



MYNOVEL AUTHOR SERIES

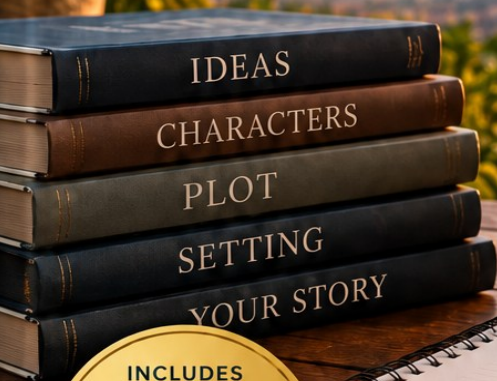
PRACTICAL GUIDES FOR BEGINNING & INDEPENDENT AUTHORS

BOOK
1

PLANNING YOUR NOVEL

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO TURNING
YOUR IDEAS INTO A COMPELLING STORY

*From idea
to outline ...
and beyond*



MIKE GROBLER

LOOK INSIDE

FREE PREVIEW

PLANNING YOUR NOVEL

MyNovel Author Series — Book 1

Mike Grobler

This short preview contains only selected opening material from the full guide. The complete book includes worked examples throughout and an accompanying editable Microsoft Word workbook.

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Introduction — Planning Without Killing the Story

Many new writers believe there are only two ways to write a novel: plan every detail before writing, or sit down with a blank page and discover the story as you go. In practice, most writers work somewhere between those two extremes. Writing entirely by discovery can work, but it can also create problems later, such as repetition, uneven character development or plot threads that lead nowhere.

Planning is not about removing creativity. It is about giving your creativity somewhere to go. A useful plan answers the big questions before you are fifty thousand words into the manuscript and realise that the story has no clear destination.

At the same time, too much planning can become another form of procrastination. You can spend months drawing maps, writing character biographies and researching details that never appear in the book. A plan should help you write the novel, not replace the act of writing it.

Your plan is a map, not a set of handcuffs.

This guide therefore focuses on the minimum planning that gives you maximum benefit. By the end, you should know what your story is about, who it is about, what the main character wants, what stands in the way, what major events will happen, and where the story is likely to end.

WORKBOOK: Complete Exercise 1 — Before you begin in the accompanying editable Word workbook.

1. Start With the Core Idea

Most novels begin as something small: an image, a person, a question, an event, a setting or a situation. The first task is not to expand it into hundreds of pages. It is to identify what, exactly, makes the idea interesting. At this stage, forget about aiming for a particular page count. Concentrate on the story first; the story will determine how long the book needs to be.

The story spark

Ask what first attracted you to the idea. Was it a character? A place? A problem? A 'what if' question? The answer is your story spark. You will probably return to it many times when the writing becomes difficult.

Ideas are all around you

Daily life is one of the richest sources of material. Notice how people speak, react under pressure, dress, argue, joke, avoid questions, show affection or try to impress others. A habit, mannerism or turn of phrase from someone you know can help spark a fictional character. The aim is not to copy a real person exactly, but to observe real human behaviour and combine traits from several sources until the character becomes your own.

Films, television and books can also trigger ideas. You might notice a type of conflict, a setting or a story question and wonder how you would handle it differently. Use that spark to create something new; do not copy another writer's distinctive plot, characters, scenes or dialogue.

Train yourself to treat ordinary encounters as research. The impatient customer in a queue, the neighbour who always has a story, the child asking an unexpected question or the colleague who never answers directly can all suggest believable behaviour for fictional people.

— PREVIEW ENDS HERE —

Continue with the full guide to develop your premise, characters, conflict, setting, structure, turning points, scenes, chapter road map, timeline and first-draft plan.

The full purchase also includes the editable Word workbook and Final Novel Planning Checklist.

PURCHASE THE FULL BOOK