



Step 1: Plan for Success

Seven Steps Writing Tips

Planning is a crucial first step when writing. The difficult part is getting children to do it!

It's hard to show people how to plan, so here's a quick method. Good stories (like movies, books, poems and even jokes) are all planned and they all have a similar structure. This is what it looks like:

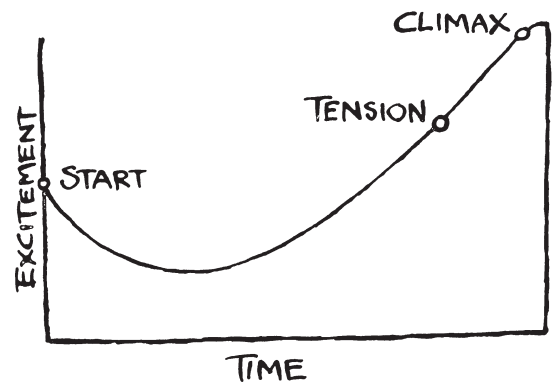
1. **Start with a bang** – start with an action scene or at a moment of change.
2. **Backfill** – the Who, What, Why is filled in while the story unfolds.
3. **Pebble** – the character faces a small problem or obstacle.
4. **Rock** – the problem escalates and the tension increases.
5. **Boulder** – the final tension scene has the reader on the edge of their seat; the stakes are very high.
6. **Action climax** – the character triumphs against all odds.
7. **Emotional resolution** – the character's inner story is wrapped up.

Once writers master this basic structure, they can plan more effectively and this will really improve their writing.

TOP TIP:

Think first, write second.

Draw a graph like this one and plot your stories out before you start writing.



Action Activity

Watch TV advertisements, the ones that 'tell a story'. In 30 seconds, some advertisements include a Sizzling Start, a tension scene and an Exciting Ending, exactly like the Story Graph.

