

Character Development

DISCUSSION FROM LAST MEETING

What was the Subtext?

Subtext is what the character is really saying beneath and between the lines of dialogue. What were the underlying drives and meanings, when we read between the lines that became apparent to us as we read?

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Announcements

Word on the Lake Writing Contest, [click here](#)

Ernie's book Choices is only available at this special price for a short period of time. Take advantage of the offer and enjoy the read; [click here](#).

Promotion

YOU ARE A WRITER

What does it take to become a writer?

1. First you must make a decision to write.
2. You have to write.

What is writing? What is art? Is it important?

I encourage you to visit this website. It was created specifically for budding high school and university artists and it's packed full of inspiration and positive thoughts on creativity and inspiration: <https://www.edonline.sk.ca/bbcswebdav/library/materials/saskartists/>

Why are we discussing art? Because writing is an art. In writing, as with all forms of art, you are trying to communicate. You can hide your writing on your computer, or in a drawer but let's face it, when you sit down to write you are, most often, expecting or hoping that someone will read what you are writing.

Self Promotion

Discussion: why promote your work, even if you're not planning to sell it?

I find that sort of self-absorbed self-promotion to be self-serving, not to mention incredibly annoying and occasionally nauseating. No one enjoys listening to a pompous blowhard.

Keep in mind that self-promotion isn't actually about you; because that's the one side of the equation nobody cares about.

Constructive Self-Promotion Is About Ideas and Vision. It doesn't actually focus on you

directly. Instead, it focuses on the passion, interest, and vision that you have and are working toward.

Discussion: what are some openings that people give you that give you an opportunity to talk about your writing?

Prepare an elevator pitch ... or have more than one ready to use when the right opportunity comes along.

What is an elevator pitch?

Also known as an elevator speech, it is a quick synopsis of what you do. It's named for the time it takes to ride an elevator from bottom to top of a building (roughly 30 seconds or 75 words).

Understand that the purpose of an **elevator pitch** is to get a conversation started.

When and How to Use an Elevator Speech

- To introduce yourself at networking events and mixers.
- If you're attending professional association programs and activities, or any other type of gathering, have your pitch ready to share with those you meet.
- "Tell me about yourself" — think of your elevator pitch as a super-condensed version of your response to that request.

How to Promote Yourself

1. Look and feel confident
2. Master your elevator pitch, most people make their mind up about a person within the first 30 seconds of meeting them.
3. Network. Connect with people using a variety of methods. Chat to people at live events, connect on LinkedIn and other social platforms, and get to know your local writers and readers.
4. Build a portfolio. Aim to keep both an online and hard copy of your portfolio.
5. Enter Competitions. Entering competitions is excellent for self promotion.
6. Collaborate on a Project. Finding other writers or artists to collabo with is a great promotion strategy. Having other creative individuals involved means more people will be aware of your work.
7. Consider your speech and dress.

Exercise here — Work with a Partner

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8. Ace Your Artist Statement — **What is an Artist Statement?**

An **artist's statement** (or **artist statement**) is an **artist's** written description of their work. The brief verbal representation is for, and in support of, his or her own work to give the viewer understanding. As such it aims to inform, connect with an art context, and present the basis for the work; it is therefore didactic, descriptive, or reflective in nature.

Why write an artist statement? If for no other reason writing an artist's statement can be a good way to clarify your own ideas about your work.

7 Great Tips to Writing Good Artist Statements

1. **Get a notepad and gather all your thoughts there.** Write general words and phrases that describe your art, why you created it, and the underlying idea you are trying to express.

Do not worry about doing it all at once, but have the notepad handy in case a thought comes to you while doing something else.

2. **Keep the artist statement short and to the point.** What you write should introduce you and your art to others, and nothing else. It should be a summary of you and your art. There is no need of rambling on and on. The reader will become bored, and wonder why you have to explain yourself so much.

The opening sentences should pop out and really get the reader interested in reading on. Originality is the key. Make it something that makes your art stand out from the crowd.

For the rest of the statement, try to **summarize your art**, and do not worry about details. Leave the details for any questions that may arise after someone reads your statement.

3. **Use words that anyone can understand**, without the need for a thesaurus. Large words sometimes come off as pretentious. This is certainly something that you do not want. The language used should be understood and appeal to anyone. Leave the big technical words for answering questions from the people that understand them.

Try not to be too repetitive in your writing. Check out synonyms for certain descriptive words so that you can create variety. Use words that describe your art, and make it attractive to the reader.

4. **Try to make your artist statement about your art now, not then.** For this, use words like "is" and "are" instead of "was" and "were". This will let the reader know you are an active artist.

Also, make it about you, in the first person and not appear as you are talking about another individual. For this, use words such as "I" and "my".

5. An **artist statement** should answer the basic questions that people may have about

your art. These questions include *“What are the artworks about?”* and *“What is the purpose of your art?”*

Try to explain the connection between your medium and the subject matter, if it is not obvious. If you leave this out, some people may not take you seriously. People may want to know why you use certain materials to express your themes and ideas.

6. **Commonly artists say who their influences are.** I have done this myself, but on further thought maybe it's not a good idea to be comparing ourselves to famous artists. Sometimes it is obvious who your art influences are, and even if its not, it is best to leave that interpretation up to the viewer.

The focus needs to be on ***you, and your art***, not someone else's.

7. **Get help from a friend or someone you know who can write**, and knows how to write about art. Ask them for their thoughts on any changes that should be made, or words that should be added. Ask the friend if they can understand what your art is about just by reading the artist statement.

Once you have a bunch of ideas written on paper, start rearranging sentences. Avoid repetitive words by using synonyms. It may take a while to come up with the perfect artist statement, but once you do, the job will be well worth it.

Once in a while you may want to go back to your notes and add additional things about your art, and make revisions to your artist statement.

Your Challenge for the next meeting:

Work on your elevator pitch AND your artist statement with regards to your own writing. I encourage you to go online and search for "how to write a good artist statement" ... I realize that they're usually talking about visual art ... just change the word ***artist*** to ***writer*** and it will all make sense.

Please send a pdf file of it to me ahead of time before the end of next weekend if you can.