

Steven King Tips (On Writing)

1. READ
2. Remove ALL words that do not contribute to the story.
3. Once done your story belongs to the reader.
4. Write your story with the door closed; edit your story with the door open.
5. A writers original perception of a character may be just as erroneous as a readers.
6. Stopping a piece of work because its hard emotionally or imaginatively IS A BAD IDEA.
7. Take your writing seriously, don't approach it like you're doing the laundry.

TOOLBOX

Vocabulary

- Don't be afraid to go with your first choice. It's probably closest to what you mean.
- Warriners English Grammer and Composition.
- Avoid the passive tense. Use active verbs.
- Avoid adverbs. Especially in dialogue tags.
- Use said or asked unless there is a good reason not to.
- For possession always add an s (even if it ends in an s eg Thomas's).

Style

- The most important part of a sentence is the end.
- Paragraphs are the building blocks of stories. Sometimes 1 sentence, sometimes 4 pages. Can indicate a stop, pause or change in tack. EVEN WHEN IT'S THE SAME PERSON TALKING.
- Don't worry about plot. Take a situation What if... and let the characters work it out for themselves.

DESCRIPTION

1. Start with a clear image; end with a brief clear description.
2. Feel free to use similes and other figurative language (Avoid Cliches!).
3. Use fresh images, simple vocabulary.
4. Say what you see, then get on with the story.

DIALOGUE

1. Listen to how people talk/behave.
2. Whether polite or vulgar it must ringtrue for your character.

SYMBOLISME

1. If it is in your story then polish it.
2. It can help focus your story.

THEME

1. Story should come first.
2. But after, ask what your story is about.
3. In subsequent drafts enhance your story with your conclusions.

DRAFTS

1. 1st draft - (closed door) 3 months should give about 150 – 200,000 words. Don't analyse, just write. Fast enough to out run your self doubt but not so fast as to outrun your enthusiasm.
2. 2nd draft – After 6 weeks (it is like someone else's writing – easier to delete). Try writing something else in between.
3. Try to correct spelling and inconsistencies in one sitting if possible.
4. Look for resonance (themes). ADD to reinforce. REMOVE what distracts.
5. 2nd draft = 1st draft – 10%

PACE

1. The story needs to unfold at its own pace.
2. Don't over/under explain.
3. Try leaving out the boring bits.

BACKSTORY

1. Everybody has one.
2. Most of it isn't very interesting.
3. Avoid Flashbacks
4. Try to get it out of the way as soon as possible. Remember the reader will be more interested in what is ABOUT to happen.

If you have a feeling that you can't quite describe something
Then maybe you shouldn't be a WRITER!