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Agent/Query Submission Central

~this week~

Synopsis and Query WORKSHOP #5

Greetings,

Welcome everyone, members of submission central and those of you in our “audience.”

So, where are you on the planet? Please type your current location in the chat box.

ABOUT TODAY’S WORKSHOP~

The focus of continues to be on the story core and query and will include **the synopsis.**

As you all know by now, writing a 350-word query is not a walk in the park. I’ve heard hundreds of writers sign heavily and, “this is harder to write than my entire manuscript!” I hear you and agree.

Write an effective query letter requires that you shift from “telling” to “selling.” Very few writers know how to do this, which is why most query letters fail. Without guidance from an industry pro, like me, writers flounder around trying to figure out what to put in their query. They may finish one and begin the submission process. Nothing happens. Over and over. This can be devastating. I understand.

My goal, for all of you, is to make that leap from telling to selling. To understand how to give agents what they want: proof that you are a talented story teller with a saleable manuscript.

You're in the right spot to learn how to do this. I'll help you master the learning curve between your completed manuscript and agent acquisition.

BTW: the issue often comes up . . . “how can I know, for sure, if my manuscript really truly is ready for prime time?”

In response, I'll be offering a limited service only for Submission Central members, a context evaluation with written comments and a 30-minute-follow-up, one-on-one discussion. I've been context editing for years, bolstered by my training in script evaluation (film). Until recently, I've addressed writing mechanic issues, including phrases and “red-flag” errors that needed to be addressed. But, to keep the cost lower, I'll be context evaluating only, and including a copy of my seven page “red-flag” words tutorial. This way you can ferret out your own writing mechanic issues and revise them while I focus on the bigger picture.



from Bradette, recent graduate from a Submission Central workshop.

. . . Thanks to Molli's query and synopsis training I now feel confident in approaching agents. Her context suggestions gave me the input I needed to polish my novel-in-progress. Molli's knowledge and experience are worthwhile for writers who want to improve their craft.

BTW: Writing mechanics are mentioned occasionally today since the major challenge for everyone seems to be context: revising your story presentation so it makes sense and flows logically. Context correction outweighs perfect grammar skills every time. Story tellers can learn writing mechanic rules. Anyone can. What matters, at this stage, is representing your story in a manner that will engage the attention of the agent reading it. Before submission, you'll learn how to check your work for “red-flag” errors and other writing mechanic issues that will doom your manuscript to delete-ville.

FOCUS FOR TODAY:

Before writing a query, you need to define the core of your story:

- Who wants what?
- Why?
- What stands in their way?
- What is the terrible “or else” that might occur if they don’t get what they want?

Respond to each of these questions in one sentence (per question) of 15 words or less. Stick to the focus on your main character, your “who” and don’t go wandering off into the weeds with inclusion of their best friend, or child, or others in your story. ‘

NOTE: You are the only one (besides myself and class members) who ever will read your story core. It’s your road map, not a submission document. Hang your story core up near your computer. Or write it on sticky notes and slap it on the screen of your computer. Whatever you need to do in order to look at this every single time you prepare to work on your submission document (and manuscript).

Remember, all story telling is founded on the concept that something happens and something or someone (your protagonist) takes an action in response to whatever has occurred. This reaction can be internal or external.

Your story revolves around your “who” and “what” they want. Next is the “why not” or the obstacle(s) that can prevent them from getting what they want.

And, in the query, you don’t reveal the story resolution. Instead, you reveal the “terrible or else” that may occur if your protagonist doesn’t get what they want.

Obviously, you must clearly know the core of your story before you can write your query. Same thing with the synopsis. You must know the story core and have included this information in your query before you begin your synopsis.

And then, *DO NOT REPEAT* what you've already written in your query. Use the golden opportunity of the synopsis to reveal more about your protagonist's inner world as you expand on your story.

To review: Here's a story core that, after a few tweaks, is helping Janet stay on track with her query and synopsis.

- WHO is the story about: Professor Grace Stone.
- WHAT does she want? The love of a husband and security of a family.
- WHAT stands in her way? Trust issues with men.
- WHAT happens if she doesn't get what she wants? She'll remain as a family outsider.

BTW: As Tom pointed out this week, your story core also is known as "Goal, Obstacle, and Resolution." I've simplified it for clarity so help writers hone in specifically on what their protagonists' want and why. This is vital when crafting the query and synopsis. Without this clarity, the agent reading may not want to take the time and put forth the effort to figure out who/what the story is about.

The terrible "or else" only appears in the query letter. Its purpose is to motivate the agent to question "what happens" and then move on to read your synopsis.

Do yourself a favor and always begin your homework with your story core:

- **WHO** is your protagonist? Respond in 15 words or less.
- **WHAT** does your protagonist want? Respond in 15 words or less.
- **WHY** does your protagonist want this? Respond in 15 words or less.
- **WHAT HAPPENS IF?** What is the terrible "or else" that could occur if your protagonist doesn't get what they want.

Evaluation order this week:

Carol
John
Linda Dale
JC
Lisa
Alan
Janet
Vicki
Doree

STORE CORE CHALLENGE~

FROM CAROL~

Her revised story core:

- WHO IS YOUR STORY ABOUT? Shaylee.
- WHAT DOES SHE WANT AND WHY? Shaylee wants to be Brott's friend because she believes the two kingdoms don't need to be enemies.
- WHAT STANDS IN HER WAY: tie in with what she wants and why. Fairies and pixies have always been enemies and no one would accept their friendship.
- WHAT IS THE OR ELSE OUTCOME: Shaylee will lose her best friend forever.

Earlier you wrote this, which, in a nutshell, reveals your story more clearly than what you've submitted as homework this week.

You wrote:

Shaylee wants to be friends with Brott but her father prohibits it and if she can't figure out a way around this, she will lose her best friend forever. This is your story core. No frills, no justification.

Your story is about a child. Not a deep philosophical concept. She wants her friend. Dad says no. What can she do, or how can she help Dad change his mind? That's a believable core for a story written for a child. Use this as

your guide while you write your next query draft. And stick to it. No diversions!

Carol, it occurs to me that you might switch around your story so Shaylee's in trouble and Brott helps her out. She's shaken, possibly hurt. He accompanies her home. Dad has a fit. Then he learns what happened and begins to change his mind about Pixies. Shaylee catches a glimmer of doubt about being enemies with the Pixies. She suggests that if he could come to know Brott better, he'd allow them to be friends. How might that change the ending of your story?

Carol commented that her story, as written, has Shaylee saving Brott and her dad changes his mind. Not clear why, but I'm sure Carol has show and told it so it makes sense.

FROM JOHN

Comment from Molli: JOHN, you submitted homework twice. However, I only go over the most recent submission. It's not appropriate for me to try to figure out what you intend to submit when you do it a piece at a time.

John wrote:

I have the first paragraph. I find it easier when I framed your guide around the paragraph and used your examples as reference.

Who wants what and why? GOAL.

Why can't they have it? OBSTACLE.

Does the protagonist succeed or fail? RESOLUTION.

Subject: Synopsis, "CAN TWO WRONGS BE MADE RIGHT?"

One: First paragraph describes who wants what (goal), why they want it, and what stands in their way (obstacle).

John's first paragraph **of his synopsis.** Whoopsie! This wasn't made clear and therefore, this paragraph was not read as being part of the synopsis.

Note: in the future, submit the entire synopsis in one time.

Query goes first. Then the entire five-paragraph synopsis.

John wrote:

Jack's doctor says his memory loss is related to the head wound, and his prognosis is 50/50 of remembering anything. What little he does remember places him in a position where two different crooks are after their money. He has no idea what they look like or when they will come, but he's sure about one thing, they are not going let one hundred grand just slip through their fingers without a fight.

WHO: Introduces Jack as the protagonist.

WHAT does he want? His goal is to settle into a quiet normal life like most people.

WHAT IS THE terrible "or else" if he doesn't get what he wants? There are two bad guys hunting him to get their money.

Suggestion: Make it a \$1.5 million (in a briefcase) just to up the stakes. Jack realizes they want their money and blood revenge.

Your thoughts?

THE SUBJECT LINE~

After you've determined your story core, write your email SUBJECT line. Keep it tight, terse, interesting, funny . . . to interest the agent and motivate that click to open your submission email.

Next, jump right into the first line of your first paragraph.

(Do not include Dear so and so. Just begin your first paragraph.)

At the conclusion of your third paragraph, THE last sentence is:

Thank you for your time and consideration. (Nothing else. Period.)

THEN, stack as much of the following as you can on the left side.

Your name

Your phone number(s)

Your Facebook page

Your twitter handle

Your other social media involvement

Third paragraph review from last week:

Lisa's third paragraph, before revision:

Lost & Found is complete at 88,000 words. I've published popular articles and research papers throughout my career as an organizational psychologist. In 2013, I retired to study fiction writing and work on my first novel. I'm an active member of Sisters in Crime (President, Atlanta Chapter, 2016-2017; published in In SinC , March 2016), Mystery Writers of America (Southeastern Chapter, Membership Survey Specialist, 2015), and the Atlanta Writers Club. I've honed my writing skills through Continuing Education classes, webinars, workshops, conferences (Bouchercon, 2015; Killer Nashville, 2013-16, panelist, 2016), beta reader reviews, and professional critiques.

As written, this third paragraph has many places where the reader stumbled. If the reader was an agent, they might give up. Double trouble: Lisa added a paragraph of information *about* her story. Major oversell and not a good idea. She set her submission for the dreaded "CLICK" as it headed off for you-know-where.

Then, Lisa revised her third paragraph to read more quickly and be much more to the point. Now it serves as a springboard to her synopsis.

LOST & FOUND, a mystery/psychological thriller, is complete at 89,000 words. Over my thirty-year career as an organizational psychologist, I've published scholarly papers, edited newsletters, and written columns and articles on topics related to K-12 education and parenting. I'm serving my second-term as President of the Sisters in Crime Atlanta Chapter, and am an active member of Mystery Writers of America and the Atlanta Writers Club. I honed my writing skills with Continuing Education classes, webinars, writers' conferences, and professional critiques.

HOMEWORK SPOTLIGHT EVALUATION:

FROM LINDA

Email SUBJECT LINE: A Journey of 10,000 miles begins with one act of rebellion.

Story Core

Who wants what and why? Wu Meichen wants freedom to participate in family decisions that will affect her marriage.

What stands in the way? Chinese cultural traditions give the oldest male in the family the power to make decisions in the best interest of the family regardless of what individual family members want.

What will happen if Meichen doesn't get what she wants? The head of the family will send her husband to America, and they may be separated for years until he's allowed to return.

Query–

Newlywed Wu Meichen hates the Chinese traditions that dictate her actions and thoughts. Although their marriage was arranged, Meichen falls deeply in love with her husband, Chao Chung. She wants him to accept her as a partner and give her a voice in his plans for his future. But Chinese tradition demands all family members obey the orders of the oldest male who's responsible for the family's welfare. When the head of the family

sends Meichen's husband overseas to work, she is devastated, fearing he'll be gone many years while she faces a lifetime of waiting.

Meichen's father-in-law sends her to a missionary school after her mother-in-law attacks her. While she enjoys learning, Meichen never stops longing for Chung. Months pass, then years. Meichen has no comfort except the few letters her husband sends, his photograph, and memories of their short time together. In the fifth year Meichen's sorrow turns into anger and then rebellion. If her husband can't come home, she'll find her way to him. When she reaches San Francisco, the family patriarch, is furious. He tries to send Meichen back to China. but she disguises herself as a boy and crosses America by train. Meichen rejoices when she sees her husband again, but she soon learns there is more trouble ahead. Her husband has been ordered to divorce her or his family will disown him. Without love, Meichen sees no point in living. But will her husband still love her when he remembers her rash actions caused the loss of his family? **Can Meichen find a way to make peace with her in-laws and stay with her husband?**

Complete at 90,000 words, Unbound Woman won first place in an ethnic novel contest sponsored by Romantic Times Magazine. I belong to the Augusta Writers and am an active member of RWA (Romance Writers of America) and Georgia Romance Writers. Thank you for your time and consideration. *318 words*

SYNOPSIS FIRST DRAFT~

First Paragraph: Wu Meichen, a young Chinese girl, submits to an arranged marriage to a man she has never met. Her new husband, Chao Chung, educated in a Christian missionary school, has adopted some American beliefs, but his family is traditional. Meichen is hemmed in by rigid rules which force her to obey everyone else in the family, especially the oldest male who is head of the family and makes important decisions for everyone. She falls deeply in love with her husband, and she hopes his western ideas will encourage him to give her a say in their plans for the future. But she is horrified when then head of the family send Chung to

America to earn money for his family. Meichen fears he will be away for years and they may even be parted for the rest of her life.

Second paragraph: Meichen's mother-in-law despises her, and does her best to make the girl's life miserable. One day she goes too far and attacks Meichen. Her father-in-law sends Meichen to the missionary school to get her out of the house. Meichen loves learning and makes friends with a sympathetic teacher, Li Biyu. She observes the freedom the female missionaries enjoy and gradually copies them. At night she aches for her husband's touch and longs for the chance to give him a son. After five years have passed and no one mentions Chung's return, her patience is exhausted, replaced by anger that drives her to go to America and join her husband. Biyu agrees to go with her to expand her missionary opportunities.

Third paragraph: Biyu quickly leaves San Francisco sponsored by her missionary friends. But American officials hold Meichen in custody while they decide if the Chinese Exclusion Act forbids her to enter America. They also steal her money. She sends word to the head of the family, Chao Gang, Chung's oldest uncle, who is a wealthy merchant in the city. He arranges her release and she goes to his house, expecting help. Chao Gang explodes in fury, castigating her for disobedience, and tells her to go back to China. She refuses, and Chao Gang throws her out to wander the streets of San Francisco. But Chao Gang's assistant secretly takes her to a missionary refuge for Chinese women who were kidnapped to be prostitutes.

Fourth Paragraph: With no money, Meichen writes to her husband to send her train fare. Weeks pass and she prays for a letter which never arrives. At last the money comes. She learns Chung's second uncle, his boss, has hidden her letters and Chung's aunt just found them. Meichen crosses America disguised as a boy. When she reaches Chung's home she gets more bad news. Chao Gang insists that Chung divorce Meichen. Chung cannot do it after Meichen's courageous journey driven by love. **His family disowns him, which casts a pall over the marriage.** Chung jumps back and forth between depression and tumultuous sexual desire. During an argument, he tells Meichen he kept her only for sexual pleasure and he is ashamed he

abandoned his family. With her heart crushed, Meichen tells him to divorce her, and she joins Biyu, who is touring the south, speaking at churches to raise money for girls' schools in China.

Fifth paragraph: Meichen joins Biyu's campaign and learns she is a powerful speaker. But before long she has to acknowledge she is pregnant. Biyu takes her back to Chung, but he is gone to China to remarry. Meichen's feelings alternate between hysterical anger and bitter tears. But one day she comes home and Chung is there. He tells her he watched her speak when his train stopped at a town on her campaign trail. He was awed by her powerful words and fiery beauty, and gave up the idea of marrying a Chinese woman who'd be obedient, quiet, and incredibly boring. Only Meichen will suit him. He writes his oldest uncle to say if he goes to China, the Americans will most likely not let him return, and then he can't make money for the family in China. Chao Gang decides he needs the money more than he needs to punish Meichen. He rescinds the order for divorce, and Chung and Meichen are once more part of the family. **712 words.**

WHAT WORKS?

Subject line is excellent. Keep it.

These two docs are coming together. Nice job of expanding your story in the synopsis. Thanks for setting your synopsis up with paragraph headings (first, second, etc.) This helps me determine where paragraph breaks are intended to go since, during the transition from Facebook to word when everything turns into one long document, as they all do.

WHAT DOESN'T WORK?

Once you've written something in the query, **DO NOT REPEAT IT** in the synopsis. For example:

Linda's first query paragraph:

Newlywed Wu Meichen hates the Chinese traditions that dictate her actions and thoughts. Although their marriage was arranged, Meichen **falls deeply in love with her husband,** Chao Chung. She wants him to accept her as a

partner and give her a voice in his plans for his future. But Chinese tradition demands all family members obey the orders of the oldest male who's responsible for the family's welfare. When the head of the family sends Meichen's husband overseas to work, she is devastated, fearing he'll be gone many years while she faces a lifetime of waiting.

Linda's synopsis first paragraph:

Wu Meichen, a young Chinese girl, submits to an arranged marriage to a man she has never met. Her new husband, Chao Chung, educated in a Christian missionary school, has adopted some American beliefs, but his family is traditional. Meichen is hemmed in by rigid rules which force her to obey everyone else in the family, especially the oldest male who is head of the family and makes important decisions for everyone. She falls deeply in love with her husband, and she hopes his western ideas will encourage him to give her a say in their plans for the future. But she is horrified when then head of the family send Chung to America to earn money for his family. Meichen fears he will be away for years and they may even be parted for the rest of her life.

Similar phrases are highlighted. Instead of repeating, use this golden opportunity to *expand* the story. This will help you tighten and revise your word count down to 350 as you reveal more about Meichen's inner world and her quest to get what she wants. You can expand on the joy of learning she discovers at the Missionary school. How she blossoms under the guidance of her Biyu, and discovers her untapped vocal communication abilities. This woman is gutsy and brave. Constantly reveal her inner essence that enables her to develop skills as she treks across America and into the heart of her husband.

Length of the manuscript may be a problem. It's a little long for a first novel.

FROM DALE who crafted her query during a prior Submission Central workshop, and now joins us to develop her synopsis.

Dale wrote in her query 2nd draft~

Email SUBJECT line: Googling for God

(Dale, next week please include your story core)

Five months out of Central Florida High School, Joshua Gilbert is jobless with no prospects. Tired of constant arguments with his father about getting off the computer and getting on with his life, Joshua drives off with no plans. Out of gas and dead broke, he wanders into a fellowship meeting in Tennessee where parishioners mistake him for their new straight-out-of-the-seminary pastor whom the aging and non-techie congregation had interviewed via **a hazy internet-connection. Will** Joshua fake it three weeks until payday and risk hellfire and damnation or worse . . . arrest for fraud?

Joshua intercepts a call from Pastor Joe (the intended pastor) who had been in an auto accident. He identifies himself as the associate pastor, and advises Pastor Joe to take three weeks to heal. Joshua uses google to preach sermons, conduct a board meeting, and baptize by immersion. From his teen-age experience, he counsels a couple with marital problems, visits the sick, and joins a teen-age band, all the while convincing Pastor Joe to stay away a little while longer. Just as Joshua begins to care about individual congregation members, Pastor Joe and his father show up in church. How will Joshua decide who he is now—the lazy kid his father thinks he is; the fraud the congregation thinks he is; the associate pastor Pastor Joe thinks he is, or someone else he hadn't yet considered?

My young adult novel, *A Lamb Leads the Sheep*, is complete at 70,000 words. I am the author of five nonfiction books and two dozen articles published in newspapers and magazines. The University Press of Florida published my recent book, *Fed Up: The High Costs of Cheap Food*. I am certified in the Amherst Writers and Artists (AWA) method of facilitating creative writing workshops. For the last twelve years I have led weekly writing groups, weekend writing retreats, and weeklong writing retreats for adults and a one-week half-day summer camp for teens.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Your market includes mainstream, YA, and Christian.

Dale's synopsis~

Nineteen-year old Joshua Gilbert wants freedom and independence from his parents. Five months out of Orlando High School, he is jobless with no prospects. In the middle of yet another argument with his father about getting off the computer and getting on with his life, Joshua snatches his mother's credit card from her purse and speeds off in the family's second car.

In Tennessee, he exits the interstate to refuel only to run out of gas. He coasts to the side of a dark, uninhabited road where he observes one lone car turn into an unlit driveway. He jogs down the darkened gravel road to the Wilsons Corner Bible Believing Congregation. He wanders into the church looking for help and is dumbfounded when the parishioners mistake him for Joe Decker, their new straight-out-of-the-seminary pastor with an uncanny resemblance to Joshua. Desperate for money and realizing it is only a matter of time before his mother cuts off the credit card, Joshua decides to play along until pay day, grab the money, and run. Joshua intercepts a call from Roxanne, Pastor Joe Decker's fiancée, who informs him Pastor Joe was in an auto accident. Roxanne and Joshua develop a close relationship. (*Good touch. Expand this a bit*)

Joshua blunders and googles his way through a board meeting, a funeral, preaching, counseling, and visiting the sick, endearing himself to many parishioners. Meanwhile, his identity is threatened by the suspicious church secretary, Mae-June who critiques his every move and confronts him with the fact Joe Decker has a moustache. In vain, Joshua tries to grow one.

When Pastor Joe is scheduled to be discharged from the hospital and take up his duties, Joshua is desperate to keep him away from the church. He talks him into staying in a bed and breakfast closer to the hospital as a convenience for follow-up medical care.

Meanwhile, Joshua's parents cut off the credit card and demand he return home with the car. Between juggling the continuous telephone calls from

his parents and keeping Pastor Decker at bay and running a church and coming up with creative answers to the church secretary's suspicions, Joshua fears he will be found out. Everything comes to a head on Sunday, the day *before* the long-awaited check, when Pastor Decker and Joshua's father show up in church.

The congregation is shocked, yet the people he has helped during the three weeks he served as pastor insist he stay on. The discussion between members of the congregation, Pastor Joe Decker, and Joshua's father becomes louder and more intense. Joshua recognizes how much self-confidence he has gained through his leadership role. He realizes he **cannot stay and he cannot go back.** He slips out to the spot where his car broke down, sticks out his thumb, and it is Roxanne who picks him up. They drive away together. 476 words

WHAT WORKS:

Nicely described flow of events. Hope your story is filled with Joshua's misperceptions about Biblical text as he expands his understanding about what they mean.

Great line says it all about Joshua: **He can't stay and he can't go back.**

WHAT DOESN'T WORK: don't repeat info from your query.

Remember, your query is read first, then the synopsis. Don't waste valuable time and space repeating information that's in your query letter. This will result in a quick trip to delete-ville for your submission. The agent is reading your synopsis because they wonder, "Hmmm, so what happens?"

Give them more. More of Joshua's inner world as he fakes being a pastor, and then, perhaps, recognizes some of the truths he's passing along. You also could reveal how, when he is counseling, he uses phrases that his father has used, and blends them with what he's googled about spiritual counseling. Show the agent how Joshua *expands his inner world to include concepts and activities he never would have accepted before.* This makes your story even more appealing.

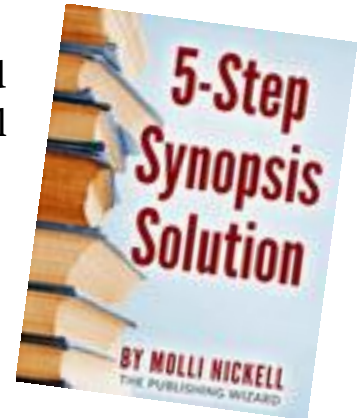
Question about what to call the parishioners or congregants of flock?

ARE YOU STUCK?

The synopsis can be a challenge because it is so different from the query. The structure is different and reveals your entire story, beginning to end. My tutorial includes examples to show you what to put where and why. If you feel stuck in the synopsis swamp, this 24-page tutorial will help you out.

Available at MolliMart for \$17.

[Here's the link for more information.](#)



FROM JC Historical story for picture book readers.

Story Core:

Who is the story about: Ulysses Grant and Emperor Meiji were once young boys who loved horses. The culturally diverse paths of two great men come together in history on July 4, 1879 to forge a friendship between two countries that still exists today.

What do they want: To travel beyond their own backyards.

What stands in their way: Civil war within their countries.

What's the or else: A divided country cannot grow without change.

Hiram and Sachi are two boys born worlds apart in the nineteenth century, but mirror one another's greatest challenges in life as men; to rebuild their nations after civil war.

One boy becomes Ulysses Grant. The other becomes Mutsuhito, the young Emperor of Japan.

As boys, Ulysses travels as far as his horses will take him in Ohio. Mutsuhito is never allowed to ride a horse, or even be seen outside his father's palace in Kyoto. Ulysses is stubborn, never turning back when sent on an errand. Though he didn't know the way, he'd always see it through. Mutsuhito is curious, pestering tutors with questions about the western barbarians visiting his country. **The seemingly annoying qualities of these two boys shape into attributes as they become men.**

Ulysses never gives up in battle. Mutsuhito, forced into a political cage at fourteen, maneuvers carefully in its limitations. Both face loss of their lives if they fail. But both find a common vehicle and passion to help them pursue goals beyond their boundaries; horses.

On the occasion of a world tour taken by Ulysses in 1879, the two men bridge continents and rattle the cage of tradition with one important, defiant act; a handshake on July 4th. The occasion to celebrate American Independence also gives rise of opportunity for a young, burdened emperor to meet privately with a seasoned warrior on the strategy of peace.

And afterward, when Ulysses returned home to New York, Mutsuhito received from him something to be encouraged by:

Three magnificent horses.

WHAT WORKS:

Nice job writing a synopsis-type outline for your historical novel. I suggest that you reconsider the bottom-line of their stories: what's at stake here is the **possible destruction of two countries.**

Nice ending to your story. They shake hands. Grant sends Meiji his personal symbol of freedom: the horses he was never allowed to enjoy when he was a child. This totally brings your story full circle.

I'm wondering what Meiji gave to Grant (who helped him understand strategy? What **inner strength might he have shared** that Grant wouldn't have known?)

Who is the story about: Ulysses Grant and Emperor Meiji of Japan.

What do they want: As children: to expand their mental and physical boundaries. As adults: bring their countries together in peace.

What stands in their way: Civil war.

What's the terrible or "else:" Their countries may fracture and never be united.

Suggest you go back and re-work your cover letter (not quite a query) for next week. Write it to describe your story of historical fiction, then include your story. You can incorporate some of what you already have written.

FROM LISA

WHO IS MY PROTAGONIST?

Kay Smith, a woman struggling with amnesia after a suspicious car accident.

WHAT DOES SHE WANT?

To recover her memory and life.

WHAT STANDS IN HER WAY?

Psychogenic amnesia (unconscious psychological defense mechanism protecting Kay from reliving a severe, emotional trauma from her past).

IF SHE DOESN'T GET WHAT SHE WANTS, WHAT HORRIBLE THING WILL HAPPEN?

A stalker will catch up with Kay and kill her.

Email SUBJECT line: A White House conspiracy forces the First Lady to run for her life. 13 words

Comment: Trim to: Conspiracy forces First Lady to run for her life.

Suggestions/comments?

Lisa's query.

Note: Lisa has prepared this to be emailed after a pitch at a writers' conference this weekend. I don't think it's necessary to add the line about the synopsis to follow. Just include it.

Kay Smith, a victim of a suspicious car accident, awakens in a private hospital with only vague memories. Hazy recollections about a serial strangler leave her panicked about what her past may hold. While tracking down leads to her identity and life, Kay discovers she's being stalked. When her inquiries **leave two people dead, Kay** knows she could be next. Can she remember her shadowy past before it catches up with her?

With a killer hot on her trail, Kay pleads for refuge with Nick Costa, her comatose roommate's daily visitor, who has become a generous friend, one she cares for and trusts. On the run together, Kay learns the shocking truth about her past and why Nick seems so strangely familiar. She's Angela Lockhart, the missing First Lady, the survivor of a secret White House conspiracy that left her **sister, Amy, and a young intern dead.** Nick's her lead Secret Service Agent, who's worked desperately behind the scenes to keep Angela hidden from the power players he suspects are out to kill her. The few memories that subsequently emerge leave Angela confused, emotionally distraught. A recurring nightmare weighs her down with shady suspicions about a possible complicit role in her sister's death. Angela's guilt reaches a tipping point when she hears a radio news flash detailing the brutal murders of **three more people killed** in her wake. Unwilling to risk more innocent lives to save her own, Angela realizes she must defy Nick's wishes and come out of the shadows. At the first opportunity, she drives off without her protector, determined to uncover the secrets of her dark past by confronting those she suspects of murder. It's a bold move Angela knows is fraught with danger, with a high probability of meeting the same fate as her sister, dead at the hands of a vicious strangler.

LOST & FOUND, a mystery/psychological thriller, is complete at 89,000 words. [NOTE TO MOLLI & CLASS: Molli has noted that at 89,000 words,

my manuscript is long for a first novel. In fact, the manuscript is not complete, but with my story editor, one of the best in the business for my genre. I expect the word count to drop, as she helps me tighten my story and writing.] Over my thirty-year career as an organizational psychologist, I've published scholarly papers, edited newsletters, and written columns and articles on topics related to K-12 education and parenting. I'm serving my second-term as President of the Sisters in Crime Atlanta Chapter, and am an active member of Mystery Writers of America and the Atlanta Writers Club. I honed my writing skills with Continuing Education classes, webinars, and conferences, and professional critiques. *370 words*
A one-page synopsis and a copy of LOST & FOUND follows this letter.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Lisa Malice, Ph.D.

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WHAT WORKS: Revised email SUBJECT line will do the trick. First paragraph works well, leads into the second.

WHAT DOESN'T WORK: The comatose roommate is too convenient. May not be necessary to mention how she found Nick. Or, perhaps he's the person who pulled her out of the car wreck and called 911. Lisa can mention that Nick rouses her in ways she wouldn't have expected, especially since, at first, she doesn't remember who he is.

I continue to wonder how she gives a secret service agent the slip. And what does she hope to discover with confrontation of those she feels are guilty? Or does she hope to determine if her husband, the president, innocent? Not clear about her motivation in heading out on her own.

Comments from group: Body count was confusing. Big question: what/if SS person isn't so trustworthy?

Trim these 400 words a bit by eliminating extraneous words/phrases.

FOR EVERYONE:

The 350 word limit for a query has been an industry standard for years because this is all most writers could fit on a page.

When unnecessary words show up in your query, it's a good bet they'll also be in your manuscript. Rather than continuing to read, the agent may decide to pass.

Because submissions are emailed to agents, this has resulted in a tsunami of email in their inboxes. Most do not contain saleable manuscripts . . . but, they never know. Each email with an interesting subject line is opened and the first line or two of the query is read. This determines read or delete.

Even though query letters aren't delivered on a piece of paper, the 350-word limit remains. And, in that space of 350 words, does the writer have the ability to tell their story succinctly or not. The query becomes a screening mechanism that prevents most writers from progressing in their quest to land an agent.

Snap decisions, "yes" or "no" are made instantly. Don't give them reason to delete yours. Make certain your query first paragraph reveals the core of your story: who wants what, why, what stands in their way and the terrible "or else" that could occur if the *who* doesn't get the *what* they want.

FROM ALAN~

Subject/(Pitch-line): First ever bio of black American king, whose real life was stranger than literary legend

History buffs know "King Dick" as a 300-pound Afro-American boxer who ruled a British war-prison in 1814. Adventure-fiction fans may remember him as an African prince who became a revolutionary Haitian voodoo hero and Islamic mad monk in a Pulitzer-winning historical novel and 1952 Hollywood extravaganza. Now for the first time we can trace the real life of

Richard “King Dick” or “Big Dick” Cephus (1790? – 1831). It’s even more amazing than the dozens of novels, plays, séances and scholarly works he inspired. He grew up among slaves, yet ruled thousands. His jokes were famous nationwide. He policed the birth of Abolitionism. His hilarious and poignant life-story will delight anyone who wants to be popular in life and famous after death.

The Last Black King of Boston: The Extra-ordinary Life and Stranger Afterlives of King Dick! tells the jaw-dropping tale—or rather tales—of a working man who lived his everyday life in incredible ways. Full of adventure, history, and laughter, it ends in redemption from violence, gambling, and race- and class-biased obscurity. His life is a jigsaw puzzle of police, prison, genealogical and tax records, memoirs, news-anecdotes and tall tales. This is a fully-documented history-detective story, not a novel. It could not have been put together before the Internet age. I tell his story through the lives he touched, the places he lived, and the work he did and the cultures he changed, including our own. *The Last Black King* totals about 95,000 words. It’s fully drafted except for the last part, about his afterlives in literature, myth and the movies. It will entertain and inspire history and literature buffs, social-justice seekers, folk-story, adventure, and mystery readers, and new-age techno-nerds. YOUR MARKET

I’m now adapting the final section from my 2013 (second) History thesis about his afterlives. The project also represents a culmination of my twenty-years-plus of writing, producing and directing award-winning nationally-broadcast public radio documentaries about race in America. Prior to that I worked as print-journalist and stage director YOUR BACKGROUND for more than a decade. So I know that his kind of immortality makes film and mini-series producers salivate. I will unveil a revamped website devoted to my Between Civil War and Civil Rights documentary series in December. It includes a forum/blog about America’s continuing racial predicament.

Thank you for your time and attention (*consideration*).

SUGGESTIONS:

Alan, you offer up a great deal of information here, but not in a format that makes it easy for the agent to read. When you craft a non-fiction query outside of the established format, chances are that you won't be able to engage agents or encourage positive response to your query letters.

I strongly suggest that you at least try to write this query according to the format for the non-fiction proposal which I sent you before class.

(The Michael Larsen "How to write a NF book proposal" probably is not current with the digital nature of the publishing business. And, if you feel comfortable following his format, do that.)

Remember, your non-fiction query is a sales pitch about your project and you, the writer. It's not a book description with a few tidbits of marketing info tucked in here and there. Time-pressured agents will not dig through to find out more about the market and how you can assist in reaching out to potential readers.

It matters that your query engages agent interest by responding to their unspoken question: "What'cha got for me?" Continual and clever description of the book doesn't make your case *about* your market, *who* they are, *why* they will care, and *how* you can assist the publisher in reaching them.

Your opening paragraph needs to describe the essence of your book in two or three sentences. What is it about and who cares?

Your second paragraph expands the information from your first paragraph. More fully describe the benefit(s) to potential readers. Why will people want to read your book? Who are they? What you have done to create your platform: meaning those in your universe who know and/or follow your activities. Does your book inform, teach, comfort, inspire, amuse, introduce, or what? Include title, word count, information about the market, and any unusual features of your book such as graphics/illustrations/audio/DVDs/templates/worksheets/video links, etc.

Third paragraph: Why are you “The Expert?” Explain why you are *the best person* to write this book. Include information about your education, credentials, experience in your field, etc.

Do not include what you plan to do. Agents are only interested in what you have now.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Name

Phone

Website

Blog

Social media links

Professional Associations

FROM JANET

WHO IS THE STORY ABOUT? Professor Grace Stone doesn't trust a married man to be faithful.

WHAT DOES THE MAIN CHARACTER WANT AND WHY? She wants the love of a husband and the security of a family.

WHAT STANDS IN THE MAIN CHARACTER'S WAY? Grace has long held trust issues with men.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE MAIN CHARACTER DOESN'T GET WHAT SHE WANTS? She remains a family outsider, much like her mother was as the other woman.

Four-year-old, Lily, questions why she doesn't have a daddy and how to get one. But her mommy, Professor Grace Stone, yearns for what was missing from her own childhood, the love and security of a family. As the result of

her mother's affairs with wealthy married men, Grace grew up with no father. In a twisted coincidence, her own husband was killed with his mistress shortly after Lily's birth. Despite her best efforts, Grace is alone again and fears she may always remain a family outsider like her mother, the other woman.

With a friend's urging, Grace attends speed dating. She meets Beau and they are attracted to each other. Lily charms him as her choice for a new father. Grace is introduced to his sister and alarmed by the woman's erratic behavior and hostility toward her. Accosted at a ritzy Boca Raton event by one of her mother's former lovers, Grace discovers the identity of her unknown father and that Beau's stepmother is her aunt. But her joy with this paternal connection is ruined by the jealous possessiveness of Beau's sister. Grace must convince him to set boundaries with the interfering woman or lose the man she loves, the family she desires, and possibly her life.

GLASS PROMISES is a 72,000 word completed romance manuscript. It won third place in the 2016 Royal Palm Literary Award competition in the unpublished romance genre. For four years, I have been a member of the Florida Writers Association, Romance Writers of America, Florida Romance Writers, and the Coral Springs Writers Group. Out of sixty entries published in the 2016 FWA anthology, my short story, *Worse Than Being It*, was ranked second by New York Times bestselling author, John Gilstrap. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Synopsis:

Professor Grace Stone is a young widowed mother with a preschooler who is lobbying for a new daddy. She identifies with her daughter's wish because Grace dreamed of a father and the security of a family as a child. She still does, despite major trust issues where men are concerned. After learning about the rich, married philanderers who paraded through her mother's bedroom followed by the death of her husband with his mistress, Grace is reluctant to let another man into her life.

Labelled a love cripple by a friend, Grace agrees to try speed dating. She meets Beau and is surprised by their attraction. Four-year-old Lily is enthralled with him as perfect daddy material. When Grace is introduced to his sister, Gen, she is taken aback by the woman's erratic behavior and unfriendliness. Gen warns her that, as a result of Beau's nasty divorce, he is incapable of loving or trusting another woman.

Grace falls more in love as their intimacy grows. At a premier charity event, she is accosted by one of her mother's former lovers. The terrifying and humiliating incident results in the discovery of her unknown father's identity. In a twist of fate, Grace learns that Beau's stepmother is her aunt. She is thrilled with having a family connection with the man she and her daughter love. On a trip to the Keys, Beau plans a romantic dinner at an island resort. Grace spies him flirting with a woman. Her fear of involvement with a cheater is confirmed when he draws away and cuts the trip short. Then Grace learns she misinterpreted the scene. The woman was Beau's malicious ex-wife and he was disturbed seeing and speaking to her again.

At a family birthday party, Gen's subtle antagonism toward Grace continues. Lily disappears and is found locked in a closet and terrorized by Gen's daughter. This creates a rift in the family exacerbated by Gen's failing marriage. Grace accuses Beau of submitting to his sister's emotional blackmail. This leads to their breakup.

Grace is aware of the continuing drama in her new estranged family but remains an outsider until Beau's sister bursts into her classroom. The situation intensifies when Gen threatens a student and severely injures Grace. It is little Lily who uses child-like intuition and delightful machinations to make her mother and Beau willing to risk love again. 393 words

WHAT WORKS: Great Title. Glass Promises. Nice job in pulling together the story in your revised query and synopsis first draft.

WHAT DOESN'T WORK:

Story core is about trust? Or is about her fear of being vulnerable? Of being hurt? Vulnerable is the deeper pain that generates the feeling of distrust. *Suggest that you delete*, “Out of sixty entries published in the 2016 FWA anthology, my short story, Worse Than Being It, was ranked second by New York Times bestselling author, John Gilstrap.” This pulls agent attention away from your story.

Your last paragraph in the synopsis describes a scenario that feels too convenient. Crazy sister tries to kill Grace.

Could there be a lesser, earlier event when Gen frightens Lily. And then, in the final scenes that propel your story toward conclusion, Gen locks Lily in a closet. Instead of going after Grace, she goes after Lily. Just a thought.

Plus, your last sentence gives away the power of pulling in all together to Lily, instead of to Grace. Stick with your protagonist.

Question/comments from group:

Relationship between Lilly and Grace who has a need to protect her daughter from the abandonment she has endured. She wants to be a good mom. Grace struggles with trusting herself to pick the right man to also care for Lilly.

FROM VICKI~

SUBJECT LINE: It followed her to school one day, breaking all the rules.

Who wants what and why: Sadie, 15, lives with cerebral palsy. She wants to belong and be a normal teenager.

KEEP IT SIMPLE AND SHORT: Sadie wants to belong and be a normal teenager.

What stands in her way: Cruel scrutiny from her peers about her disability has left her with no self-esteem.

KEEP IT SIMPLE AND SHORT: Lack of self-esteem.

What is the terrible or else: If she doesn't find the strength to believe in her own self-worth and accept who she is, she will crumble in her dark place and give up on living.

KEEP IT SIMPLE AND SHORT: Suicide.

Comment for everyone:

KISS: Keep It Simple Sweethearts. The purpose of the story core is to keep you focused instead of wandering around in adjective/adverb/explanation land.

Vicki's first paragraph:

Born with cerebral palsy, Sadie's tangled walk attracts attention with every step she takes. The real Sadie hides from the world, for people only see a cripple when she slithers by. Except for her one friend, Finn, who moved back to London. She's convinced she'll never see him again. Sent to her grandmother's isolated Catskill Mountain home for the summer, it is a perfect refuge to end her life. But in the forest, as at school, Sadie senses someone watches her, once again.

Comment: This works. Keep it.

A malevolent fairy, Devilia, taunts, trips, and injures Sadie. This invisible thing stalks her and Sadie is sure she has lost her mind. Sadie wants to die, not be crazy, for the torture of insanity would be much worse than death. When Devilia finally shows herself Sadie is stunned. Yet Sadie begins to tap into an inner strength, for this creature, envious of the mortal world, intrigues her. Sadie starts to live, and is sure she can handle the workings of this fairy. As their odd relationship grows, Sadie can't tell if Devilia is friend or foe. Devilia's volatile antics put Sadie further in the the limelight, which she hates. Things explode on a field trip when Devilia is the cause of a miraculous incident with Sadie as the centerpiece. A YouTube video of Sadie goes viral. She is an Internet sensation, her disability on display to the world. Sadie is forced back into her dark place, devastated at the attention she receives, and wants to rid herself of Devilia for good. Now,

more than ever, Sadie needs Finn. Or is her answer within. Can Sadie let her true self shine through to the rest of the world, and find the strength to love the person she is meant to be.

My YA novel Crooked is complete at _ words. I have been in a **writers' groups since xxxx**, attended conferences and workshops, and am a member of the SCBWI ~~NY chapter~~. I live in Manhattan with my husband and am the mother of a "sometimes" crooked young adult. I also live with a wirehair dachshund, Clancy, my muse. I look forward to sharing my novel with you.

Do not be pals. This is business.

End with, "Thank you for your time and consideration."

WHAT WORKS:

Subject line and first paragraph will engage agent interest.

WHAT DOESN'T WORK:

2nd paragraph wanders around and includes extraneous information that doesn't follow your story core. Sadie wants to be normal and have friends. She suffers from lack of self-esteem. That's clear in your first paragraph.

However, your 2nd paragraph focuses on Devilia, while it needs to focus on Sadie. According to this version, Sadie needs/wants Finn. Why? What can Finn do for her that she can't do for herself? She wants to get rid of Devilia. What is the core of her desire to get rid of Devilia? Why does her interest in this "being" shift to ridding herself of this pest?

At some point, something happens that forces Sadie to look at how her life has changed. How, because of Devilia, has she become stronger in her ability to deal with attention? Perhaps being in the limelight shifts her internally? Does the UT video bring her potential friends? Or has it helped some of the kids at school realize that like themselves, she is self-conscious, which most of them had not considered before? Could the miraculous event require her to be more vocal? More assured? More something other than ashamed?

Vicki, I don't know your story, but have a feeling that you are entangled in large philosophical concepts instead of sticking with the loneliness of one girl. You have written, "Can Sadie let her true self shine through to the rest of the world, and find the strength to love the person she is meant to be" which is a large in concept and vague as to the how." What is Sadie's true self? Have you revealed this, or hinted at it in your story? What/who is the person she is mean to be? Same question: have you revealed this in your story?

About context:

Sadie is *every girl, every* teenager. Angst is part of being a teenager. The cause is different in all kids, but the feeling is the same. Ashamed of pimples or weight or not having a boyfriend or curly hair or straight hair or not having a car or not making the honor role or . . . whatever it is, teenagers wallow in emotional sh*t! And today, spread it around the world via YT. So, in that sense, Sadie is normal and like other kids. She has issues. But may not see this (yet) in other kids. They may not see this in her (yet).

This angle is one that teen readers will relate to because it touches on emotions they know. Everybody has issues. Some cover them up. Some deny them. Some deal with them.

When you hone in on the ONE THING SADIE WANTS MORE THAN ANYTHING, this automatically this will reduce your word count.

Comments from group: Sadie wants to fit in.

Story falls under diversity in terms of marketing.

Other worldness with the fairy adds to it as well.

Arm wrestling? Or something that makes her normal. Something kids do all the time that she also can do, but has never attempted.

Added Saturday AM:

Does she swim? Upper body strength? Pull somebody out of the pool? What could Sadie do that would give her credibility as being something other than an awkward cripple? A selfless act. Seen by her peers. So they see her differently.

Young YA. Kids think about suicide. Sadly, many of them do this. This also makes this story more poignant, more current with life as it is for YA kids, especially those with physical or emotional issues that somehow make them “different.”

Self-harm issues. No arm braces. Pulls herself up stairs.

Comment from Molli during workshop:

Create a situation where Sadie, using the strengths that she has, does something that demonstrates to others, and to herself, that she has some of the same inner angst and uncertainty that all teens have?

And, since she does not use hand crutches (as I thought), her walk is more or a lurch, or a side to side or awkward and slow? She has to keep herself balanced? More than tangled? And, she doesn't pull her feet behind her, she walks. So “slithering by” does not fit. It paints the wrong picture.

You are getting their Vicki. Write on!!!

FROM DOREE~

Story core:

Who wants what? Levi Yokum wants his status quo to remain as is.

Why does he want this? Levi and his mom are very close. He can't handle the thought of life without her.

KISS: Keep it simple. Levi's mommy manages his life.

Who stands in his way? Levi. The me factor.

Hmmm. Is it himself? Or is it mom who makes choices without consulting him? In this situation, this is a choice that will alter his personal “status quo?”

What is the terrible "or else" that may occur if Levi doesn't get what he wants? That drugs aren't the answer and to learn by asking not assuming. Its up to Levi to learn to cope with the reality of life and grow up. Change is inevitable and his mother has provided for him.

So, what is the terrible or else? Define it. One thing which is?

Core: He has to look inside himself for his survival. *Hmmm. Do you mean to say he will have to take care of himself for the first time in his life?*

Subject: Opioids . . . can you hear me now? *This works.*

Query first paragraph:

When 17-year old Levi Yokum learns that his life is about to change, he thinks the subject is college, not cancer. He's ill prepared to accept his mother's final decision when she announces that she wants to **slowly die from the disease**. Fear about his future turns their home into a battlefield of arguments and accusations the weaker she becomes. As they both stumble through their pain, he comes across a little bottle of opioids. He steals and hides them in his closet, for later? But, he can't decide . . . are they to assist his mother or him?

Reveal prior cancer, prior chemo etc. Treatments. The pain and why mommy decides not to experience that again. Build the case that mommy takes care of him. He selects a college close enough that he can come home on weekends so mommy can do his laundry?

2nd paragraph:

Levi Yokum's excited about college. He and his mother have plans for the summer to visit several campuses to see which one fits best. Before they can begin, his mother is diagnosed with cancer. Levi's devastated, but he's there to help her through it. Until he discovers that, she's decided to **allow cancer to carry her to death**. Levi can't believe it. What about him, his college, and his future? Their close relationship becomes accusations and arguments. As his mother's illness progresses, her drug prescriptions become more poignant, and his temptation increases. The good boy turns bad. Maturity and love are his only realism as his mother begins to fade. Will he man-up and be beside her during her final hours, or will he be following her in death?

Don't repeat first para phrases in your second paragraph. Instead, expand the story. Has their relationship been close, or has he been totally dependent on mommy? Big difference. Paint the picture in

*your query that fulfills what you have identified as your story core.
The who, what, why, why not, and the terrible “or else?”*

*How can Levi be looking forward to college when it means he'll be
separated from mommy and who will take care of him?*

Question: What is a poignant drug prescription?

Completed at 54,500 words, "Turn" will appeal to readers of "Fault in our Stars" and "Thirteen." My background includes three years as a reporter for the Salt Lake Valley Journal. For seven years, I've been an active member (and past vice president and president) of the Utah RWA (Romance Writers of America) and participate in SCBWI, the Utah League of Writers and Absolutely Writers as well as two critique groups. *This works. Good job.*

Thank you for your time and consideration.

[Doree Anderson](#)

doree.anderson@gmail.com

WHAT WORKS?

Subject line works. Third paragraph works.

WHAT DOESN'T WORK?

Because your story core is not defined, clearly, your query wanders without focus. Back to the drawing board to determine your story core and then tell that story in your first and second paragraphs.

What does he want. One thing. STATUS QUO. Relationship with mom. Close. Team. Contrary to discussion last week, she doesn't do everything for him. They are a team. Work as one.

In re context:

Is your story about Levi deciding to grow up and take care of himself? YES? Or to die without trying? Said another way, Levi has to make a choice. Grow up and learn to take care of himself or take the easy route and follow his mother into death? Doesn't know if he can go on by himself, or be a team

with mom in death. Does he need 1/2 of the team to exist? He is **grieving the lost relationship**. Her choice creates **emotional abandonment for him**. He wants her to fight it. She won't/can't. How does he deal with her choice? Anger! (2nd stage of grieving). He fights this impending loss. He has to live. Will he take the opioids to move past his inner angst which he may not have experienced before. Or, will he just give them to mom when her pain becomes unbearable.

2nd paragraph. Doesn't yet focus on the core. His core. Must accept what is, not what he wants to be.

HERE'S YOUR CORE: He can't accept what is. But he has to accept it. Or else.

NEXT WEEK:

The next Submission Central workshop meets Friday, November 11, 1 PM, Eastern. (Veteran's Day)

HOMEWORK DUE TUESDAY, Nov 8th, noon

PLEASE SUBMIT:

Your revised story core (if you're still defining it), revised query and synopsis, of synopsis first draft.

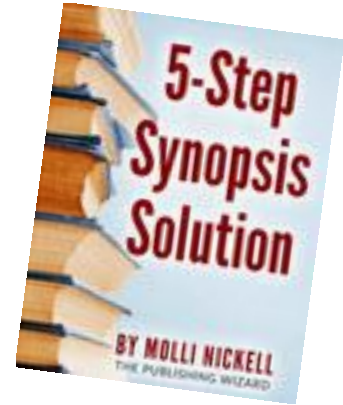
And yes, homework is now due on Tuesdays instead of Wednesday.

We'll focus on the synopsis for the next three weeks. And, as part of the program, as a group, we'll go over and over and over your revisions as necessary.

Do you feel stuck in the synopsis swamp?

This 24-page tutorial, available at MolliMart, will help you out.

[Here's the link for more information.](#)



BTW:

Regardless of *when* you join Submission Central, your submitted homework always will be evaluated, even if you're catching up with query or synopsis.

At the moment, on-demand videos of each class will be posted and available on the “on-demand” page at www.getpublishednow.biz.

If you're not yet a member of Submission Central, thank you for being with us today.

Would you benefit from receive weekly evaluations of your submission documents in our Friday workshop? Or access to Q & A, and discussions between Submission Central members on our private Facebook group?

Both of these will help you learn what you need to know in order to land an agent who will help you navigate the publishing maze. Join us! [CLICK HERE](#) to read more about the AgentQuery Submission Central program.

TOMORROW~

OPEN FORUM/Trouble Shooting Saturday, November 5th at 11th AM Eastern.

We'll discuss anything you want (except specific homework assignments). This is the time and place to ask questions about anything involving the submission process.

Feel free to invite a writer friend (or two) to drop in and ask questions

about agents, agencies, industry changes, agent research “best practices” for the entire submission process.

Here’s the link to register:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/29d470ba4669f51fdc2040ba88984b7b>

Catching up~

Regardless of when you join Submission Central, if we’re working on the synopsis, but you haven’t written a query, no problem. Begin with the query. Use my query template and jump right in. Move through the query, week by week, until you’ve mastered it. And, if the workshops are focusing on synopsis, first pages, or submission protocol, etc., join in regardless of which aspect of the submission process where you may be focusing.

Really truly, the query is the document that must be written first because it forms the basis for the synopsis and structure of your manuscript first pages.

I’ll help you, as will members of the group who have progressed beyond where you may be at the moment.

Thanks to all of you for being here today. See you tomorrow, or next week.

Write on! May the words be with you!

Molli