

Lecture Topics

I really do have words and will travel. I love teaching others the tips and tricks that help me in my writing. All these lectures can be tailored to your groups interests, time, or level of intensity.

So if you have a group that needs inspiring or a workshop that needs whipping into shape, pen me a line!

A spoonful of subplot sugar- adding romance to any book (1.5-2 hours)

You've got yourself a thrilling thriller. A fabulous fantasy. The very best of Westerns. It just needs a little something extra – but what? Fortunately, Amanda is here to help you season your story to perfection... with a dash of romance! We'll cover the who, when, why, and how of adding a romantic subplot to your story, integrating it seamlessly with your main storyline and bringing it all to a delicious conclusion. Bring your appetite – this class is a feast!

Building a better world (1 hour)

Writers have total control over the worlds they create and the heroes they manipulate. In this lecture by Amanda Arista, she will explore the keys to the relationship between these worlds and the steps to walk through when creating a world from scratch to challenge your hero, or how to find the write hero to make your world a better place. Like building a pyramid, a strong foundation is key to creating inherent conflict within your story. From continents to cultures, this workshop will help beginning writers think of the big questions for new realms, past, present and future.

Decoding, Declawing, and Delivering the Revise and Resubmit (1 hour)

From the trenches of her current submission battles, author Amanda Arista helps you define that ambiguous territory of Revise and Resubmit. After switching genres, she is starting over and had 6 R&Rs on one manuscript. What is an author to do? Amanda will walk you through the highs and lows of receiving this type of feedback, thought process of revise or not revise, and give you a few tips to decode the comments and make any manuscript glow.

Don't Type at me in that Tone of Voice (1.5-2 hours)

Voice is one of the most elusive tools in the writer's workshop. In this session, Amanda Arista will guide you through her workings of voice with concrete examples of how to build your writing voice. Voice is defined as the distinct personality, style, or POV of a piece of writing that grabs reader's attention and established a relationship. Voice is what the readers listen to and fall in love with. By understanding the writer's audience, tone, and character POV, a writer can define a voice that will set them apart from others, enhance their story and make readers keep their hearts glued on the page.

Down and Dirty Character Development (1 hour)

Why spend months developing a character only to find that its the wrong character for the story you want to tell? Using this boiled-down amalgamation of three top screenwriting teachers, Amanda Arista will show you how to create a character that will

leap off the page with their own backstory, voice, and deep connection to the story you want to tell.

Once upon a Monomyth- The Heroine's Journey (1.5-2 hours)

Humans have been telling stories to pass along survival skills before there was a time to "Once upon..." Using the structure set forth by Joseph Campbell, Amanda Arista will walk you through the heroine's journey and give writers a language to strength their tales and speak to their readers deep-seated need for story. Using popular novels, we will identify the stages that help a main character become a stronger heroine and satisfy the readers journey as well.

Subplots (4 hours and potential for Workshop)

You have your main story, but its only 60K? Take your story to the next level by learning how to enhance theme, increase characterization, and flesh out the hero's journey with subplots. In this workshop, Amanda will guide you through plotting and subplotting techniques, analyze structure of popular subplots, and weave these subplots into your current hero's journey. Complete with crafting time, this session will help you strengthen your main story, clarify your external versus internal versus extraneous story elements, and craft surprises and laughs on every page for your readers. Don't forget the post-its!

The WRITE stuff: Tools for prewriting through editing to the right words (4 hours with potential for workshop)

Most writers have had that moment when they realize they made a left in their manuscript ages ago and might have to chunk thousands of words and precious hours. But what if there was a way to help your brain build a train-track before the story really got chugging. Amanda will teach you focusing tools from pre-writing all the way to editing to make sure that your words are all chugging in the same direction. Using brain patterns and tested methods, she will help you get the right words on the page and them polish them up.

Why These Monkeys: Strengthening Heroines and Villains in Women's Fiction (1-2 hours)

Readers want real, bruised women who shake it off and get back up. They want situations that are tough but relatable. Readers want stumbling, but the grace to keep on walking. It is a balancing act between traumatized and unscathed, between faking it and making it. During this workshop, Amanda will walk you through her tried and true tips to help amp up the heroine's character arc, create a logical character wound, and help define the meatier areas to explore in woman's fiction heroines. To oppose that, she will take you through the strengths your antagonist will need to have and how to create sympathy in both.