



What's the Story? Building Blocks for Fiction Writing (The Storyteller's Toolbox #1)

Melissa Donovan

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What's a story? Is it character? Plot? Conflict? Change? Why do some stories fall flat with audiences while others sweep the globe, captivating people in every corner of the world?

Stories are made up of many moving parts: action, dialogue, description, and exposition are just a few components of a story. These, and many other building blocks, are woven together to create a compelling and entertaining narrative.

What's the Story? Building Blocks for Storytellers parses the elements that work together to form a story, fostering a broader and deeper understanding of stories, what they are made of, and how they are developed.

The Storyteller's Toolbox series of books helps you develop skills and strategies to tell the best stories possible while exploring your creativity and developing a storytelling process that works for you.

What's the Story? Building Blocks for Fiction Writing (The Storyteller's Toolbox #1) Details

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Author : Melissa Donovan

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From Reader Review What's the Story? Building Blocks for Fiction Writing (The Storyteller's Toolbox #1) for online ebook

Gregory says

What's the Story? Building Blocks for Fiction Writing provides a brisk education on the art of storytelling. (Please note I received this book through Goodreads' Giveaways program in exchange for a review.)

In the introduction, author Melissa Donovan describes the need for the book she's written: "I found plenty of books on character creation or plot development and even more on structure and formulas. There were lots of books on writing in genre. I even found some that promised to show me how to write a story--step-by-step instructions for producing a novel. But I never did find a book that simply gathered all the elements of storytelling in one place, a book that said, 'Here are your tools and materials. Now go build something.'"

What's the Story? fulfills this need admirably. Written in a breezy, straightforward manner, the book serves as a helpful primer on a wide range of topics. Donovan starts with the core elements of storytelling (characters, plot, setting and theme) and then progresses into more detailed discussions regarding narrative, structure, etc. She provides plenty of practical advice along the way, including an appendix of worksheets for story analysis, character building and story structure development. All relevant terminology is well-explained.

Donovan keeps the focus broad, recognizing that the fundamentals of crafting a good story are the same whether one is writing a novel, movie or other type of narrative. She uses plenty of popular works as examples to effectively illustrate her points throughout. I also appreciated her frequent reminders to write with an understanding of the needs and expectations of a potential audience in mind.

While *What's the Story?* doesn't get into any single topic in depth, it does offer some suggestions for further reading. Rather than approaching this book as a comprehensive textbook, think of it as a handy pocket guide: If you run into trouble while you're working on a narrative, this book is likely to give you the tools to quickly diagnose the problem.

I'd recommended this book for both new writers and more experienced writers looking for tools to improve their storytelling abilities. I've already applied some of Donovan's insights to a writing project of my own.

Djanderson says

I have been waiting on this book.

What's the story is a long-awaited resource for the new and experienced writer? Beginning authors have an excellent checklist of pointers that are like breadcrumbs to the heart of your story. Other writers will find a handy reference to aid in problem areas of a plot, character or narrative. I like the clean, straight language which makes the book easy to read. I have used Melissa's other books have not been disappointed.

Rebekah says

Good Book

Overall this was a good book. I thought the first few chapters were fairly basic, meaning they covered topics I've read in other writing books, but about two thirds through it got interesting. I also liked the business of writing section at the end. The writing was good and well researched. The examples also helped illustrate her points. Overall, I would recommend this book.

Martha Davis says

I read this book and felt like there was a lot of great information on the pages, but it reads like a Cliff Notes version of a bigger, more colorful story. Lots of fast-paced notes with no personality.

Stephen Yoder says

The subtitles for this book sum it up quite well. One basic structure for this book which spoke to my own personal values is that it does not provide you with answers, but rather it asks many vital, probing questions about one's writing project.

Quite often after finishing ARCs I scrounge around looking for someone with which I can share them, but I think I'll keep this one for myself.

I've read these meta books on writing a number of times this year and Donovan's book had something new and refreshing to say.

A keeper.

I received an ARC in exchange for the possibility that I might write a review (. . . albeit a disjointed one without proper transitions. Perhaps I should re-read that part of the book.).

Tobyann Aparisi says

I won this book on goodreads for an honest review.

This is a very helpful addition to the books and guides out there to assist one in writing a book of their own. With plenty of antidotes and helpful hints this book guides you through the steps needed to start your own book. If you have the inspiration and willingness to write a book, this book is one to read and follow.

Ramona says

This is a wonderful book that will help new authors greatly with it's information. I would highly recommend this book for people interested in writing fiction books. I won this book through a giveaway on Goodreads website.

Maria says

I must say that I was given this book to review. The following views are my own.

This book is a good introduction to the business of writing fiction, written in a highly readable form. It explains the key aspects of a story from the plot and characters to the style, genre, point of view and dialogue. It is, as the author says, the kind of book she wished had been around when she started writing. Using Vogler's 'The Writer's Journey', she talks about the things that should be considered when writing a story - the key points that will help improve the story for the reader.

The final part of the book shows how to analyse a story and a film, using 'The Wizard of Oz' as an example. The thinking around this is that in analysing what other people write you can come to an understanding as to how you can improve your own writing. At the back of the book is a useful glossary with various writing terms that I will return to.

This was an enjoyable book from which I learned a lot.

Lora says

Good for beginners, great for reviewers of the wordcraft. Includes worksheets and practical stuff like that. Very reader and writer friendly. This was a win from the giveaways.

Michael D. Kanner says

Review based on the second reading.

Why read a second time? Because it is good to be reminded of the basics. I can't say that there is nothing here that you can't see elsewhere, but like a good checklist, this reminds you of all the things you should be doing.

A great source for someone that is just starting to write fiction, but it is also useful for someone that has been at it for a while. This, like a copy of Writer's Market and a good dictionary, is writing tools that I keep on my Kindle for ready reference.
