

How to write a book

By Geoff Kroll

Writing a book can be a fun and time consuming process. Depending on how much time you invest into writing daily, it can take some time to complete. Like any activity with constant dedication and direction, it can be completed. These steps are meant to be general directions to writing a book. Whether this be your first or you twenty first book these steps can help organize thoughts to begin the process and finish your book.

MATERIALS:

- Paper, notebook or computer (All or one of these materials may be used.)
- Writing utensil (If just using a computer, a writing utensil isn't needed.)
- Time (Crucial in completing process)

STEP 1: THINK

This could be considered the hardest step for some. Take time to think about what it is you want to write a book about. (see Figure 1) The biggest choice you will make is what genre you will pick. The two main genres are Fiction or Nonfiction. The sub-genres included but aren't limited to Comedy, Drama, Horror, Romance, Satire, Tragedy, Tragicomedy, Fantasy.₁



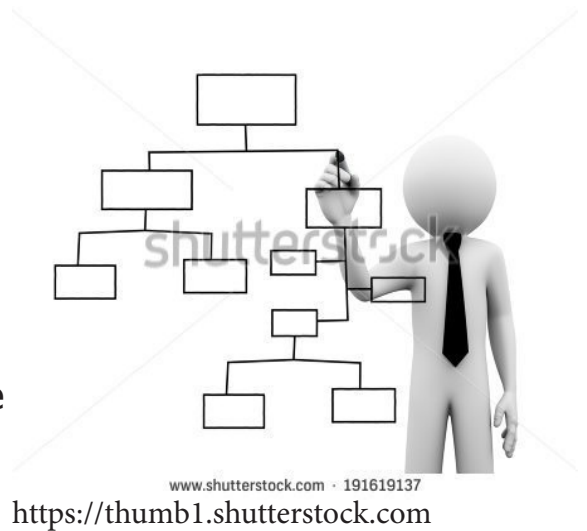
<http://www.mikebechtle.com> (Figure 1)

STEP 2: RESEARCH

Research is important to avoid plagiarism. You don't want to write a book and then realize that there is already a New York Times best seller about the exact same thing. Learn about places, topics, people and things before you write. Get your facts right.

STEP 3: ORGANIZE

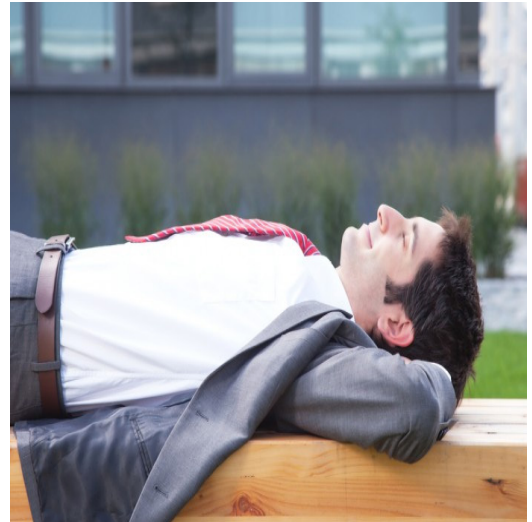
You've thought of a genre and maybe a couple other ideas have floated into your mind. Now is the time to organize it. This organization should be simple. This is the skeleton of your book. Group the characters, describe who they are. List the main events and the order you want them to happen. Group the places and setting of the book as well. Attach descriptions to each of the characters and settings. Don't worry about solidifying the character, setting and plot. Make sure you can edit this information later.



<https://thumb1.shutterstock.com>

STEP 4: TAKE A BREAK

Simple enough right? Take the break you need. Go outside, take a walk. Stand up and stretch, get a drink. While writing a book, it's best to have a relaxed mind. If you need to sleep on it, go ahead. Just make sure you are ready when it comes to the next steps.



<https://s3.amazonaws.com>

STEP 5: START AT THE END

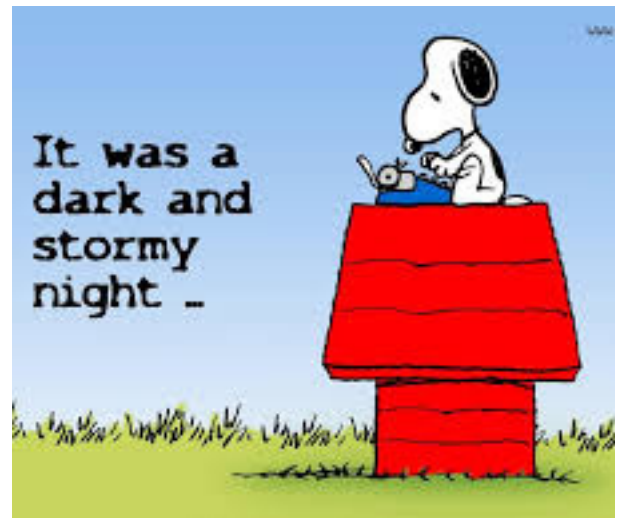
You may be wondering if you are reading the step right, but yes, this is step 4. Many writers agree that the ending can be the hardest part. "The ending is also the thing that stays the longest with readers." You don't want a watered-down ending written out after you have done everything else. Decide what will happen and how the book will conclude. Then take the next step to form everything else you write around it. "The first sentence can't be written until the final sentence is written."₃



<http://www.seeds4thesoul.com>

STEP 6: WRITE THE REST

Victoria Lynn Schmidt, Ph. D. says to “work *as if*, [which] means that you keep writing ... without stopping to rewrite everytime you change your mind about a character, plot or setting detail.” Keep story tracker notes as to not lose track of changes made to characters or plot. For example if you changed a character’s name John to Joe on page 30, write in the notes, “Change John’s name to Joe check pages 1-30.”¹



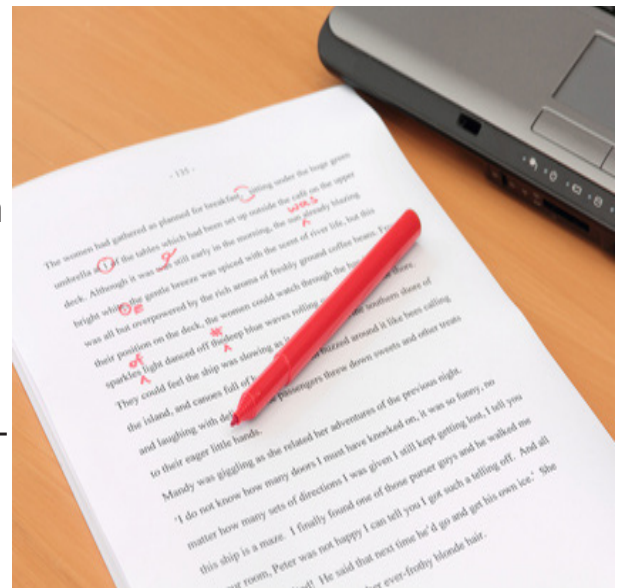
<http://www.bestsellingreads.com>

STEP 7: TAKE A BREAK

See Step 3

STEP 8: REVISE AND REWRITE

It’s true that editing can be very painful. You may think that one paragraph you wrote is award winning but is it really needed for the story? Have someone else review your writings as well. Sometimes we need a second opinion. “When your story is ready for rewrite, cut it to the bone. Get rid of every ounce of excess fat. This is going to hurt; revising a story down to the bare essentials is always a little like murdering children, but it must be done.”²



<http://emmawaltonhamilton.com>

STEP 9: PUBLISH

Find a publisher or have your book self published. This really comes down to how you want your book to be perceived. A publisher can help make your book known but they may take out elements you wanted in your book. Self publishing can be difficult but the book will truly be 100% yours.

¹*Book in a Month: The Fool-Proof System for Writing a Novel in 30 Days*, By: Victoria Lynn Schmidt

²<https://blog.udemy.com/how-to-start-writing-a-book/> By: Kasia Mikoluk

³Joyce Carol Oates, WD