

How to Decide Which Story to Write

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Are you trying to figure out which of one or more stories to write next?



Perhaps you've put your producer hat on and considered each story's relative merits in terms of concept, genre, marketability, casting, international appeal, and so forth. Or you're the type of writer who says, "Screw that, I'm just gonna write whatever the hell I want to write," which is absolutely fine. In either case, however, you have several stories staring you in the face, each crying out, "Write me! Write me!"

And for the life of you, you just can't figure out which one to write... right now.

If you're in that boat, here is a method I have proposed to dozens of writers who have used it to steer themselves safely to shore in the sure knowledge they have discovered which story they really want to write.

Warning: This approach may strike you as rather New Age or pseudo-spiritual. But hey, I have lived three decades of my life in California, so it comes with the territory!

Let's say you have three stories and you can't decide between Story A, Story B, and Story C.



Take three pieces of paper. On one, spend a couple of minutes and jot down anything that comes to your mind about Story A: images, dialogue, character stuff, whatever bubbles up into your consciousness. Do the same thing with Story B on another piece of paper. Also with Story C.

Next go to a room where you can turn off electronics, shut

the door, and have some quiet time. Sit down and do whatever you can do to get into a mindfulness state (deep breathing, concentration, relaxation).

Pick up the paper for Story A and just sit with it for 5 minutes. Track what you are *feeling*. Same thing with Story B. 5 minutes. Story C. 5 more minutes. What are you *feeling* about each?

What you're going for is to identify which story you have the most connection to / emotional resonance with at this time.

As I say, dozens of writers have tried this and almost every time, I hear back from them with a response like this: "It just became really clear I need to write this one." In fact, I gave this advice to a writer just yesterday. She tried it. It worked.

Look, the chances of getting from FADE IN to FADE OUT, let alone creating something which becomes a compelling read depends in large part on your emotional connection to the story in question. It's your passion for the story which gets infused in the process that can result in words magically lifting off the page and into the imagination of a reader's mind.

So if you have two, three, or more stories, and you just can't decide which one you *really* want to write, embrace your inner mystical self. Get quiet. Sit with your stories. And trust the one you're supposed to write will reach out to you and let you know via your feelings that, "This is the one."

How do you decide which story to write? Let's hear your thoughts on the matter, all suggestions wanted!

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