1. A mystery concerns itself with a puzzle. A thriller presents the reader with a nightmare.  
  
  
2. A mystery is a power fantasy; we identify with the detective.  Thrillers are a victim fantasy; we  
identify with someone at the mercy of others.  
  
3. A mystery can be likened to a myth.  Suspense is more like a fairy tale.  
  
4. In a mystery the hero or heroine already has the skills he or she needs to solve the puzzle.  In a  
thriller, he or she must learn new skills to survive.  
  
5. In a mystery, thinking is paramount.  In a thriller, feeling is paramount.  
  
6. The most important action in a mystery takes place offstage.  In a thriller, the important action  
happens onstage.  
  
7. A mystery usually takes place within a small circle of friends.  The hero or heroine of a thriller novel often finds him or herself thrust into a larger world.  
  
8. Readers of mysteries are looking for clues.  Readers of thrillers are expecting surprises.  
  
9. In a mystery, information is withheld.  In a thriller, information is provided.  
  
10. The ideal reader of mysteries remains one step behind the hero or heroine.  Those who read suspense  
should be one step ahead of the hero or heroine.  
  
11. Mystery readers expect a series.  Those who read thrillers know a book can be a one shot.  
  
12. The hero or heroine in a mystery is looking for suspects.  The hero or heroine in a thriller looks  
for betrayers.  
  
13. A mystery hero or heroine must confront a series of red herrings.  The thriller hero or heroine  
faces a cycle of distrust.  
  
14. Mystery endings must be intellectually satisfying.  Thriller endings must provide emotional  
satisfaction.  
  
15. Mysteries are usually three hundred manuscript pages.  Thrillers can be longer.  
  
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