



The BIG Facts of Story Writing

(Well, some of them)¹

Everybody loves a good story. But it's just as true that everybody hates a bad one. That's why there's a lot on the line when you write a story someone will actually read. Many readers have been reading great stories by the world's best writers since they were old enough to hold a book in their hands and turn the pages. Talk about pressure! Worse, readers not only have high expectations, but they are also easily distracted ("oh look, a squirrel!"). And then there's you—as a writer, you really want readers to connect with and enjoy your story.

You may find all of that quite intimidating. No wonder! But that doesn't mean you shouldn't try. Writing great stories is work, but it's also fun.

What to do? If you want to write a good story, you need to learn and remember the **BIG Facts of Story Writing**:

- **Fact 1: Story writing is all about a relatable character.** The best stories are built around complex, interesting, relatable characters.
- **Fact 2: Story writing is all about what your character wants.** Your character wants one thing more than anything else in the world and that one thing drives everything your character does.
- **Fact 3: Story writing is all about how your character gets or does not get what he or she wants.** Some characters get what they want, others fail. *How* they get it or don't will make up the plot of your story.
- **Fact 4: Story writing is all about how your character changes.** After everything that happens, your character is forever changed. This is what makes your story meaningful.
- **Fact 5: Story writing is all about the world you create.** You choose the people, places, things, and ideas in your story. Your choices influence the meaning of the story and your readers' level of interest.

Writing stories can be hard to do well. Even professionals find it challenging. But using these five **BIG Facts of Story Writing**, you can do it.

¹ Original concept by Steve Peha/Revised for class by Joseph Sigalas