

The Busy Writer's Book of Checklists

Checklist 2 – Plot

Aspect of Plotting	Your Assessment		
	Works Well	Needs Work	Poor
What is at stake? Will the main character care? Will the reader care? Do you need to raise the stakes?			
Have you started your story at a turning point or crisis for the main character?			
Does your main character have a clear plan of action throughout the story? When challenged, does he/she opt for a logical change of plan?			
Does the main character have a worthy adversary?			
Is your main character believably motivated?			
Are you clear on whose story this is? Is this made clear by the viewpoint chosen? Is the viewpoint you've chosen the best to tell this story?			
Are the main characters interesting and well-developed, with clear goals?			
Are your secondary characters clearly motivated? Is this believable?			
Problems/Challenges/Complications: can you identify them? How will the character overcome them? Are they too easily solved? Are there enough of them for the length of the story?			
Is the story plausible? Could it happen to any of us?			
Genre: is it clear to readers which genre this falls into?			
Is the conflict immediate?			
Are any subplots closely related to the main plot?			
How will the story appeal to your readers' emotions?			
Does the pacing work? (Is there too much non-stop action? Too many slow sections?)			
Is action followed by reaction?			
Does the story build to a climax?			
Is there a moment when all seems lost?			
Mood and Tone: Is the general tone of the book clear at the beginning? (Humorous, suspenseful, romantic etc.)			
Setting: Is there a clear and vivid geographical setting? Is there a convincing professional setting (if applicable)?			
Time: Is it clear WHEN the story takes place? On reflection, is the time span of the story appropriate, or too long/short?			
Is there a satisfying ending? (Everything comes together and the goal is reached.)			
<i>Other Aspects of Plotting to Consider:</i>			