

## WRITER'S ROADMAP

1. Decide what you will write about – make sure it is a topic you know well, have personal experience of, or can undertake in-depth research to learn about the primary focus material in your story.
2. Don't write about things you have no experience of, because you will find it difficult to write with **authority** on the subject and the story will not be believable.
3. Prepare a sequence plan to decide how your story will begin. Work out how sub-plots will fit into the main story line.
4. Plot the action to include: the opening, the rising action, the climax, the falling action and the ending/close of the story.
5. Develop profiles for all the characters – paint detailed word pictures to describe their physical features, their likes and dislikes, personal values and history/background.
6. Develop a language style to create each character's voice – i.e. make street kids, sound like street kids, and make corporate lawyers sound like corporate lawyers.
7. Make the language authentic. The tone of the voice must match the personality of each character, if you want readers to believe they are real people.
8. Remember fictional characters must come across as real, living, flesh and blood people if you want your story to engage the reader.
9. Write a number of descriptions to describe the environment/setting for the story. Do this for every setting throughout the story.
10. Work out relationships – know the relationship all the characters have with each other. Their relationship will influence the way they interact with each other i.e. formally, informally, intimately, etc.

11. Check the language style against the relationship. The tone of their dialogue will vary according to the relationship they have with each other.
12. Write a powerful **opening** paragraph that will immediately grab the reader's attention.
13. Write another opening paragraph, and then another. Write at least six opening paragraphs.
14. Select the opening paragraph that works best, and start writing your story.
15. Stick to the plan.
16. If you have an idea that isn't in the original plan find a realistic way to integrate the new idea into the story in a logical way, without changing the plan.
17. Immerse yourself in each character. Think like them. Talk like them. Know them well.
18. Work on the project every day. Try to write for a minimum of one hour each day.
19. When you finish your first draft. Edit, Edit, Edit – remove **ALL** unnecessary words. Be highly critical of your work.
20. Develop a **Project Evaluation Team** – have a mix of readers. Some who always read fiction, some who never read fiction, some who only read technical work and some who read anything they can get their hands on.
21. Distribute your story to the Evaluation Team and ask each reader to fill in an evaluation form.
22. Analyse the responses from the evaluation team members.
23. Rewrite the story to strengthen it – make sure you take into account all the comments from your evaluation team members.