



## LAYERING AND TEXTURING YOUR NOVEL

**1. ACTION** Action is movement. It's the gestures the characters make, the steps they take, the places they go, the touches they exchange. It's the physical aspect of the story. It's what keeps the characters from being nothing more than talking heads.

**2. ATMOSPHERE** Use the just the right words to evoke the atmosphere you need in the scene. It was a dark and stormy night

**3. BACKSTORY** Tell the reader only what she needs to know for what is happening in the story at that moment to make sense. A couple sentences here and there. Backstory is best served as reaction to current, compelling action. And then it should be brief.

**4. CHARACTERS** The better the character the more unexpected his traits will be Know where you character is when they are not on the page

**5. CHARACTER ARC** What is your character going to learn throughout the story? Not all characters have to arc, but your main protagonist has to learn something and grow by the end of the book.

**6. CHARACTER GOAL - Desire, want, need, ambition, purpose.** What the character wants, or thinks he wants. State this clearly right at the beginning.

All he wanted was to be left the hell alone.  
And here she was

**7. SCENE GOAL or WITFITPOT** (What is the flipping is the point of this?)

**8. SETTING** No matter what time period or local you're writing, setting is a crucial part of any story. How you build the world around your characters will play a vital role in the overall believability of your novel.

**9. CONFLICT** Trouble, tension, friction, villain, roadblock

**10. DESCRIPTION** Evoke verisimilitude of time, or a place or atmosphere.

**11. DIALOG - Prolivity - Less is more.** Dialog has to propel the story forward, impart information, create drama, tell the reader what the character is feeling, show sub text, and/or reveal character.

**12. EMOTION** - In everyday conversation, a huge percentage of the message someone receives from you is not in your words, but in your facial expression, posture, voice inflection, speed of delivery and an infinite number of other unidentifiable factors.

**13. EXPOSITION** - When people who know each other are talking, they use a shorthand because they have common knowledge. They're not going to repeat information they already know. So you need to set up the conversation so the audience can understand what they're saying, through oblique implication.

**14. MOTIVATION** - Drive, backstory, impetus, incentive

**15. NARRATIVE** - The story without dialog

**16. PLOT** - Left brain story telling.

**17. RESEARCH** - Do a lot. Use a little

**18. REACTION** - POV character -internal thought, internal dialogue, and possibly dialogue, + EMOTION. From the non-viewpoint character, body language, dialogue and action. No matter what the scene is about, both characters must react to each other, and interact. And the stakes must be raised higher at each turn.

**19. SEXUAL TENSION** Use all five senses

**20. SUBTEXT** Subtext is "a subtle or coded message sent and received." Subtext is the message under the message.

**21. TENSION** A longer sentence conveys emotion, a shorter sentence evokes a sense of drama

**22. VOICE** One is the writing style that, over time, writers develop--their own *voice*. The second is individual characters voices. Your reader should recognize who is talking without tags.