

Novel Writing 101: the first draft

Instructor: Angie Caedis

YouTube Course: Novel Writing 101 — [watch here](#)

Learn More: angiecaedis.com — [click here](#)

Section: A **Week:** 2 **Topic:** Key Story Decisions / Finding Inspiration

Finding Inspiration Worksheet

To me, one of the most enjoyable parts of the brainstorming process is finding and gathering inspiration. This is the time to explore anything that could potentially spark new ideas, whether that be music, books, movies, art, or things you experience in real life.

Ways to spark new ideas:

Art	Music
Media (tv, movies, books, video games)	Meditation
Taking a class or workshop (pottery, welding, guitar lessons, etc.)	Experiencing new and exciting things (escape rooms, ghost tours, museums, etc.)
Activities that let your mind wander (walking, crafting, puzzles, etc.)	Talking through your ideas out loud (voice notes are helpful, too)

Once you've tapped into your creative flow and begun welcoming in new ideas, it's important to collect it all somewhere. Utilize things like your notes app, a whiteboard, music playlists, journals, and moodboards to collect and gather these ideas.

My favorite methods for gathering inspiration:

- Making a project-specific playlist
- Building a moodboard on Pinterest
- Sketching out ideas on a whiteboard

For an example, check out my playlist for Into Darkness, Book 2 of my fantasy series, on Spotify — [click here](#)

How To Build A Moodboard:

There is no right or wrong way to create a moodboard; the most important thing is that you create one you'll find useful during the writing process. In its simplest form, this is a visual representation of certain aspects of your story like: key scenes, characters, settings, interactions, and worldbuilding. Think of it as the overall vibe of your novel.

1) Collect your visual references

You can either create a physical moodboard with magazine clippings and cut-and-printed images OR you can create a digital moodboard on platforms like Pinterest and Canva. It's totally your preference!

When searching for images online, I recommend using stills from relevant movies and searching via queries like "your genre or story's vibe" + "aesthetic".

2) Collage to your heart's content

This is where things start coming together! Arrange your images in a way that's pleasing to you and either print it out or keep it somewhere on your laptop or phone that you can reference later.

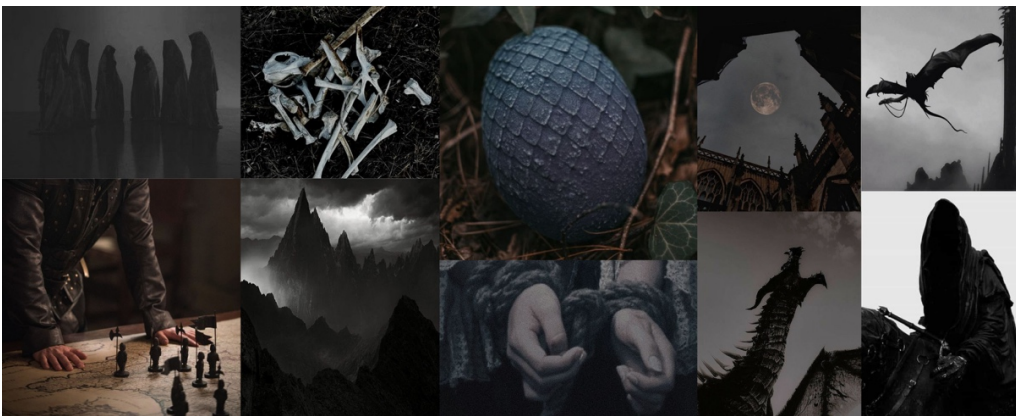
Examples:

A woman finds herself in the middle of a global invasion with nothing but the clothes on her back and an unwelcome alliance with someone she swore to forget.



(all images found on Pinterest using searches like: "the Mist movie", "apocalypse aesthetic", and "world on fire")

After finding a dragon egg in the middle of the forest, a young girl is thrust into a foreign kingdom's thrall of politics and superstition as a century's old prophecy declares her a threat to the one true heir.



(all images found on Pinterest using searches like: "dark kingdom aesthetic", "dragons", and "dark occult")