

FEATURES OF A GOOD SHORT STORY

- Character:** develop a character the reader can identify with and be interested in.
- Setting:** use imagery to create a strong sense of place and atmosphere.
- Plot:** construct a series of events that include a strong conflict, a suspenseful rising action, an exciting climax, and a thoughtful resolution.
- Theme:** give the story a sense of purpose and meaning.
- Dialogue:** use dialogue to convey information about the characters and to forward the plot
- Point of View:** select the appropriate point of view for your tale. First person is more intimate but third person is more objective.

BRAINSTORMING

1. Select a genre: _____

Science Fiction
Fantasy
Horror
Mystery

Realistic Fiction
Historical Fiction
Romance
Humor

2. Choose a story premise from the list below or create one of your own.

Some possible story premises:

- A lonely young girl wishes to be wanted.
- An overweight girl who is bullied wishes to be thin.
- A boy whose dog has died wishes to have the pet back.
- An unemployed man about to lose his house wishes for a million bucks.
- A young teenage boy wishes he could have all the chicks.
- A singer wishes to become famous.
- A child who is fascinated with dinosaurs wished they still roamed the earth.
- A teen girl wishes her parents would leave her alone.
- A clumsy teen wishes to become varsity quarterback.
- A video addict wishes to become part of his game.
- A young boy with a scientific mind wishes to visit the future.
- A teenage girl wishes she didn't have an annoying little brother.

* Your story does not have to be about someone making a wish, but it can be.

3. Create a focused character description that includes only details relevant to the story.

| <u>YOUR MAIN CHARACTER:</u> | SAMPLE |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Age: | Age: 16 |
| Gender: | Gender: male |
| Personality: | Personality trait: insecure |
| Physical features: | Physical features: short and underweight |
| Relevant hobbies/interests: | Relevant hobbies/interests: basketball |
| Place in the world: | |

Based on the above description, could your reader predict ^{what motivates} ~~the wish~~ this character ~~would~~ ~~make~~? _____ Can they predict what actions your character might take?

4. What point of view will you select for your story? _____

First person (the "I" voice): I was so angry with Mom that day...

- ❖ narrator is one of the characters in the story. We only learn this narrator's thoughts and feelings about events. The narration is not objective and or always reliable, but readers tend to identify more with this character.

Third person (the "he/she/it" voice): Charlie Robbins loved his video games...

- ❖ Omniscient: mystery narrator knows everything; can offer insight into the thoughts and feelings of all characters
- ❖ Limited: narrator know everything about one character

Objective (the "he/she/it" voice): Charlie Robbins played video games constantly...

- ❖ narration is limited to describing events and provides no insight into the thoughts and feelings of characters.