CREATING A LOOSE AND FLEXIBLE OUTLINE

Presented by creators

This two-part worksheet guides you in creating an adaptable outline based on your protagonist's tangible goal and key plot points. In the first 10-15 minute section, you'll define your character's concrete goal (e.g. marry a rockstar, find a habitable planet). Then, you'll create two lists of events: "Wins" (events that help your character achieve their goal) and "Setbacks" (obstacles or conflicts that push them away from their goal). Aim for at least 3 events in each list, and focus on moments that are dramatic and engaging. Start your timer! Instructions for the next part follow.

PART 1: DEFINING THE CORE

Establish a clearly defined objective for your character (e.g. escape a haunted house).

Main character's (MC) name:	
MC's concrete, tangible goal	

Create two lists with at least 3 events each.
- Wins: Events that move the protagonist closer to their goal
- Setbacks: Obstacles or conflicts that push them further away

Focus on dramatic and engaging moments. Time: 10-15 minutes.

WINS	SETBACKS

Next, organize your two lists of events to resemble a plot. You can use the beginning, middle, and end structure as a guide, but don't be afraid to shuffle your events around until the order feels compelling.

Quick tips:
- The plot should alternate between successes (wins) and failures (setbacks) to maintain high tension and keep the reader engaged.
- Avoid stringing together too many consecutive wins or losses: a well-paced story requires a balance of both.
- Shuffle your events until you discover the most effective and engaging order for your story.
- Feel free to include any new events that come to mind, provided they directly relate to your protagonist's goal.
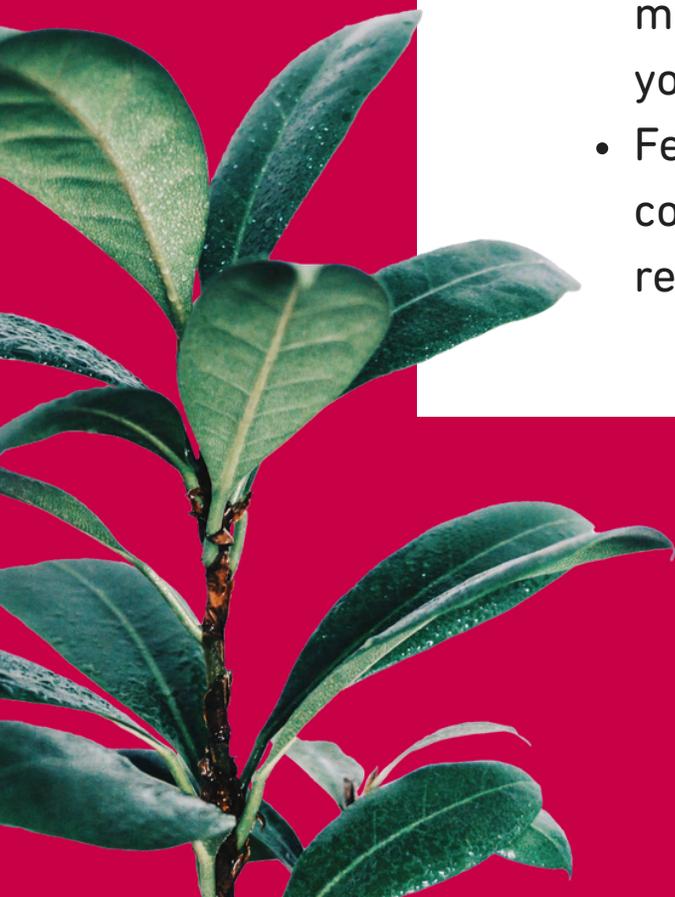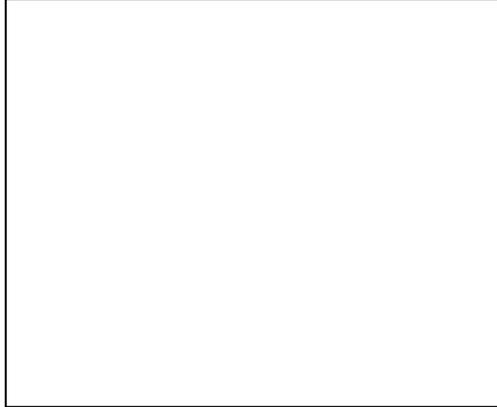
PART 2: STRUCTURING THE PLOT
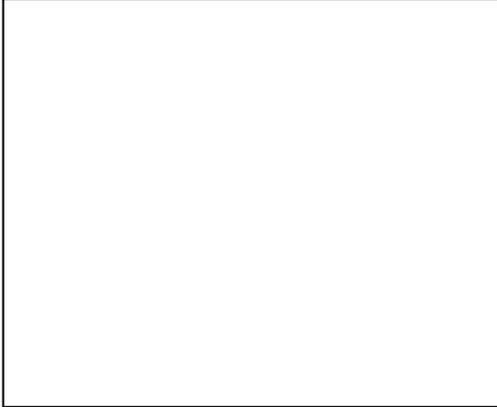
EVENT 1	EVENT 2

EVENT 3	EVENT 4

EVENT 5	EVENT 6

Congratulations! You have completed your Loose and Flexible Outline!

CONNECTING THE EVENTS

Once the events are in a rough order, determine the dramatic significance of each event for the character and the story. Begin connecting the events by outlining the steps needed to get your character from one major event to the next. Remember, the outline will expand as you connect the events, but keep the balance between successes and setbacks in mind to maintain tension. There is no single "right way" to organize your plot; the key is finding the most effective way to tell your story.