

Story Planning Worksheet 1

Element	Suggestions and Hints	Outline your elements here
Plot	Good plots twist and turn but lead only to one place. Surprise your reader and you keep him/her reading.	
The detective	The best detectives are the memorable ones – make your sleuth a “character,” whether she is a fool, an egotist, a vamp, a real smarty or just plain gorgeous, make her memorable (8 inch heels)	
The crime	Murder is good but only in fiction. Avoid the stolen roller-skates or the lost notebook unless you have a new slant on these lesser crimes. Theft has to be of a valuable item, not a pogo stick.	
The situation: Setting	Exotic places can be engaging, but if you pick a place no one wants to go, you also can make that work. Hawaii, International Blvd., Montclair, Sri Lanka, London can all be engaging if you use concrete detail in your description. Remember, the people in these places have to talk like they belong there.	
Social Setting	Social setting has relevance to dialect and to a deeper societal meaning for your work. The characters have to be consistent with the social setting; know that gang murders and husband/wife murders in the ‘burbs both have social settings even though they are very different from each other.	
Suspects	These should be memorable and their characteristics can, and maybe should, be clues to the solution of the crime. A limp, right handedness, a mutual friendship of a suspect might lead to solution of the crime. Weird	
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