Panster vs Plotter

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Panster vs Plotter - a continuum – and anyway that works best for you is good!

PANSTER – write by the seat of his/her pants

> Positive –
> - A fun roller-coaster ride
> - Research as you go
> - It's how God wired you – so enjoy it and don't feel guilty if you do it differently than anyone else.
>
> Negative –
> - The Problem of Backstory
>   - Solution: Character Interviews
> - Writer's Block
>   - Solution: Recognize it as fear and push through!
> - Character/Setting/Scene mixups
>   - Solution: Editing and revision
>   - Keep a timeline separate
> - Plot holes
>   - Solution – that timeline
> - Forget to answer important questions
>   - Solution: Writing fast can keep you from forgetting – this is only a problem if you write slow. Again keep notes as you go.

PLOT VS STRUCTURE

PLOTTER – Planning, researching, and outlining your story
- Pre-Planning
  - Something has to happen
  - Goals must be established
  - Action
  - Determine Genre and Word count
  - Setting (contemporary/historical)
  - Motivation (internal/external)
  - High stakes conflict
  - Denouement takes place

- Tools of a Plotter
  - Character Development Worksheets
  - On paper- notes or detailed charting
  - Plot on your walls (use post it notes!)
  - Scrivener or other story software
  - Other people's guides and books
    - Classic Plot structure
      - BEGINNING – Inciting incident (Active/motive)
      - MIDDLE – Needs/Goals worked on (Roadblocks/Conflict!)
      - END – Satisfying but not necessarily victorious (Change/Growth!)
    - Randy Ingermanson's Snowflake Method
    - Freytag's Pyramid
    - Other models: Clock, Skeleton
  - DIY Outline/synopsis

WHY PLOT?

- Elevator pitch
- Character and setting continuity
- To avoid character/setting/scene mix-ups
- To keep the story moving forward
- To save time on research
- To give yourself goals/avoid writer's block
- To avoid plot holes
- Avoid time frame issues
- Keep stakes high and tight
- Answer the important questions
- Even flow of information in non-fiction that addresses the initial problem/question
- It's how God wired you! Embrace it!

Resources:

Baty, Chris. *No Plot? No Problem!*

Bell, James Scott. *Plot and Structure*

Mills, DiAnn. *The Dance of Character and Plot*

Smith, Dean Wesley. *Writing in the Dark: How to Write a Novel Without an Outline*

Character Development Worksheet

Photo

Full Name:

Meaning of Name:

Nickname:

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Age:

Birthday:

How old does he/she look:

Hair color:

Hairstyle:

Eye color:

Weight:

Height:

Body Build:

Skin tone/ coloring:

Shape of face:

Pet peeves about appearance:

Does this affect the story:

What she likes about appearance:

What people notice first about her:

PERSONALITY TRAITS

Mannerisms:

Life verse:

Optimist or pessimist:

Favorite color:

Favorite expression:

Favorite scent or perfume:

Favorite sports:

Regrets:

Ambitions:

Darkest secret:

Person most influenced by:

How:

What is her most prized possession:

Why:

How does she relate to others:

What is her greatest strength:

What is her greatest weakness:

Phobias:

Joys:

Temper:

FAMILY

Mother:

Dead or Alive:

Father:

Dead or Alive:

Relationship with mother:

Relationship with father:

Siblings:

Upbringing:

EDUCATION

Background:

How well did she do:

Ramifications of education or lack of education:

RELIGIOUS

Relationship with the Lord:

When became Christian:

*Faithful in church, Bible, fellowship***:**

*Prayer life***:**

*Actively seeking God daily or only in crisis***:**

*Share their faith or reserved***:**

*If not interested in faith, why***:**

*What will it take to bring to God***:**

*How perceive God***:**

*Feeling about church and fellowship***:**

*Pivotal issue of faith to draw them to God or closer to him***:**

*How affect relationships with others***:**

*Other "gods" in their life***:**

FINANCIAL

*Financial status***:**

*What kind of spender***:**

*Do they budget***:**

CAREER/ OCCUPATION

*What is her job***:**

*Dream occupation***:**

*Vehicle driven***:**

RESIDENCE

*Native of/ born***:**

*Where do they live now***:**

*Do they like this location and why or why not***:**

*Description of home***:**

HOBBIES

*How does she spend free time***:**

*Why these hobbies***:**

*One day to live, how spend it***:**

*Ideal vacation site***:**

*Favorite music***:**

*Favorite food***:**

*Favorite literature***:**

*Like movies & what kind***:**

TALENTS

What is she good at:

*Athletic***:**

FRIENDS

Name:

Relationship:

Name:

Relationship:

Name:

Relationship:

Name:

Relationship:

What circle do their friends come from:

How they affect their life:

WARDROBE

Favorite style of dress:

Office/ business:

Footwear:

Sleepwear:

Jewelry:

GOALS

Personal goals:

Deepest unfulfilled desire:

Most proud of accomplishing:

Least proud of:

LOVE LIFE

What kind of love life:

Ever been in love:

How has this affected her life:

What does she want in a romantic relationship:

What is she looking for in a mate:

Does she desire to marry:

Want a family:

Why or why not:

POLITICS

What are their political interests:

Involved in current events:

Involved in their surrounding community needs:

Causes involved with:

HEALTH

General health:

***Ever had a close brush with death*:**

***Does this have bearing on story*:**

QUIRKS

What quirks does she have?

   Pet peeves:

   Character flaw:

   How does character relate to others?

   How is character perceived by:

      Strangers?

      Friends?

      Significant other?

Children?

Co-workers?

Protagonist?

Antagonist?

First impression character makes is:

What happens to change this perception?

What do family and friends like most about the character?

What do family and friends like least about character?

Redeeming character quality:

Character Development Worksheet for a COUPLE

	HIM	**HER**
Name Nickname? What do they want? What will they get? What gets in the way?		
Age Height Weight Eyes Hair Any distinguishing facial features? Build Health Voice Scars (how did they get them)/birthmarks		

Clothing		
Occupation Financial situation Car Home Pets		
Personal Characteristics Goals Attitude Habits/Mannerisms Distinctive Personality Traits Self-image Clothing – how do they dress? Dreams What would happiness look like for them?		

Fears – biggest- who have they told- or why wouldn't they tell		
Secrets		
Sense of humor -what makes them laugh out loud?		
What do they do when they get angry?		
Have they been in love? Had a broken heart?		
Code of ethics		
What do they like?		
Pet Peeves		
Sports		
Hobbies		
Talent		
Magazines/books		

Movies		
Music		
Motives		
Favorite foods		
Favorite colors		
Ideal spouse		
Background		
Birthplace		
Parents		
Siblings		
Other family?		
Friends?		
Where do they live now? Where have they lived?		

Culture		
Faith		
Spouse/significant other		
Children		
Military		
Education		
Personal History		
Education		
Religion		
Early childhood experiences		
Profession		
Past relationships		
Biggest regret		

If they could change one thing about themselves… Who do they admire the most? Personal motto Greatest achievement		
Positive traits		
Negative traits – fatal flaw or a strength so prominent it becomes a weakness What do they hate most about themselves?		

MISC		