

The Busy Writer's Book of Checklists

Checklist 22 – Writing a Synopsis

<p style="text-align: center;">Writing a Synopsis</p> <p><i>You may not need to worry about writing a synopsis if you are publishing your own book. However, most authors use various forms of a synopsis to help promote or sell their books. Some authors use a 'working synopsis' as an aid to plotting: this kind of synopsis changes as the story develops. Basically, a synopsis is a summary of your book, in the TONE of your book.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Your Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Works Well Needs Work Poor</i></p>		
Do you tell the whole story in an entertaining way? (A synopsis is a sales tool as well as a story summary.)			
Does the opening paragraph hook the reader and immediately interest him/her in the story?			
Have you included the ending? (A synopsis is not the same as a book blurb, which 'hooks' the reader without giving away the main plot points or the ending.)			
Do you clearly identify the lead character(s) and what their goals/problems are?			
Will the reader relate to your characters and want to read their story?			
Does one paragraph flow logically and entertainingly to the next?			
Have you hit the high points of the story, showing the main scenes and major conflicts, without getting lost in the minor plot points?			
Does the reader have an overall sense of how everything unfolds and how everything is resolved - or has something vital been left out?			
Have you written your entire synopsis in the present tense?			
Have you checked your synopsis to ensure there are not mistakes with spelling, grammar and punctuation?			
Have you used paragraphs effectively? (No long, dense chunks of text!)			
Have you avoided all grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes?			
Have you written your synopsis in different lengths, ready for different purposes? (You may be sending your synopsis to different people for different reasons - when you want them to read a review copy, arrange a radio interview, etc. Practice writing a synopsis in these lengths: half a page, one page, two pages.)			
<p><i>Other Aspects of Writing a Synopsis:</i></p>			