Author Academy Writing Course

The A-Z of Getting Your Book Written & Publish Ready!

The Setting of your Story

What is Story Setting?

Your Setting has two broad elements:

Place and time.

In a novel, it's where and when the events of your chapters unfold.

Why is setting important?
The function of time & place in fiction

Setting is more than simply a geographical location or time period that serves as a backdrop to characters' actions.

Fictional settings have many uses:

Using Place in story settings

• 'Place' in a story has multiple purposes and effects:

• **The places you set your scenes contribute mood and tone**

• Places restrict (or open) **possibilities for your characters' lives and actions**

• **Places can evolve and change as your story progresses. You can use their evolution to show the changing circumstances affecting your characters' views and options**

Using Time in setting

Time in a story, for example the historical period or epoch the story spans, is equally vital:

- Like place, time restricts or rather determines, to some extent, possibilities for your characters. **The time setting of your novel impacts what types of lives your characters can lead and what choices they can make.**

- **Time in your novel's setting determines what kind of technology is available**

- **Time in your story setting** is equally useful for showing and underscoring changes that contribute to character and plot development

Spend a few minutes daydreaming about the world of your novel

Research and plan
Places in your story

Use Place like you would a character

We give characters individual voices to make them feel real, so that the cast members of our novels don't feel like two-dimensional carbon copies of each other.

Just like a character, a place in your novel should have its own 'voice'

Once you have a few general ideas about your setting, it's time to start writing your ideas down.

Make your setting vivid

"Show, don't tell" - it really does work.

Keep it in mind that you shouldn't always show but not tell.

Combine factual and fictional sources

Build individual elements of place and time

- Locale
- Time of Year
- Time of Day
- Climate

By now, you should have a pretty clear mental picture of the world that your characters live in.

Find a good feedback system
that works for you

Keep going over it until it's perfect!

Exercise One

Setting

What's Next?

Looking at
Plot, Style and Tone