**Planning Your Book**

I. Meta-planning

A. Your book’s genre and subgenre

B. Your proposed Length (recommended 20-30k words for 6 week release)

C. Your Budget (includes book cover, editing, etc – recommended 0-150 dollars for first book)

D. Your Expected time per day on the project (remember you have to write 1k words a day during drafting)

II. Planning the Story Elements

A. Setting

1. Genre variations

2. Places:

3. Differences from modern culture (if any) ex. Dress, gender attitudes, etc.:

4. Technology and Magic (if any):

5. Any other miscellaneous notes

B. Characters.

1. Protagonist(s) – physical description, history, demeanor

Strength?

Fatal Flaw?

2. Love interest (if applicable - recommend "A" story only)

3. Antagonist (if applicable)

4. Best Friend (often part of “C” Story)

5. Other supporting characters

6. Mentor (optional)

III. Plotting

**Plot** – the event sequence, usually executed by the characters.

**A, B, C Stories** – A typical three-act plot structure contains a primary plot (the A story), a secondary plot that is important to the characters (usually a romance), and a tertiary plot that occurs in the second-half of the story, providing the action for the final parts of the plot.

**EX. Empire Strikes Back –**

A story – Luke must train to be a Jedi to overcome the empire

B story – Han and Leia have a romance

C story – Darth Vader lures luke to cloud city, knowing his force powers will see his friends in danger

# Plot Structures

**Three - Act**

Act I – Exposition and “Conflict” formation

Here you introduce the protagonist, expose certain details of their personality (preferably by demonstrating them through action), and expose critical setting details. By the end of Act I some event should have put the plot into motion and motivated the protagonist to act.

Act II – Chaos

Here is where the plot events really begin to gain importance, ratcheting up the tension of the story. The protagonist is searching for a solution to his/her problem, formulating a plan of action, and beginning to interact with any “B” Story.

The transition to the third act usually happens when the protagonist begins to enact his plans, but encounters unexpected opposition or failure

Act III – the Great Contest

Usually beginning with a significant failure or setback of the protagonists plans, the final act is about moving toward resolution. Usually this means escalating tension and the threat of a final “contest” that will settle the conflict once and for all. The protagonist has to adapt to overcome a foe that is more powerful than he realized.

Typically, this part of the story involves a loss due to a “Fatal flaw,” a “dark night of the soul” (where the protagonist must reflect on his flaws and reformulate his understanding of the situation), and a final battle where the outcomes are uncertain.

Note: Sometimes the protagonist doesn’t win

**Ex. The Empire Strikes back**

Act I – The rebellion is exposed as in hiding. Luke receives his motivation for seeking Yoda. A sudden attack by the antagonist (Vader), sets the rest of the plot into motion, sending Luke and Han into different places.

Act II – Luke learns how far he still has to go to defeat Vader. Leia and Han begin their romance while reacting to Vader

Transition: Han and Leia are captured in cloud city

Act III – Luke goes to face Vader; Han is frozen; Lando escapes with Leia and Chewy. Luke finds out Darth Vader is his father.