**BLUEPRINT FOR A BOOK:**

**BUILD YOUR NOVEL FROM THE INSIDE OUT**

**by Jennie Nash**

**Workbook Answers**

**Part 1: Story Fundamentals**

1. Why write this book? Write one page and expand on what you wrote in the Mini

Blueprint. Go deep! Go broad! Go big!

1. What’s your point? Write one or two lines.
2. Write a super simple version of your story -- one or two sentences, maybe three.
3. Brainstorm some book titles. Try to think of 15 and highlight your favorite.
4. Define your genre/category. This is the same question we asked on the Mini Blueprint.

You can copy that here or update if you have changed your mind while doing the Blueprint.

1. Who is your ideal reader?

* How old is she?
* Where does she live?
* How does she spend her day (in very broad strokes)—mom, kindergarten teacher, dog owner, business owner, truck driver, senator?
* What keeps her up at night? What does she worry about, care about, wonder about?
* What does she want more than anything in the world?
* What can your book do to help her get it?
* What other books does your Ideal Reader love? Aim to find three books and answer these questions:

⮚Why does she love these other books?

⮚What will your book add to the conversation?

⮚What would your ideal reader say after finishing your book?

1. Write your Book Jacket Copy. No more than 250 words.

**Part 2: Design a Structure**

1. Who is your protagonist?

* What does your protagonist want in the world?
* What does your protagonist want inside themselves?
* What is standing in your protagonist’s way of getting what she wants?

1. Who is telling your tale?
2. Two questions about time:

* Where does your narrator stand in time?
* What is the period of time that elapses in your story?

1. Where does the story start and where does it end?

* The Kitchen Timer Scene Challenge.

⮚Opening Scene

⮚Closing Scene

1. Develop your “Because of That” Story Summary.

Once upon a time there was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Every day \_\_\_\_\_\_. One day \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Because of that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

Because of that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

Until finally \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

And ever since that day \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Part 3: The Inside Outline**

1. Develop your Inside Outline. Here is a reminder of the rules:

* Use standard manuscript formatting: 1-inch margins, Times Roman 12-point font, single line spacing, one full line space between the bullet-point pairings.
* Write no more than 3 pages.
* Each bullet point should have no more than 3 lines
* Each Scene must *cause* the next one so your story has a narrative drive.

1. Use the Ten Point Inside Outline Checklist to evaluate your work.

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# **The TEN POINT Inside OutlinE CHECKLIST**

Check to be sure there is one clear point: Is the story about something? Does it say something? Can someone look at your Inside Outline and see it?

Check to be sure that the POV is consistent and clear throughout, whether you have one POV character, two, or twelve. The point that goes with each scene should be about that POV character and what they know and feel and believe.

Check for an arc of change: Does the ending resolve the problem of the beginning?

Check the character motivation and logic: Do the protagonist’s actions make sense? Would they actually behave this way based on who they are and what they want? There is logic to the way people behave, even when they behave in contradictory ways.

Check to make sure your protagonist has agency over their decisions. Are they making choices and decisions or are things just happening to them? We want a protagonist who is engaged in their own struggle and their own story, not a cardboard cutout who only reacts to whatever happens to them.

Check the consequences of every decision your protagonist makes. Is something at stake? Or, in other words, do they stand to lose something? Will something happen if they make one choice versus another?

Check the cause-and-effect trajectory: Do the actions the protagonist takes drive to the next thing that happens in every single chapter? This is where you will probably spend the bulk of your time and effort: thinking this through and locking it in. It’s hard, because changes you make will impact every other scene in the story. Don’t shy away from making those changes. Better now than when you have an entire manuscript.

Check the force of opposition. Is it clear what is standing in the protagonist’s way on the inside (their beliefs about the world and their role in it) and the outside (their culture and society, the expectations people have of them, the circumstances they find themselves in, competitors and antagonists)? We want the protagonist to struggle as they make their choices and decisions. We want it to be hard so we can experience what it would feel like to struggle in this way without actually having to do it ourselves.

Check pacing and flow of the story: Is there tension throughout? Does it build and grow? Are there scenes that don’t drive the story forward? Can they be cut?

Check genre conventions: Does the story do what the genre needs it to do? Certain genres have clear expectations around word length, content, outcomes and conclusions, etc. Make sure your story meets them.

15. Is there anything you notice after doing your analysis that you can tell needs to be

strengthened or changed? What are the big issues with your story? What are you most

concerned about?