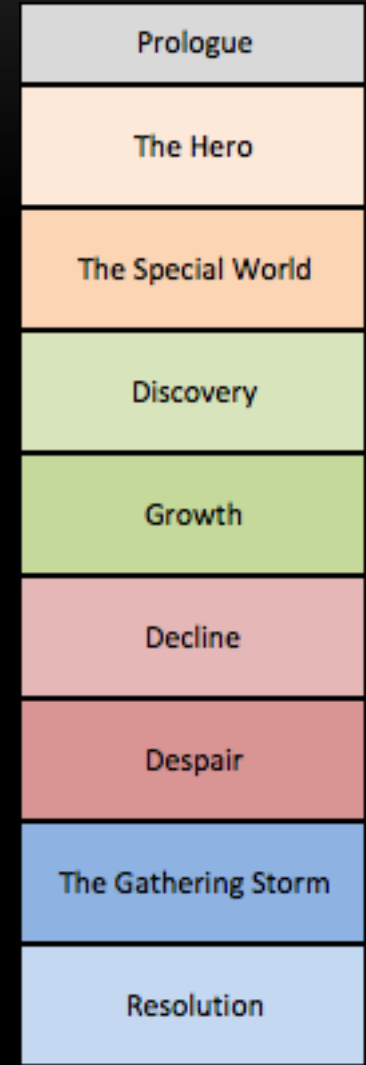
- Aftermath of the Climax
- Resolution of Subplots
- Shows the final disposition of
 - The Hero
 - The Hero's Allies
 - The Opposition and Enemies
- Reveals the Message of the Story
- There May Be an Optional Epilog



THE AGILE STORYBOARD

SUMMARY

- Plot is Plot
- There are 8 Stages, 7 Turning Points
- Aids Plotting and Pacing
- Not all plots fall into this pattern
- Genre Novels Work EXCEEDINGLY WELL
- Literary Novels attempt to find new patterns



WRITING YOUR NOVEL

In COARSE DETAIL w/ SYNOPSIS

In the MEDIUM DETAIL w/ STORYBOARD

In FINE DETAIL w/ Manuscript

WRITING YOUR NOVEL

ABSTRACTS

- Create a Story Abstract
 - The One-Page Description of your story
 - Message
 - One Line Description
 - Elevator Speech
- Create Hero & Villain Abstracts
 - Initial Goal
 - Main Goal
 - Missing Inner Quality

WRITING YOUR NOVEL

SYNOPSIS

- A 8-page (2000 word) Narrative
- Tell the whole story
 - From beginning to end
- Keep the details to a minimum
 - Avoid Subplots
 - Avoid Dialog
- Create A “Brain Dump” of your story

WRITING YOUR NOVEL

THE AGILE STORYBOARD

- Fold your Synopsis into the 8 Stages
- For each “Stage” (0-8)
 - Create a Bulleted List of Scenes
 - Declaritive
 - End each Stage with a Major Turning Point
- Discover
 - Major Plot points
 - How many characters you’ll need
- 4-6 Weeks

WRITING YOUR NOVEL

WRITE YOUR FIRST DRAFT

- Work From Beginning to End
- Write 10 pages each week
- Don't worry about spelling or grammar
- Bring Pages Critique Group Weekly
- Update your pages if necessary
- Then put them Away.
- Do not continually edit them
- CONSTANTLY MOVE FORWARD

WRITING YOUR NOVELS

EMBRACE CHANGE

- Resist the temptation to change your Manuscript
- BUT if you find a change is necessary
- EDIT YOUR STORYBOARD FIRST
- Determine which Pages were changed
- And update the Manuscript for only those Pages
- CONSTANTLY MOVE FORWARD

WRITING YOUR NOVEL

SUMMARY

- Create the Story, Hero, & Villain Abstracts
- Create Synopsis
- Fold the Synopsis into 8-Stage Storyboard
- Write 10 Pages Each Week
- Get Critiqued Each Week
- Change Your Storyboard
 - Not Your Manuscript
- AND CONSTANTLY MOVE FORWARD

AGILE WRITER CLUBS

A Complete Support System
for the Agile Novelist

AGILE WRITER CLUBS

OVERVIEW

- Agile Writers is a complete support system for
 - Conceiving
 - Writing
 - Publishing
 - Marketing
 - Your Novel

AGILE WRITER WORKSHOP WEEKLY MEETING

- Publix – John Rolfe Parkway
- Discuss
 - Progress
 - Upcoming Events in the Writing Community
 - Weekly Craft of Writing Presentation
- Storyboarding & Critique – Thursdays 7-9pm - \$25/month

AGILE WRITER CRITIQUE

- During the second half of the meeting
- Write 10 pages per week
- Critique every week
- Groups of 3 writers
- Interdependence breeds
 - Motivation and
 - Sense of Accountability

NEXT STEPS

BECOME AN AGILE WRITER!

1. Decide that you want to write Your Novel
2. Register at <http://AgileWriters.org>
3. You will receive a Welcome Email
 - A Dropbox location to drop your files each week
 - Access to the Agile Writer Library
4. Fill out the
 - Agile Story Abstract
 - Agile Hero Abstract
5. Come to your first meeting!
 - RSVP on the Meetup Site
 - Bring your Story and Hero Abstract
 - Show up on time, ready to work!