ACTIVITY 1: CONFLICT

1. A short story is about a conflict/problem that your character faces. What is your character’s goal? What does your character want/desire/aspire to?

2. What is the obstacle preventing your character from achieving their goal? Why are they not able to get what they want/desire/aspire to?

3. When did this conflict/problem first begin for your character? Why is did it occur? How does your character feel about it?

4. When writing a short story you need to build the suspense so that reader is curious as to how the character will resolve his/her conflict. What steps does your character take to overcome the obstacle to achieving their goal? List three possibilities.

5. Now imagine that none of these actions help resolve the problem. For each possibility list a reason why the problem wasn’t resolved.

*Congratulations. You have now developed the plot of your short story.*

6. Pick one of the steps your character takes to resolve the conflict. Now write a scene in your character’s point of view where they are attempting to achieve their goal, but are prevented from doing so. Don’t forget to use the five senses (smell, sight, taste, touch, hearing).

ACTIVITY 2: STORY STRUCTURE

Now you have your conflict/problem you need to develop a plot to your story. Structure your plot using the 5 essential parts of a story:

* + **Introduction** - The beginning of the story where the characters and the setting is revealed.
  + **Rising Action** - This is where the events in the story become complicated and the conflict in the story is revealed (events between the introduction and climax).
  + **Climax** - This is the highest point of interest and the turning point of the story.  The reader wonders what will happen next; will the conflict be resolved or not?
  + **Falling action** - The events and complications begin to resolve themselves.  The reader knows what has happened next and if the conflict was resolved or not (events between climax and resolution).
  + **Resolution** - This is the final outcome or untangling of events in the story.

ACTIVITY 3: BEGINNINGS

A short story begins close to the conclusion. Start the story at the point where your character encounters the conflict/problem. Where are they? What are they doing? What are they feeling? What are they thinking? Use as many descriptive words as you can.

ACTIVITY 4: ENDINGS:

Now let’s jump to the ending. Your ending must tie up loose ends and answer any unanswered questions in the story. Writing the ending is also as important as your opening. So, you need to write an ending that resonates in the mind of the reader and that answers the central conflict of the story.

ACTIVITY 5: WRITING YOUR STORY

Now put it all together. Make sure that you:

1. Tell your story from the point of view of your central character and stay in their point of view for the whole story.

2. Introduce your problem/conflict early on, within the first paragraph or two.

3. Build the suspense so that the reader wonders how the character will resolve his/her conflict.

4. Resolve the conflict at the end of the story in a way that is satisfying for the reader.