CRAFT YOUR NOVEL

- RULES OF WRITING
    - Don't bore your reader (have them *participate* in your story)
- HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR IDEAS
    - Start with the classic plot archetypes and put your own spin on them
        - Rags to Riches (*Cinderella, The Great Gatsby*)
        - The Quest (*The Odyssey, The Wizard of Oz*)
        - Rebirth (*A Christmas Carol, Beauty and the Beast*)
        - Overcoming the Monster (*Dracula, Terminator*)
        - Comedy (*A Midsummer Night's Dream, Catch-22*)
        - Tragedy (*Billy Budd, Hamlet*)
    - Combine current news stories
    - Play the "What If" game
    - Listen to music (not your usual genre)
    - Create a character and give them an obsession:
        - Ego
        - Winning
        - Looks
        - Love
        - Lust
        - Enemies
        - Career
    - Write opening lines
    - Write a list of nouns
    - Combine genres (Gene Roddenberry pitched *Star Trek* as "*Wagon Train* to the stars")
- WRITE BELIEVABLE CHARACTERS READERS WILL CARE ABOUT
    - Characters bond readers to the story
    - Write Protagonist with flaws, antagonist with at least one redeeming quality
    - Main characters don't have to be morally good, but they have to be good at something — readers want anti-heroes to redeem themselves or get their "just desserts"
    - Characters need backstory before readers do
    - Great villains are justified, at least to themselves (bad guys don't think they're bad, they think they're *right*)
    - Give your character inner conflict (often head vs heart)
    - What are the stakes? Stakes of a story must be death: physical, professional, psychological
    - How can it get worse for your main character?
    - Don't neglect your supporting cast

- POINT OF VIEW
    - First-Person, Third-Person Limited, Third-Person Omniscient
      https://janefriedman.com/point-of-view/
    - Be careful not to head-hop between POVs
      https://www.louiseharnbyproofreader.com/blog/what-is-head-hopping-and-is-it-spoiling-your-fiction-writing
- PLOTTING
    - Act 1: Opening Image, Theme Stated, Set Up, Catalyst, Debate
      Act 2: Break into Act 2, B Story, Fun & Games, Midpoint, Bad Guys Close In, All is Lost, Dark Night of the Soul
      Act 3: Break into Act 3, Finale, Final Image
      (*Save the Cat! Writes a Novel*, by Jessica Brody; https://savethecat.com/)
- PACING
    - Vary the pace of the story
    - To speed up the pace, use shorter sentences and paragraphs (heightens tension); to slow down pace, use longer sentences and paragraphs (more exposition)
- CONFLICT
    - Every story needs conflict, every scene needs conflict
    - Conflict is the engine that drives the narrative forward
    - Can be external or internal
- SHOW vs TELL
    - Telling is informing and explaining, showing is evoking and emotive
    - Telling: "The gothic-looking house was large and imposing, and Rachel approached it nervously and wearily."
      Showing: "The gargoyles peered down from the cornice at Rachel. She hesitated, her mouth suddenly dry. Craning her neck, she spotted the grotesque stone figures and prayed they took no notice of her. Alighting the steps, she climbed on and on, her legs on fire when she finally arrived at the door."
    - Adverbs (words that end in -ly, like "nervously" and "wearily") are telling, not showing. Instead, use strong verbs: Instead of "He walked angrily across the room", say "He stomped across the room".
    - Telling is valuable when there's a lot of information to convey, and keeps the story moving, focusing reader's attention on what's important
    - https://emmadarwin.typepad.com/thisitchofwriting/showing-and-telling-the-basics.html
- CONTROL TIME
    - Compress long events into short passages, often through telling
    - Expand short events into long passages, often through showing

- DIALOGUE
    - Dialogue should not be used to merely convey information. It should characterize, set the scene, advance the story, foreshadow or remind the reader about something.
    - A character's choice of language, verbal tics, whether he asks a lot of questions, interrupts, etc., reveals his character.
    - Characters should "sound" different from one another, with different vocabulary, rhythms, etc.
    - Dialogue with stakes: Two stubborn characters simply arguing about an issue with no stakes is dull. Make the argument about something that each character cares deeply about, something that has touched them personally.
    - Text (direct) and subtext (indirect):
        - Direct: "I want a divorce."
        - Indirect: "I heard Fred and Joan are separating". If you've established that the speaker is unhappy, this could mean she's thinking of separating from her spouse.
    - Filter out filler words, like "um", "er", "like", "I mean", "Hello", "Hi", etc.
    - Keep dialogue short, for the most part. Don't use dialogue as an information dump.
    - Dialogue tags: Avoid synonyms for "said". "Asked", "replied", "responded", "answered", "added", "continued", "remembered", "reminded" are okay. Tags like "whispered", "boomed", etc. should be attuned to the way the dialogue is being spoken. "Declared", "affirmed", "opined", etc. are trying too hard. "Said" fades into the background.
    - Cut out dialogue tags altogether when possible, as long as it doesn't cause confusion.
    - Try to avoid adverbial modifiers for dialogue: "He said loudly" is "He yelled". "She said softly" is "She whispered". With "He said sharply", delete "sharply" and make the spoken words themselves short and barbed.
    - Read your dialogue aloud, or use text-to-speech, to ensure it sounds natural.
    - https://centerforfiction.org/writing-tools/tips-for-writing-dialogue/
- WRITE WITH EMOTION — https://jerichowriters.com/emotions-in-writing/
    - Show, don't tell (avoid stating emotions outright, describe them from character's POV)
    - Use similes, imagery, and metaphors
    - Describe the senses, what does the character see, touch, taste, smell, feel
    - Use idioms sparingly ("Her heart sank").
- ADDITIONAL TIPS
    - Suspense vs. Surprise: Hitchcock's example
    - Introduce a ticking clock/deadline to increase tension
    - Use mini-cliffhangers at the end of chapters
    - Vary the length of your sentences — Gary Provost example: https://theamazingoffice.com/pages/writing-tips-gary-provost-on-sentence-structure
    - Before editing, put the manuscript away for a few weeks, come back with fresh eyes
    - If a sentence/scene/chapter doesn't advance the plot, or reveal something about the character, or the character/reader doesn't learn something, delete it.