SET YOUR STORY

What is Setting?

Your story needs to take place somewhere and somewhen. Otherwise, your characters and your plot have nowhere to do anything. This is a worksheet that is meant to help you find the right place to tell your story.

When

Whether your story occupies the third century or the twenty-third century, we, the readers, need to know exactly what is going on and when. This gives your story a context. What happened before the story? What is about to happen? These details give you, as an author, a depth to explore; it makes your story come alive. For some stories, the time can be vague: "A long time ago" or "Once upon a time." All that you need is an anchor point from which to build your chain of events. Here are some prompts to get you started. CIrcle one.

Future   Present   Past

The season of the year is _____.

The time of day is __:_____.

List 3 different weather events that might impact your story.

    1. _____

    2. _____

    3. _____

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Location is just as important as your timing. Whether it's a castle on the moors or a ship set on a course for distant lands, each place is going to have different scenery, lighting, problems or perils that may come to affect your storyline. Castles may have unexpected, secret passages and ships tend to pitch and fall in the waves. Let your setting become a character in your story that interacts with the plot and come alive for the reader. Here are some prompts to get you started.

Describe the landscape:

Are there any buildings or unique locations of interest? If so, list them.

Each building has four spaces: Bedroom, Bathroom, Living room, and Kitchen. Write down a few details about each room in these buildings.

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What sort of people, groups, or creatures would interact with your character(s)? How might they interact?

Everyone needs food, water, and shelter. How will your setting meet those needs?

Interaction

      The best stories let all their elements dance together, connecting the characters to the plot and the plot with the setting and the setting with the characters. Mr. Darcy chases Elizabeth out into the rain to propose marriage, Thanos destroys Avengers HQ to cue the final battle sequence, Frodo has to climb up Mount Doom to destroy the one ring, etc. This is where real creativity begins: Take your different setting elements and match them up with plot elements and different characters. Use the space below to summarize a few scenes.