

THE WRITER COMMUNITY'S
INTRODUCTION TO

Writing Conflict



1

Six Types of Conflict

Using Hunger Games & ATLA as Examples

- Character vs Character
 - Katniss vs the other contestants
 - Zuko vs Aang
- Character vs Self
 - Katniss vs herself, debating if right or wrong to kill Peeta
 - Zuko vs his past and the man he's becoming
- Character vs Nature
 - Katniss vs the elements in the games
 - Zuko trying not to starve in Earth Kingdom / not to freeze in Northern Water Tribe

1

Six Types of Conflict

Using Hunger Games & ATLA as Examples

- Character vs Society
 - Katniss vs the capital and its laws
 - Zuko vs Fire Nation society
- Character vs Technology
 - Katniss vs the mutts
 - Aang vs Fire Nation tanks / Aang vs “New Airbenders”
- Character vs Supernatural
 - Character vs a ghost or the human vs vampires (not in HG)
 - Aang vs Spirits

2

Effectively Build Tension

- Do your character's personalities clash?
- Do their beliefs differ?
- Morally gray characters are PERFECT for building tension.
- Continue to ask yourself, what would this character do if this happened? The "what if?" question will solve many of your problems.
- Raise the stakes! What happens if the character doesn't succeed? It better be epic.
- Play with different writing styles (i.e. shorter more impactful sentences)
- Build tension by withholding information either from your character or your reader. This is easier to do in the third person, but not impossible in first person.
- Secrets build tension

3

Physical Conflict

- Put your characters into a situation they are uncomfortable with by taking away their personal space
- Always remember how your characters would react to being put into different situations (aka KNOW your character)
- If you do write a fight scene, don't just let your character win. Make them work for it, maybe even make them lose!
- Use actions to intensify the conflict (i.e. body language that is fitting to your character)
- Silence sometimes speaks louder than words, even in a book!

4

Verbal Conflict

- Start off with a normal conversation that develops into a conflict as the characters realize they aren't fully agreeing on something.
- Remember your characters are human too (maybe) they're allowed to say things they don't really mean just to build up tension.
- Think about how your characters would feel in these situations. Are they arguing over personal beliefs?
- Your characters don't need to scream.
- Verbal conflict can be snarky remarks or comments too
- Every word should matter

5

Lasting Impact of Conflict

- Conflict **MUST** be meaningful. Otherwise, why is it happening? How is it progressing your plot or character arc?
- PTSD exists. Don't pretend your characters are just going to get over traumatic events. Pay attention to mental health.
- Conflicts usually aren't resolved right away. They help with character development.
- Everything is better in 3's - 3 stages of conflict
 - The inciting incident that causes the conflict
 - The climax where conflict reaches its peak
 - The falling action where conflict is slowly resolved

DID YOU FIND THIS USEFUL?

FOLLOW

@THE_WRITER_COMMUNITY

& THE FOUNDERS:

@MEGANBETHDAVIES

@SKYEHORN_AUTHOR

@AUTHOR_S.ALEXIS

@RAELYNNFRY

