

Creative Writing II

with Johnny Worthen



Week 4 - Supports

Today's Plan

- Workshop/Critique
- Symbolism
- Support Characters
- Subplots
- Twists
- Epistolary



Goal Check In



Symbolism



- **Symbol:** *something that represents something else*
 - Something that encapsulates, informs, and reflects a greater thing (or at least longer to write).
 - Borrowed - culturally defined (color black, heart)
 - Constructed - textually defined (mockingjay, one ring)
- Powerful tool - condensed meaning — poetry
- Thematic (optional)

EXERCISE: Symbols

- **Think of a symbol that suggests these sets:**
 - *Unseen power*
 - *Apparent but empty value*
 - *The weakness of independence*
 - *Enduring and broken*

Secondary Characters

- More than a walk-on/less than a main character
- Purposes
 - Act as catalyst
 - Mirrors and contrast
 - Expand the world
 - Subplots
 - Emotional Depth
 - Resource
- Don't need arcs, but do need "character" - quirks, flaws, strengths etc



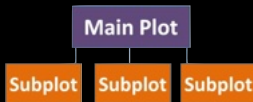
Secondary Characters

- Assist the main character or Hinder them
 - Sidekick (sounding board, emotional support)
 - Mentor (teach and prepare)
 - Love Interest (parallel plot)
 - Informant (resource)
 - Minor antagonists (irritants)
 - Henchman (chance for early victory)
 - Etc...



Subplot

- A **SUBPLOT** is a secondary plot/story interwoven around the **main plot** and story. In best situations a subplot will be a reflection of the main plot and inform it.
 - Stories can have several subplots
 - Character level / Plot level / Thematic Level
 - Subplots follow the same format as regular plots: beginnings, action and resolution*
 - Subplots can extend beyond single story**

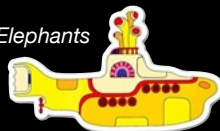


**Beware Soap opera stringing
e.g. - Stephanie Plum's
romance in
Janet Evanovich*

*** Linking series books*

Using Subplots

- The length and complexity of your work will be a key factor in how many and how involved your subplots can be
 - *Game of Thrones vs. Hills Like White Elephants*
- Subplots can be used to add spice and facets to story
 - love interest, family issues, haunted past, comic relief, etc.
- Subplots can be used to create suspense and tension in the main plot by diverting attention away from it for a while



Epistolary

- Like a dialog but written
 - Journals, diaries, letters, texts, etc...
 - Subtext
- Some famous Epistolary stories
 - Alice Walker: *The Color Purple*
 - Mary Shelly: *Frankenstein*
 - Bram Stoker: *Dracula*
 - Anne Frank: *Diary of a Young Girl*
 - Helene Hanff: *84, Charing Cross Road* by

Homework for Week 5

- Read *The Storm*, Kate Chopin
- Write for Critique:
 - 300 word **EPISTOLARY** story (story told through correspondences alone)
 - letters, journal entries, texts...
 - Bonus: include **symbol** and **twist**
