

Write BETTER Stories

GETTING STARTED GUIDE

Welcome to the Write Better Stories Community

You found your way to this community because you're just like me. You want to **write a story that makes an impact on the world.**

You want to tell amazing stories and write a novel you can publish.

I want those things too. That's why I created the Write Better Stories community.

I wanted to build a place where **writers with a common goal (to tell better stories and write publishable novels)** can come together and share what we know; share our ideas and our stories, in **a loving, uplifting, non-judgmental environment where everyone's supportive.**

What's resulted is what you'll see throughout this site. From the monthly content to the conversations taking place in the forums, the underlying goal is always helping you tell better stories and take your storytelling (and writing) skills to the next level.

While publishing (self or traditional) is the ultimate goal, the focus of this community isn't getting published. **The focus is learning the principles of telling a story that's publishable—and then applying those principles to your own writing.**

This community is ever-evolving thanks to all of the brilliant, amazing, fabulous members who are part of it. So never be shy about sharing yourself, your opinion or your suggestions.

You are welcome here. Always. In whatever form you come.

We're all in this together, and we're all here to be a support system for you writing a totally badass novel that you can publish.

Write on!

jennifer

The First 3 Things You Should Do

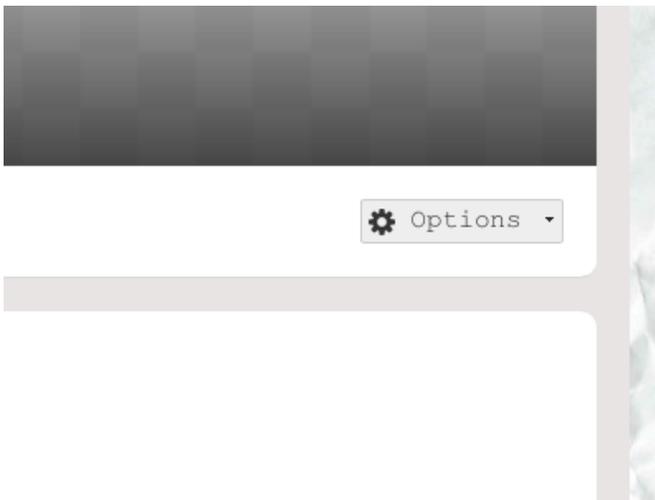
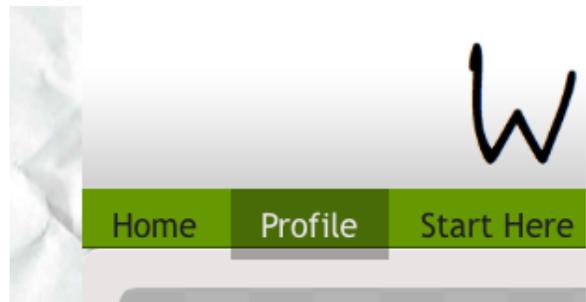
We're so glad you've decided to be part of this writing and storytelling community with us!

We want to make sure you get off to a great start now that you're here. So we've put together a list of the first three things you should do now that you're a member of the community:

#1: Set Up Your Profile Page

Click on the "Profile" link in the navigation bar and you'll be taken to your member profile page. Here you can update your information, as well as add a profile photo and a cover photo (if you choose to).

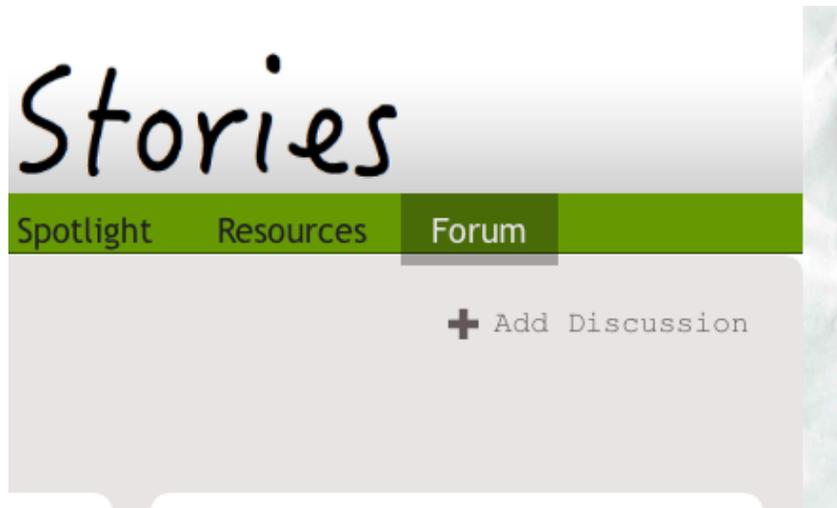
Just click on the "Options" box (on the right, below your cover photo) and you can edit your information, add photos, etc.



Feel free to upload photos of yourself, your books, whatever you want. Just please keep the photos appropriate, and don't upload anything you don't own or have the copyright to. (We have the right to—and we will—remove any photos that don't follow these guidelines.)

#2: Post An Introduction In the Forums

Once you've got your profile set up, it's time to introduce yourself to the rest of the community.



Head on over to the Forums and click on “+ Add Discussion” to add a new discussion. Add a title (suggested format is, Introduction: Your Name).

Then write up your introduction, telling us a little (or a lot) about yourself.



Introduction: Jennifer Blanchard

Posted by [Jennifer Blanchard](#) on May 11, 2014 at 7:51pm in [Introductions](#)

Hi everyone! I'm Jennifer Blanchard, I'm an author and writing coach who helps emerging novelists take their stories from idea to draft without fear, distractions or disorganization.

I created this community to be a place where you can learn how to tell better stories, share your writing, and connect with other writers from around the world.

I've been on my writing journey pretty much since birth, but I've been a professional writer since 2001. Six years ago, in 2008, I wrote my first novel. And it's been an uphill battle ever since.

Over the years I've learned a TON about how to tell stories that work. My biggest influence and mentor has been Larry Brooks, bestselling author of *Story Engineering*. His book changed my life--both my writing and my the direction of my writing career.



Feel free to add photos or link to your website, social media profiles, your books, etc. Just keep the photos/links appropriate, don't infringe on someone's copyright, and don't post spam (once again, we have the right to remove your links and photos, and we will).

Select one or more categories

Introductions

Story Planning

Writing the First Draft

When your done with your introduction be sure to choose the category “Introductions” at the bottom of the page, before hitting the “Publish” button. Otherwise your intro won’t show up in the right place on the Forums.

#3: Check Out the Content

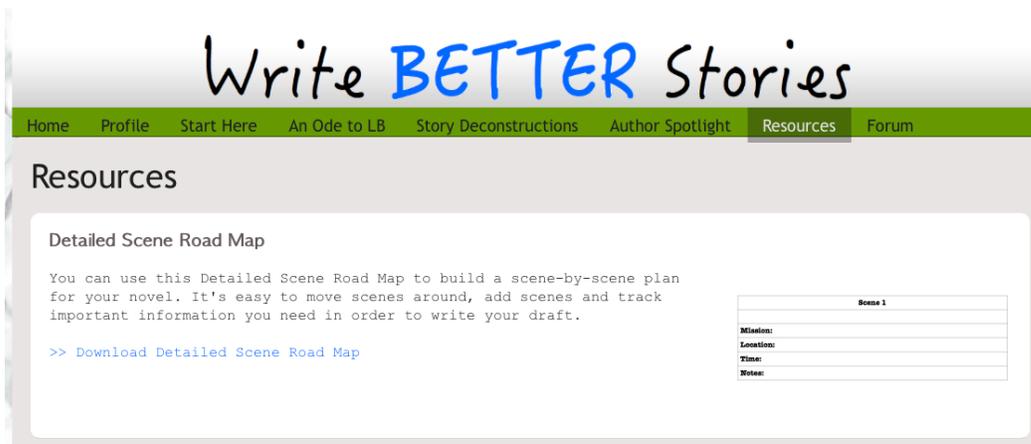
There are three categories of content you’ll find in the Write Better Stories community (other than the Forums):

1. Story Deconstructions

These are in-depth deconstructions of stories from popular movies and books. You’ll find detailed information on how the story is put together, what all of the story structure points are, and how the character arc unfolds.

2. Author Spotlight

These are interviews with published authors, both traditionally published and self published. It’s always insightful to take a look at what works for other writers and how they get their writing done.



The screenshot shows the website header with the title "Write BETTER Stories" in a handwritten font. Below the title is a navigation bar with links: Home, Profile, Start Here, An Ode to LB, Story Deconstructions, Author Spotlight, Resources (highlighted), and Forum. The main content area is titled "Resources" and features a section for "Detailed Scene Road Map". This section includes a paragraph explaining the tool's purpose and a link to download it. To the right of the text is a form for "Scene 1" with fields for Mission, Location, Time, and Notes.

Write BETTER Stories

Home Profile Start Here An Ode to LB Story Deconstructions Author Spotlight Resources Forum

Resources

Detailed Scene Road Map

You can use this Detailed Scene Road Map to build a scene-by-scene plan for your novel. It's easy to move scenes around, add scenes and track important information you need in order to write your draft.

[>> Download Detailed Scene Road Map](#)

Scene 1
Mission:
Location:
Time:
Notes:

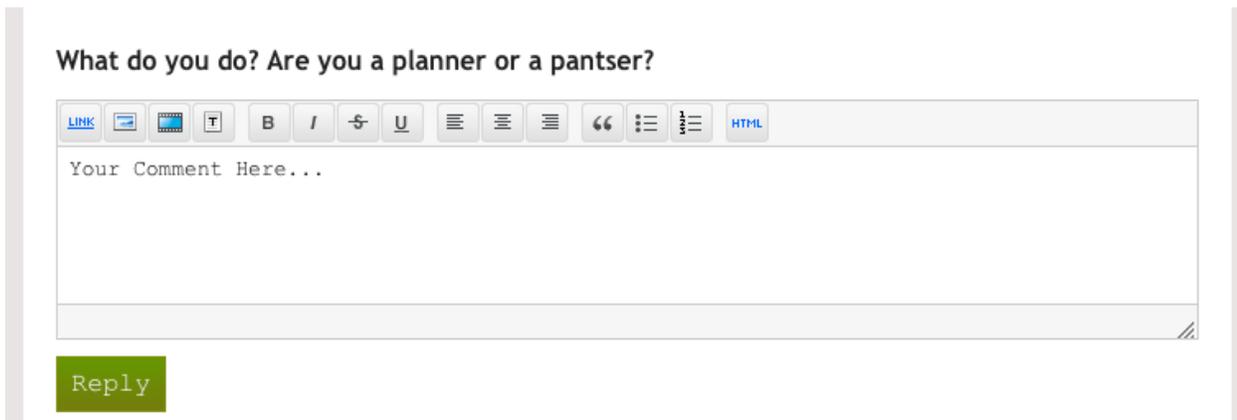
3. Resources

These are worksheets, checklists, videos, etc. that have a mission of helping you tell better stories. Some of them are related to story structure, while others are craft-related.

This content will grow and expand over time as this community does, so check back often. And be sure to download all the content to your computer or Dropbox so that you can have it on-hand for when you're working on your stories.

Bonus—#4: Leave A Comment

Once you've done all that, it's time to explore the Forums and find a discussion to join. Leave a comment and share your thoughts or feedback.



What do you do? Are you a planner or a pantsier?

LINK [Image] [Image] T B / ↺ U [Image] [Image] [Image] “ [Image] [Image] HTML

Your Comment Here...

Reply

The more you participate, the more you'll get out of being part of this community.

Don't be shy!

You have things to learn from the people here, and we have things to learn from you. We're all in this together.

Guidelines For Sharing Your Writing

I created this community to be a safe space for you to share your ideas, your stories and your writing. We're all here because we love writing and we love telling stories.

We're all here to support and uplift each other, which means giving feedback and criticism that's constructive—not hurtful. (We will ban members from the community who don't follow this guideline. Just saying.)

There's a wide range of writers and storytellers in this community, from newbies to professionally published and everything in between. And we all have something to gain from sharing our writing and giving feedback to others.

That being said, here are some basic guidelines to keep in mind when it comes to sharing your writing with the community:

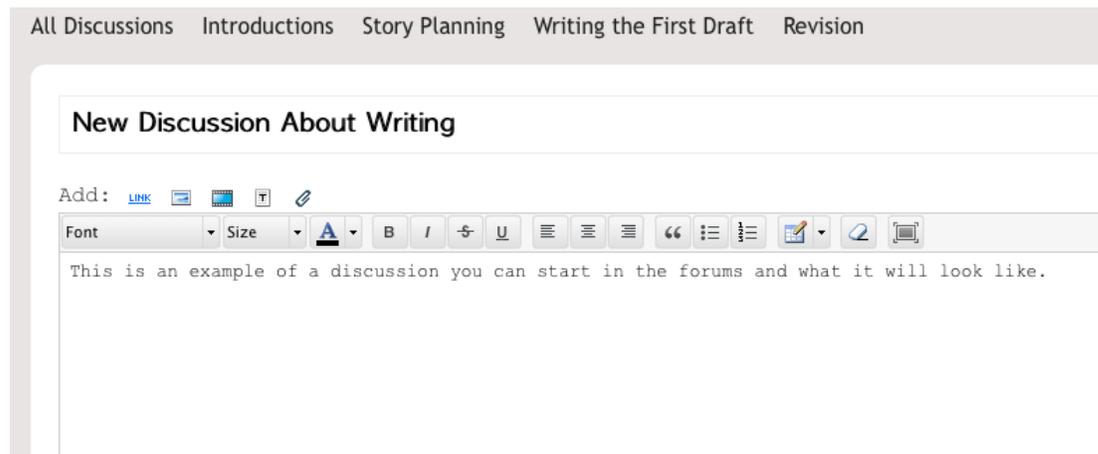
- **Share Up to 10 Pages Of Writing At A Time**—as this community grows, there will be more and more writers sharing their stuff. To make it easier for people to give you feedback, try to only share up to 10 pages of writing at a time.
- **Only Post Your Own Writing**—enough said.
- **Upload Your Document As A PDF**—there are lots of free PDF converters online. You can find them by Googling "[free PDF creator](#)."

How To Get the Most Out of This Community

You'll get the most out of this community by checking in regularly and participating as much as you can. When you're an active member (meaning sharing your writing, commenting and leaving feedback for others), you'll get so much more out of the experience than if you sit back and watch.

Here are some suggestions for how to get the most out of the Write Better Stories Community:

- **Join (Or Create) Conversations In the Forums**—there's so much to talk about! Tell us what you're working on, ask questions relating to story structure or theme, share a link to your favorite writing blog—whatever you want that's writing related. (Just a heads up, when creating a discussion in the Forums, please only choose **one** category to list it in—and we know it asks you to choose one or more, but let's stick to one. If you choose more than one category, we'll pick the best one and remove the others.)



- **Share Your Ideas and Your Writing**—we want to see what you’ve been up to, so share some of it with us.
- **Keep Your Profile Updated**—staying active means keeping us updated on what you’re doing with your writing. We’d love to know!



- **Connect With Others**—in this community you can make friends and find other writers to be your support and accountability buddies. And when you do, you can add them as a friend so that you stay connected to each other. You can also send messages to members of the community (similar to email) if you’d prefer to connect in that way.

Story Structure: Reading Recommendations

Story structure is one of the those key elements that make a story work or fail. And it’s also something many writers know nothing about.

That’s why story structure is the main focus of this story community. When you understand how to structure a story, it changes everything.

To get started on your journey to understanding story structure, here are some articles and books we recommend you read:

The Fundamentals of Story Structure by Larry Brooks (of StoryFix.com)

1. [Just Possibly the Holy Grail of Storytelling](#)
2. [Introducing the Four Parts of Story](#)
3. [Milestones Along the Four-Part Storytelling Road](#)
4. [Five Missions for the Set Up of Your Story](#)
5. [The Most Important Moment In Your Story: the First Plot Point](#)
6. [Part Two of Your Story: the Response](#)
7. [Wrapping Your Head Around the MidPoint Milestone](#)
8. [Part Three: Attack](#)
9. [The Second Plot Point](#)
10. [Pinch Points](#)
11. [Part Four: the Final Act](#)
12. [Epilogue: the Fine Print](#)

And if you want to dive even deeper into how to tell a story that works, you should read Brooks' bestselling writing craft book, [Story Engineering](#), and his follow up, [Story Physics](#).