

SENIOR: NOVELIST

Hey Girl Scout! Share a meal with a historical figure, unearth ancient treasures, spend the summer in outer space or dancing flamenco in Spain – writing a novel lets you dream the world your way. As you write descriptions and dialogue, invent situations, and make up feelings, you'll experience the fun of a novelist's career: spending time with new friends (characters you've created) and in other worlds (those from your imagination). At the end, you will have an incredible work of fiction that you created yourself. When you've earned this badge, you'll know what it takes to write a great novel and will have written at least 10 pages of your own.

Step 1: Deconstruct a novel

1. Think about a book that you have read that you love and remember well. You are going to write a review of the book like those that often appear on the backs of books or in a newspaper or magazine. The goal is to write a review that tells the reader enough about the story without spoiling it, while also making the reader want to pick up the book.

Supplies:

1. Blank paper
2. Pen or pencil

Step 2: Create great characters

1. Characters are the heart of a great novel. If you have a story concept already, keep that in mind during this step. If not, build your characters and see what happens. Many novelists start with characters, and then figure out what should happen to them – and a story idea blooms from there. You will be creating 2 characters in this activity. To do this, you can let real people you know or characters that you like inspire your characters or you can create the characters completely from your imagination.
2. To create a character profile, write down information like the characters name, age, where they are from, and what their likes and dislikes are. Then draw a sketch of the person.

Supplies:

1. Blank paper
2. Pen or pencil

Step 3: Develop a plot

1. A plot is an outline of the situations your protagonist will face. A protagonist's circumstances generally grow more dire as the story unfolds toward the climax, where the protagonist faces their most difficult challenge. Using a character you have created today or one you know of from a show, movie, or book, create a plot. The plot can be a twist on one you already know, inspired by something in the news, or one you make up. Think about how you can integrate the characters you created in the previous activity in this plot you create.

Supplies:

1. Blank paper
2. Pen or pencil

Step 4: Write at least 10 pages

1. Before you delve into writing, look through the character profiles and plot you have created today. After that, write about 10 pages of a novel. You can write the first 10 pages of a story, 10 pages filled with different scenes that would happen in a book, or the last 10 pages of a story. This is a rough draft and is a time for you to explore all the ideas you want. Be creative and use your imagination!

Supplies:

1. Blank paper
2. Pen or pencil

Step 5: Edit your pages

1. Editing is the most essential step in writing. It gives you the chance to improve and polish your work. Even the most seasoned writers go through several drafts of revising and rewriting, and sometimes two or three more drafts after a publisher has bought their book. Editing can mean the difference between a mediocre novel and a truly great one. You will be editing your pages you just wrote twice, once by you and another time by someone in your home.
2. Edit the pages yourself. Then, have someone in your home read your work and tell you what they think.

Supplies:

1. Your 10 pages
2. Pen/pencil