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Is There a Difference Between Writing And Storytelling?

by Martina Sanchez | 8 January, 2019 | Screenwriting | 0 comments



To many people, the art of storytelling, writing a book, or writing in general, all seem to come

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In fact, there are so many differences between the two, some of which might even blow your mind. Today, we're going to several of these key differences, detailing everything you need to know in order to tell the difference between writing and storytelling.

Storytelling is a Performance

Perhaps the most noticeable difference between storytelling and writing is the fact that storytelling can take many different forms and creates an experience for the reader to witness. For example, if I was to get up and tell you about what I did last week, I'm telling you a story, without having to write anything down.

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I could make this story of my week as boring, or as exciting, as I want using body language, the tone of voice and movements. However, while storytelling is fully possible through writing, writers of stories don't have the same luxuries.

"The problem with writing in this sense is that you need to abide by the standard story arc rules (in most cases) of having a beginning, a middle and an end, and then the entire piece of writing became linear and guided within this process," explains David Arnold.

In fact, whereas a face-to-face interaction fully relies on voice and body language, you would want quite the opposite from the story in a book. Imagine realising on every word that you were reading the author's words; the book would become so different to read.

The Point-of-View Detail

Another clear difference between storytelling and writing is the fact that storytelling performances have the ability to show, rather than tell. For example, if I'm talking to someone in person, I can change my tone of voice, change my direction of talking, or simply change my body language to suggest another person is talking, as well as how they were feeling.

For example, if I was talking about a co-worker being late and the boss being really strict, I could put on an angry tone of voice, and you would instantly know the mood of

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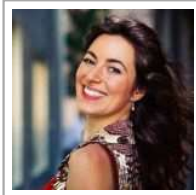
The Sequencing of Storytelling

“While it may seem like storytelling has a lot more benefits over writing, don’t be fooled as this simply isn’t the case. Perhaps the main benefit towards writing is the fact that the act of storytelling, in most cases, is restricted to being told in chronological order,” shares Nick Davis.

This is because people need to hear the start, middle and end in that order to gain a full perspective of what’s going on. However, in writing, the author has the chance to do whatever sequencing they want and tell the story how they want to tell it. What’s more, a writer is not refined to the boundaries of the point of view or and can jump around, even jumping a third-person narrative if needs are.

Show, Don’t Tell

The most important difference to remember is that storytelling is the act where you show your audience the story; especially on stage, in the cinema, or during physical interaction. If you try to implement these storytelling techniques in writing, they’re not going to work, so just be as mindful as you can!



About Martina Sanchez

Martina Sanchez is an entrepreneur and writing consultant. She is absorbed with novel writing and is a constant contributor to her blog where she touches such topics as writing techniques, storytelling and book marketing.

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