

Writing Your First Chapter

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The Journalistic Approach

Who

What

Where

When

Why

How

Your Hook...



Your first chapter is your hook to 'hook' your reader to read your book . This is your elevator pitch or your invitation for your reader to want more.



The first paragraph should contain all the 'w' points.



It should answer your reader's question:



What is happening here?

To begin:

- Who is your main character?
- What is he/she doing?
- Where is this happening?
- When is it happening?
- Why is it happening?
- How will it unfold?



YOU COULD BEGIN WITH A QUESTION...

- “Does school prepare children for the real world?”
Robert T. Kiyosaki, *Rich Dad, Poor Dad*.

OR A
STATEMENT...

"I am an Invisible Man."

Ralph Ellison, *The
Invisible Man*.

"This is a short book
because most books on
writing are filled with
bullshit." *Stephen King -
Memoirs of the Craft*

OR CHARACTER ACTION...

"I looked at my notes and didn't like them."

I Robot, by Isaac Asimov

"Bless me, Father, for I may have sinned."

Force of Habit 3, Nun the Wiser,
by James Scott Bell,

**WHO IS YOUR
PROTAGONIST?**

**WHAT ARE HIS/HER
CHARACTERISTICS?**

**WHAT DOES
HE/SHE LOOK LIKE?**

**WHAT IS HE/SHE
WEARING?**

YOUR OPENING STATEMENT...

- Make it interesting
- Make it relatable to the reader
- Make it fit the story
- Make it memorable



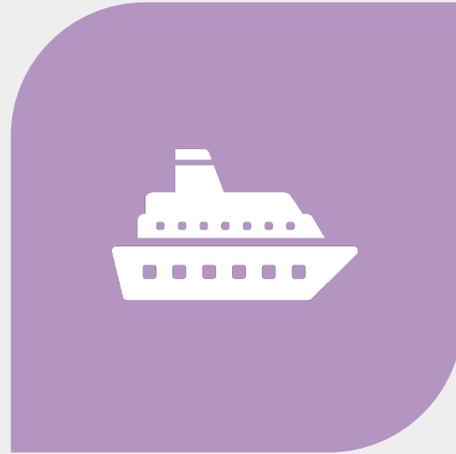
**WHAT IS YOUR
PROTAGONIST
DOING?**

IS SHE/HE
WALKING OR
RUNNING?

IS HE/SHE IN
TROUBLE?

DOES HE/SHE
SENSE
DANGER?

WHERE IS THIS HAPPENING?



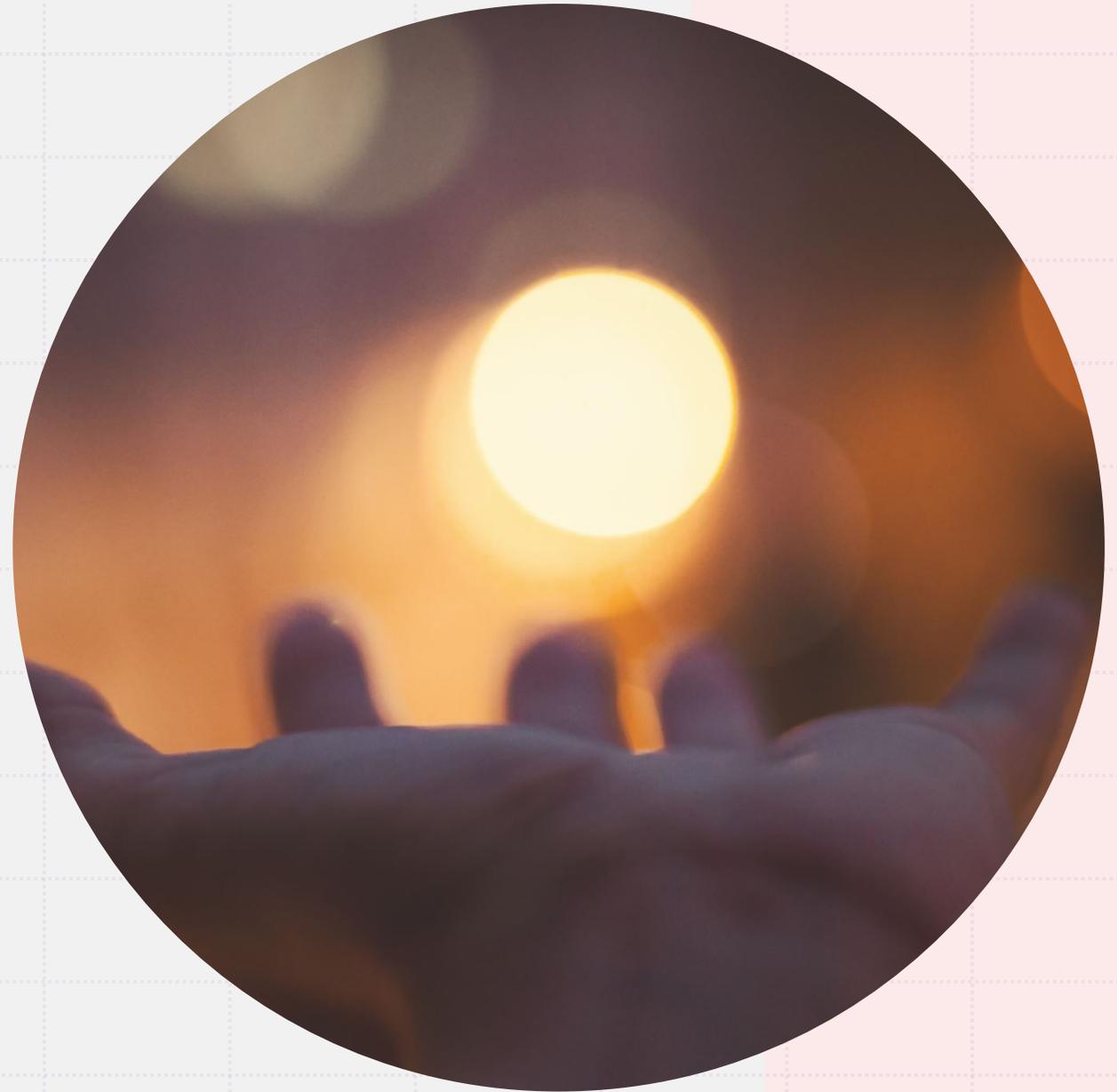
IS YOUR HERO ON A
BOAT OR A PLANE?



IS THIS HAPPENING IN
A CITY?

WHEN IS THE ACTION TAKING PLACE?

- IS THIS A FLASHBACK?
- ARE WE IN THE PRESENT TIME?
- IS THIS HAPPENING IN THE FUTURE?
- IS IT DAY TIME OR NIGHT?





WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

**THIS IS YOUR
THEME...**

**THIS IS YOUR
FIRST INCITING
INCIDENT**

**THIS IS WHAT IS
MOTIVATING
YOUR HERO.**

**HOW WILL
HE/SHE REACT?**

**WHAT ACTION
WILL HE/SHE
TAKE???**

HOW WILL THIS
OCCUR???



THIS IS YOUR PLOT!

- HERE IS HOW YOU GUIDE YOUR CHARACTERS
- HERE IS HOW THE STORY WILL FLOW.



YOUR FIRST CHAPTER



DOES IT ANSWER (SOMEWHAT)
THE FIVE W'S?



DOES IT GIVE THE READER
MOST OF THE INFORMATION?



WILL THE READER WANT
MORE?

A young girl with long, curly brown hair is sitting at a white desk in a classroom, reading an open book. She is wearing a blue denim jacket with a white fur collar. In the background, other students are seated at desks, and large windows let in bright light. The text "DID YOU HOOK YOUR READER?" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

DID YOU HOOK YOUR
READER?

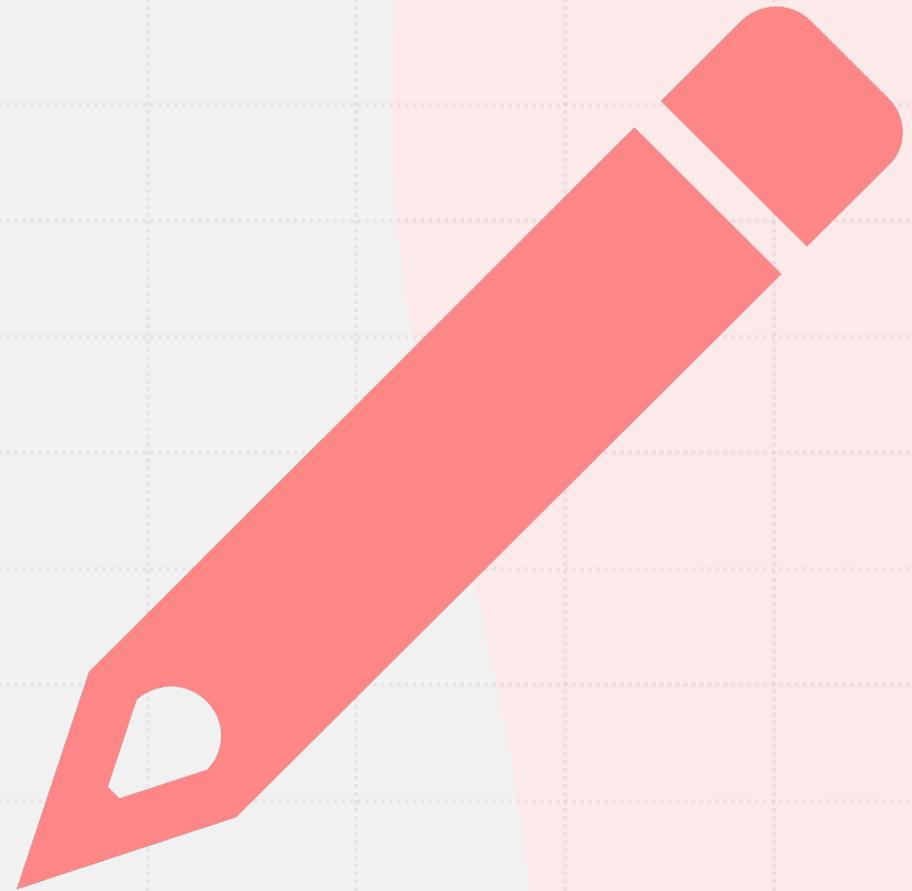
HOW DID YOU END YOUR CHAPTER?

DID YOU DO A
CLIFF
HANGER?

WILL YOUR
READER WANT
TO CONTINUE?

REWRITING

What will you change?





ANY QUESTIONS?

WRITERS' BLOCK???



Need a Writing Coach?

Sometimes
we need a
writing
coach.

Even just to
answer a
question.

Or for help
with a
chapter.

Or plot
hole...

A hand is shown writing on a piece of paper on a wooden desk. In the foreground, a large, three-dimensional '@' symbol made of cardboard is prominently displayed. The background is softly blurred, showing a computer monitor and other desk items.

Writing Coach

sdanderson.books@gmail.com



Manuscript Evaluation?

- Want some input on your story?
- First three chapters free...
- sdanderson.books@gmail.com



THANK YOU!

WANT MORE?



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE TIPS
AND WRITING IDEAS

WWW.CAPECODWRITERSSTUDIO.COM