

Growing A Novel
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Workshop Outline

There are three rules for writing the novel. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are – Somerset Maugham

You have an idea for a novel. How do you know where to start? Should you plot it out, focus on the structure, develop the characters, or plan your big set-pieces? It is not unusual for an unpublished author to spend two years working on a project only to discover that they have written the entire novel in the wrong voice or from the wrong viewpoint, or that the plot begins halfway through. These are the kind of mistakes we will try and avoid by starting small and slowly building up towards a bigger picture step by step, examining some of the methods used by successful authors along the way. Maugham was only half joking, there are no hard and fast rules which guarantee success, but there are a number of strategies which will make writing a novel seem much more manageable.