

Cheat Sheet: Video 3

“What if My Writing Sucks?”

- Everybody feels this way at times – regardless of how many copies you’ve sold or the reviews you get.
- The key is learning to overcome these mental barriers and get beyond them.
- Don’t let your inner critic eat you alive!
- A key tip – knowing your story works on a structural level will help you understand readers will respond to it
- You can go back, look at your scenes, and find proof that your story is solid – know from beginning to end your story works
- And that is has the right emotions to engage readers
- And your editing process will allow you to “tweak” your manuscript, rather than re-writing huge chunks
- You will always have “butterflies” – but with confidence in the process you’ve used to write will help you move past it
- Have confidence in your structure and smash through that barrier!

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How to Come up with Ideas and How to Articulate Them and Build into a Story

- First, figure out your premise (Video 2) and the “general thing this story is about”
- An idea can be as simple as “Jurassic Park with Mermaids” – you can come up with dozens of ideas
- Finding an idea you LIKE means taking the bare essentials (“Jurassic Park with Mermaids”) and constructing your premise – see video 2.
- Where is the conflict? What are the stakes? This will guide you in coming up with compelling ideas.
- Then it’s just a case of using the Story Engines structure to build on the ideas.
- You don’t want to get $\frac{3}{4}$ through and realise you’ll have to re-write most of what you’ve done
- The 7 step “Story Engines” process can help you “check off” the key scenes to know your ideas work BEFORE you start writing
- Then it’s just a case of finding “the right words”
- Splitting your work into scenes and working through in short bursts will help you build your world quickly

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How to Reduce your Editing and Re-Writing

- The more time you spend in the editing and re-writing phases, the less time you have for writing something new
- And reducing the “red marks” from a professional editor (nobody likes a page full of red marks!).
- If you know your key phases and game changing moments ahead of time, you know your story WORKS
- This eliminates the reason most people have to go back and do HUGE re-writes
- Rewrites = big changes to the story. Editing = small tweaks.
- So avoiding re-writes completely is the #1 goal. Understanding how your story hangs together eliminates this altogether.
- Never self-edit when you’re writing your first draft. Writing is creative, editing is analytical. These require different brain skills and will slow you down on both counts
- If you get to a point in your manuscript where you need to tweak something, or research something, note it down and come back later
- This will also speed up your writing and improve your wordcount in the time you have available

The 7 Key Elements

STORY BEGINNING

**PHASE #1
PREPARATION PHASE**

GAME CHANGER #1

**PHASE #2
REACTIVE PHASE**

GAME CHANGER #2

**PHASE #3
PROACTIVE PHASE**

GAME CHANGER #3

**PHASE #4
CONCLUSION PHASE**

STORY ENDING