AUTHOR LIFE

HOW TO TURN YOUR SHORT STORY INTO A NOVEL

WORKBOOK

PLOT

SETTING

?

CHARACTER

LINDA MCNABB

How to Turn Your Short Story into a Novel

WORKBOOK

Linda McNabb

Introduction

This workbook is intended to be used in conjunction with *How To Turn Your Short Story into a Novel.*

Writing a book can be daunting but with a piece by piece approach you can break it down into manageable amounts.

This workbook can be used for any other projects as well and you should be able to adjust usage to fit the creation of most full-length novels.

It is recommended to read *How to Turn Your Short Story Into A Novel* first, or use it alongside as you read.

Lists of traits and places and names etc are NOT included here and can be found on many free websites. If there is a demand I will produce a companion book full of every list you could ever want.

Be sure to let me know if you want one at lindamcnabb.com

Good luck and HAVE FUN!

Choosing a story

Option One: What happens next?

Fill out the following section (for as many short stories or ideas as you're considering this time around)

Pick the short story that had the most ideas or made you jump up and down with excitement. **Then go to PAGE 12 for the next step**

If you didn't get a story to write, rank them with how many stars you'd give them, then cross out the one with the least stars. Keep crossing out until there is one left.

If you can't cross any out - go to PAGE 10

List Your Ideas

You don't have to fill it all right now! Come back later if you have more

#	Story Idea	Stars
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

Option One: What happens next?

Ideas that might work. Before or after Story Idea #1

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Ideas that might work. Before or after Story Idea #2

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Option One: What happens next?

Ideas that might work. Before or after Story Idea #3

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Ideas that might work. Before or after Story Idea #4

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Option One: What happens next?

Ideas that might work. Before or after Story Idea #5

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Ideas that might work. Before or after Story Idea #6

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Option One: What happens next?

Ideas that might work. Before or after Story Idea #7

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Ideas that might work. Before or after Story Idea #8

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Option One: What happens next?

Ideas that might work. Before or after Story Idea #9

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Ideas that might work. Before or after Story Idea #10

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Option Two: Favourite Child

List your books under the appropriate heading. Based purely on what you think of it "TODAY". Tomorrow you might list them differently!

Then rank the GREAT ones in order of your favourite.

The winner is #1. Go back to Option One if you haven't done that yet and fill it out for the winning story.

If you still don't have a story selected see the next page.

Ranking	Great	Good	Average

Option Three: Mix and Match

Combined Story_____

List ideas that 'might' work with this new storyline.

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

Combined Story_____

List ideas that 'might' work with this new storyline.

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

Option Three: Mix and Match

List your ideas/stories RANDOMLY under the following headings. Keep genres together!

See if you can make a new story from the combined ideas.

Then fill out the Combined Story ideas list on previous page

Genre _____ Idea #1_____ Idea #2 _____ Idea #3 _____ Does this combination work? Yes / No	Genre _____ Idea #1_____ Idea #2 _____ Idea #3 _____ Does this combination work? Yes / No
Genre _____ Idea #1_____ Idea #2 _____ Idea #3 _____ Does this combination work? Yes / No	Genre _____ Idea #1_____ Idea #2 _____ Idea #3 _____ Does this combination work? Yes / No
Genre _____ Idea #1_____ Idea #2 _____ Idea #3 _____ Does this combination work? Yes / No	Genre _____ Idea #1_____ Idea #2 _____ Idea #3 _____ Does this combination work? Yes / No

Characters

List your existing characters from your Short Story or Idea here.

Then put a STAR next to your Key Characters - eg. The story won't work without them.

Heroes (or 'Nice Guys')			
Name	Form Human/Frog etc	Key Character?	Are They Essential?

Villains			
Name	Form Human/Frog etc	Key Character?	Are They Essential?

My Key Characters		
Name	Form Human/Frog etc	Hero or Villain?

How does my Villain help the Key Characters develop?

Why do they need to defeat it/him/her and how will it change them?

List ways your character would be out of His/Her Comfort Zone.
Include your Villain(s)

Key Character	Situations that they would be uncomfortable in

13

Character

Hero or Villain	
Human / Elf / ?	
Name / Nickname	
Age / Height / Build	
Skin / Hair / Eyes	
Personality	
Gender	
Goals / Dreams	
Habits and Traits	

Write a short description or story about them, or one of their habits.

Character

	Key Character? Y / N
Hero or Villain	
Human / Elf / ?	
Name / Nickname	
Age / Height / Build	
Skin / Hair / Eyes	
Personality	
Gender	
Goals / Dreams	
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Hero or Villain	
Human / Elf / ?	
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Personality	
Gender	
Goals / Dreams	
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Human / Elf / ?	
Name / Nickname	
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Skin / Hair / Eyes	
Personality	
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Skin / Hair / Eyes	
Personality	
Gender	
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Personality	
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Personality	
Gender	
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Habits and Traits	

Write a short description or story about them, or one of their habits.

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Key Character? Y / N

Hero or Villain	
Human / Elf / ?	
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	Key Character? Y / N
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Gender	
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Habits and Traits	

Write a short description or story about them, or one of their habits.

Character

	Key Character? Y / N
Hero or Villain	
Human / Elf / ?	
Name / Nickname	
Age / Height / Build	
Skin / Hair / Eyes	
Personality	
Gender	
Goals / Dreams	
Habits and Traits	

Write a short description or story about them, or one of their habits.

The Reader - And what they want

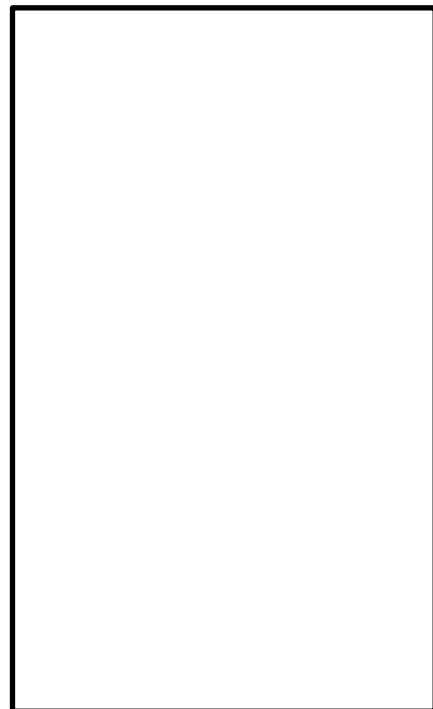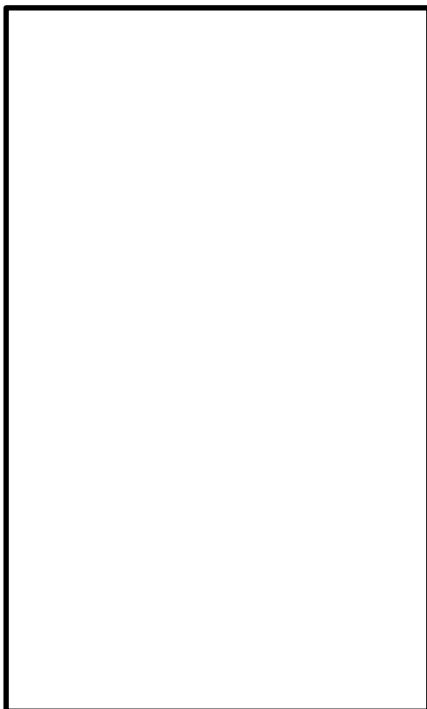Let's take a break and think about what type of cover you want.

It's important to the reader too!

Look at other books in a similar genre to yours - Preferably ones that sell well!

Title	Description of cover

Do a couple of rough sketches of your ideal cover.

Take the above info into consideration

Settings

What is the current setting of your short story / idea?

Describe it briefly.

Pick more settings that you would like to include.

Don't think too hard about this.

Setting

Name	
Location	

Description and History

Sight

Size	
Light	
Space	
Objects	

Sounds	
Smell	
Tastes	
Touch	

Setting
Come back and use these as needed

Name	
Location	

Description and History

Sight

Size	
Light	
Space	
Objects	

Sounds	
Smell	
Tastes	
Touch	

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Setting

Name	
Location	

Description and History

Sight

Size	
Light	
Space	
Objects	

Sounds	
Smell	
Tastes	
Touch	

Setting

Name	
Location	

Description and History

Sight

Size	
Light	
Space	
Objects	

Sounds	
Smell	
Tastes	
Touch	

Setting

Name	
Location	

Description and History

Sight

Size	
Light	
Space	
Objects	

Sounds	
Smell	
Tastes	
Touch	

Setting

Name	
Location	

Description and History

Sight

Size	
Light	
Space	
Objects	

Sounds	
Smell	
Tastes	
Touch	

Need More pages?
Photocopy the page at the end of this book

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Is it the Beginning or the End?

Events that could happen BEFORE and AFTER your current short story. Hint: we've done some of these already!

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
	Your short story scene or idea goes here.
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

My short story fits BEST at the

BEGINNING / MIDDLE / END

Based on how the story works either before it or after.

Circle the one that fits best.

Do I need a Series?

Look at other books in a similar genre to yours - Preferably ones that sell well! You don't have to write a series. Write what feels right to you.

Is it a Series	# of Reviews	Ranking	# of Chapters	Title

Series / Standalone *(cross out one)* **sells best in my genre.**

The sweet spot for ONE book in my genre is:

Length in pages _____

Chapters   _____

NOTES

Point of view

It's time to work out what POV you'll be using. Will it be the same as your initial short story? It doesn't have to be!

<u>Basic POV Styles</u>

Third Person   Narrator

Third Person - Changing   First Person

My short story current POV _____

POV for my novel will be _____

Let's try it in a different POV to see what happens. Just a couple of paragraphs will give you an idea.

Use those that are different to your current POV.

Try it in First Person

In Narrator Style

And in Third Person

How it all ends

It's time to decide the beginning and ending of your story.
A brief description only, for now.

Remember: Who is there? Where is it? When is it?

Where does it BEGIN

And where does it END?

Timeline

Set up your basic timeline. Make a mark or arrow on this timeline where your short story, or idea fits.

Don't worry, you can move it later if you need to.

My short story / idea fits HERE

Novel Timeline

Beginning	End

It's time to GO LARGE.

As per the *How To* book. Go find an empty table and put masking tape along it (if it won't damage the table!)

Add POST-IT notes for the beginning, short story, and end.

Different Post-it Note sizes

2" x 1.5"

3" x 3"

Note:

I find the 2" x 1.5" more than enough for this step, and they fit on the page easier later on!

There are many other sizes too!

Add in the rest of your plot so far

Go back to Page 34. Copy all your ideas to individual post-it notes and stick them on the timeline. Add any that you have thought of since then.

Try to work out the order as you go. Perhaps you've changed your mind since you wrote them and the scenes need to be rearranged.

Some new ideas might be born during this process.

WRITE THEM DOWN NOW!

How does it look? Move them around if you need to.

Fill in the gaps with ideas as per the *How To* book.

It's time to set fire to the tree!

Then add a CLASHING COLOUR post-it note under EVERY challenge you've set your Key Characters - or Villain.

On the new colour, devise ways to disrupt or ruin that plan.

This will produce even more ideas.

WRITE THEM DOWN!   :)

You're bound to have new characters and settings so we'll deal with those next.

New Characters or Settings?

New Characters I need

Go back and make character sheets for each one!

Character Name	Key Character? Y/N	Who are they?

New Settings I need

Go back and make setting sheets for each one!

Place Name	Why it's Important

Lay out the plot

Use the table again, or any large surface.

Note: if you used Post-it notes they stick REALLY well to windows or walls!

Once you've worked out how many chapters you need (See *How To* book) You can divide them up into chapters.
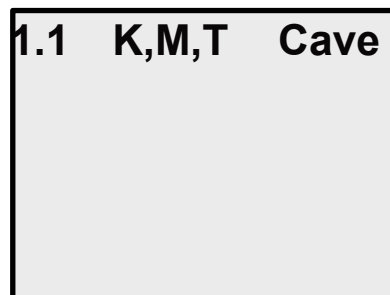
You will probably have 3 per chapter if you're following along with me.

Hint: in the top left corner (in pencil) I usually write the chapter and scene number incase they get mixed up.

Eg. 1.1 (for chapter one. scene one)

Across the top I add who is there - just initials and where the scene is taking place It doesn't have to be big, just squeeze it in the top 1/4".

1.1	K,M,T	Cave

Ready set go

Okay. You have your story, your characters, your settings and a wall full of post-it notes.

Transfer the post-it notes to the pages of this book (from Page 46 onwards) and you're ready to go.

When that's done

1. Look at the first chapter, and the first post-it note.

Spend five minutes dreaming through that section of plot and see what ideas you come up with.

2.   Use the right hand side of the chapter-spread page to make quick notes on what you 'saw' or any ideas that need to be incorporated.

3. Break out your preferred method of writing and GO FOR IT!

Well done and remember to have FUN.

Ideas and Thoughts

Post-it Note

Space for more ideas as you think of them!

If you used larger Post-it Notes, you might still fit 6 per page

Chapter Fourteen

Chapter Sixteen

Ideas and Thoughts

Ideas and Thoughts

Ideas and Thoughts

Ideas and Thoughts

Character

	Key Character? Y / N
Hero or Villain	
Human / Elf / ?	
Name / Nickname	
Age / Height / Build	
Skin / Hair / Eyes	
Personality	
Gender	
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Write a short description or story about them, or one of their habits.

Setting

Name	
Location	

Description and History

Sight

Size	
Light	
Space	
Objects	

Sounds	
Smell	
Tastes	
Touch	

Rewrite Notes