

**PLOT WHISPERER Martha Alderson's
PlotWriMo**

REVISE YOUR NOVEL IN A MONTH

with
LITERARY AGENT Jill Corcoran

PlotWriMo invites you to stand back from your words to
view the bigger picture of your story through
plot and design,
concept and scenes.

The following 30 exercises guide you to
take your story apart, analyze what you've written,
brainstorm and revise and then, put your novel back
together for more depth and added meaning in
preparation for an effortless rewrite.

30 REVISION EXERCISES for Videos #1 – 8

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PlotWriMo

REVISE YOUR NOVEL IN A MONTH

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OVERALL STORY LEVEL

Video #1

How to Revise + Concept & Characters

Day 1: ORGANIZATION

Print a hard copy of your manuscript – break into 4 equal parts, chapter headings, no rewriting – start new project

Day 2: STORY CONCEPT

Write a 1 to 2-sentence answer to: "What's your book about?" Rewrite answer another 10 times... getting more specific each time.

Day 3: CHARACTER

Traits: *flaw, strength, love, hate & fear*

- Protagonist(s),
- Antagonist,
- Secondary Characters

Highlight in the hard copy of your manuscript where you introduce the different character traits for the protagonist in the first $\frac{1}{4}$ of the story. Note on the manuscript where to add, expand, cut traits for character consistency.

List all characters, how many characters intro on page #1 and in chapter #1, and the order in which you introduce your secondary characters.

Day 4: STORY TITLES

Free-associate a list of titles

PLOT AND DESIGN LEVEL

Video #2

Transformation + Goals

Day 5: STORY TITLES

Continue listing story titles using metaphors and plays on words and incorporating concept

Day 6: CHARACTERS

Consider the list of characters you created in Video #1 and the order in which they were introduced. Narrow the group to the most important to the overall story. Revise to introduce the characters in order of importance

Day 7: TRANSFORMATION

Write a transformational summary for your protagonist. A sentence or two of who she starts out showing herself to be compared to who she becomes in the end. If your character does not go through an actual transformation, write down the change they experienced, new skills learned, emotional maturity gained

Day 8: GOALS

Identify Character Goals for each main character, including any major antagonists at each major part of the story:

- In the beginning
- Entering the middle of the story
- At the end of the story

Video #3

Concept + Energetic Markers

Day 9: CONCEPT

Give each character an adjective that best describes them + read book jacket descriptions & plot summaries on Amazon for books similar to yours

Day 10: ENERGETIC MARKERS

Read scenes where the post-its are in your manuscript. Locate scenes that satisfy the 4 Energetic Markers

Day 11: PLOT PLANNER

Create a Plot Planner:

- Banner paper
- Giant Post-it Notes
- Painters tape
- On-line

Plot your 4 Energetic Markers on your Plot Planner (Recommitment Scene at the 1/2way mark is missing. Include that as one of the 4 Energetic Markers)

SCENE LEVEL

Video #4


Scenes + Theme

Day 12: SCENE IDENTIFICATION

Mark directly on the hard copy of your manuscript the beginning and end of each of your Energetic Marker scenes. Track those scenes for the following:

- Date and Setting
- Character Emotional Development
- Short-term goal defining the scene
- Action
- Tension or Flat
- Emotional Change within the scene
- Thematic details

Track the rest of the scene beginnings and ends



Project Name:
 Date:
 Draft:

Notes:

Chapter:

Scene/Summary	Time & Setting	Character Emotional Development	Goal	Dramatic/Action	Conflict	Emotional Change	Thematic Significance
Scene #1					<input type="checkbox"/>		
Scene #2					<input type="checkbox"/>		
Scene #3					<input type="checkbox"/>		
Optional					<input type="checkbox"/>		
Optional					<input type="checkbox"/>		

Day 13: THEMES

List themes + begin a statement that conveys the deeper meaning of your story

Day 14: GOALS

Identify what the character stands to lose at each goal declaration in each major part of the story:

Day 15: ANTAGONISTS

Study the force of the antagonist in relationship to the power of the protagonist and then revise your antagonists to create greater tension and excitement

Video #5**The Climax****Day 16: CLIMAX**

Identify the:

- Scenes where the protagonist prepares for the Climax
- Scenes where protagonist moves forward in anticipation of the final confrontation
- Scenes showing the big event
- Scene showing her reaction to what happened

If you haven't already, track the scenes that lead up to the Climax, Climax and scene after the Climax for the following:

- Date and Setting
- Character Emotional Development
- Short-term goal defining the scene
- Action
- Tension or Flat
- Emotional Change within the scene
- Thematic details

Day 17: PLOT LINES

In the scenes you identified and tracked in Day 16, revise the Character Emotional Development and Action and Thematic details to better link together the three major plot lines of your story

Day 18: ANTAGONIST

Rewrite the Climax scenes (preparation, anticipation, big event, reaction) from the antagonist's point of view. Then rewrite again from the protagonist point of view.

Video #6**Beginning and End****Day 19: BEGINNING**

Read 1st pages & chapters of books in your genre for manuscript voice & where story starts. Compare to your manuscript voice & your story beginning

Day 20: CHARACTER TRAITS

- From Video #5 exercise writing the Climax from several POVs, mark, analyze & list character traits, abilities, skills & beliefs needed at Climax.
- Mark page one to the End of the Beginning scene – the 1st quarter of your manuscript – abilities, skills & beliefs she shows
- Compare beginning character to her Climax. Determine character arc
- Make those missing in the beginning
- Check for character consistency

Day 21: THEMATIC & SENSORY DETAILS

Make notes on the 1st (1/4) of your manuscript for thematic & sensory details to develop in the beginning to compliment and foreshadow the end

Day 22: CAUSE & EFFECT

Identify cause & effect in your manuscript scenes, where one scene directly causes what happens in the next scene. Where scenes do not follow each other through cause & effect, mark and make notes how to improve transitions

Day 23: ANTAGONIST

Using the homework you did in Video #4 with developing stronger antagonists, now look where those antagonists show up in scene for ways to make the interaction more impactful with external dramatic action

Video #7**Manuscript Voice + Character & Action****Day 24: Manuscript Voice**

Share 3 chapters in your Manuscript Voice with your critique partners for feedback about:

- Tone
- Characters
- Setting
- Concept
- Freshness
- Uniqueness

Day #25: Transformational Journey

Track your protagonist's transformational journey. If you have more than one view-point character, track that character's transformational journey

Day #26: Backstory Wound

Determine if your character has a traumatic wound to heal at the core of the entire story

Day #27: Subplots and Theme

- List major subplots in the middle of your story
- Determine what they add to the deeper meaning
- Note in your manuscript how to tie subplots thematically to primary plot

Day #28: Crisis

- Rewrite Crisis from antagonist's point-of-view as their climax
- Rewrite again as Crisis from protagonist's point-of-view

WORD LEVEL

Video #8**First Pages + Final Test****Day 29: Every Word Perfect**

Replace over-used words & adverbs stronger, more specific words & verbs

Cut info dumps

Vary sentence structure

Search dialog, words between quotation marks ONLY, for:

- Authenticity of character
- Move the story forward?
- How each character's goal for the dialog conflicts with the other character's goals and needs

Day #30: Prepare for Rewrite

- If you don't have one already, create a space devoted to your writing.
- Organize & purge space of everything other than your manuscript & notes by chapter or added to your Plot Planner.
- Hang Plot Planner for easy viewing with extra sticky notes & pen
- Set a goal & mark a writing schedule on your calendar
- Re-read your story as many times as you need to make sure you have all your notes & ideas incorporated for the rewrite

Day #31: Rewrite

Begin rewriting starting at Scene #1 and write all the way to the end before going back and starting again – 1 complete full cycle from beginning to end

(For additional plot support:

- *The Plot Whisperer: Secrets of Story Structure Any Writer Can Master*
- *The Plot Whisperer Workbook: Step-by-Step Exercises to Help You Create Compelling Stories*
- *The Plot Whisperer Book of Writing Prompts: Easy Exercises to Get You Writing)*

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