



PREMISE WORKSHEET

Book Name :

Protagonist

The premise should include the primary character of your story and a few defining characteristics about them - for example, homeless teenage girl, grieving angry mother or lonely, old, widow.

In your premise, you must identify and describe your protagonist, your central character, in just two- three words. Here's the formula:
one or two adjectives + a noun

Example:

Katniss Everdeen - survivalist by necessity

Harry Potter - boy wizard

The Situation/ Conflict

Next, identify the situation, crisis, or core conflict in the story.
Here you usually focus on one of two major story elements: the inciting incident or the climax of the story.

The Hunger Games - Volunteers take part in a televised fight to the death.
Harry Potter - Enters the magical world of witchcraft



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The Objective/ The Goal

What does the character want as a result of the new situation.

But what we're looking for here is their main external objective once the story gets going as result of the inciting incident.

Survival, Justice, Money, Love, etc.

The Hunger Games - to survive the games and return home to her family.

Harry Potter - to survive school and learn magic.

The Opponent

Conflict builds tension, excitement and interest. A lack of conflict is a big fat bore. And for good conflict, you need a good opponent.

There may be multiple opponents, but in our premise we're going to focus on the Big Bad.

Hunger Games - The Game Makers

Harry Potter - The Greatest Evil Wizard the ever lived.



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Distaster

Your novel should be a series of ever-increasing peril and conflict, and here we want to define the hardest challenge your hero faces at the climax of the story.

The disaster is usually brought about by the main opponent.

It's important to think about stakes at this stage and make sure they are high enough for your readers to be gripped.

Hunger Games - the game makers change the rules at the last moment, forcing her to choose between killing her closest ally or being killed by him

Harry Potter - Voldemort wants to steal an immortality charm and destroy the entire school.



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Now Put It All Together

Protagonist + Conflict + Objective + Opponent + Disaster

When Katniss Everdeen, survivalist by necessity, volunteers to take part in a televised fight to the death, she just wants to survive and return home to her family. But the game makers change the rules at the last moment, forcing her to choose between killing her closest ally or being killed by him.



When Harry Potter, child wizard, enters a magical school of witchcraft and wizardry all he wants is to survive school and learn magic. But the greatest evil wizard who ever lived wants to steal an immortality charm and destroy the entire school.



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More examples of Premise Statements

Romeo and Juliet

A teenage girl and boy, from warring families, fall in love; but instead of bringing everyone together, their relationship leads to a huge feud and eventually their death.

Oliver Twist

A Victorian orphan escapes the workhouse and joins a London street gang, learning how to steal from the rich; yet little does he know his long-lost family are one of those rich people.

A Man Called Ove

An ill-tempered, isolated retiree who spends his days enforcing block association rules and visiting his wife's grave, has finally given up on life just as an unlikely friendship develops with his boisterous new neighbors.

The Diary of Anne Frank

A diary of a Jewish girl hiding from the Nazis during WW2, showing us all that even during the hardest of times love is all that matters.

Death of a Backwoodsman

By Lynn Palermo

When the Phelan family move to Upper Canada, in search of a better life, they soon face discrimination and hardship in the unforgiving wilderness, struggling to find acceptance and belonging in a hostile community.