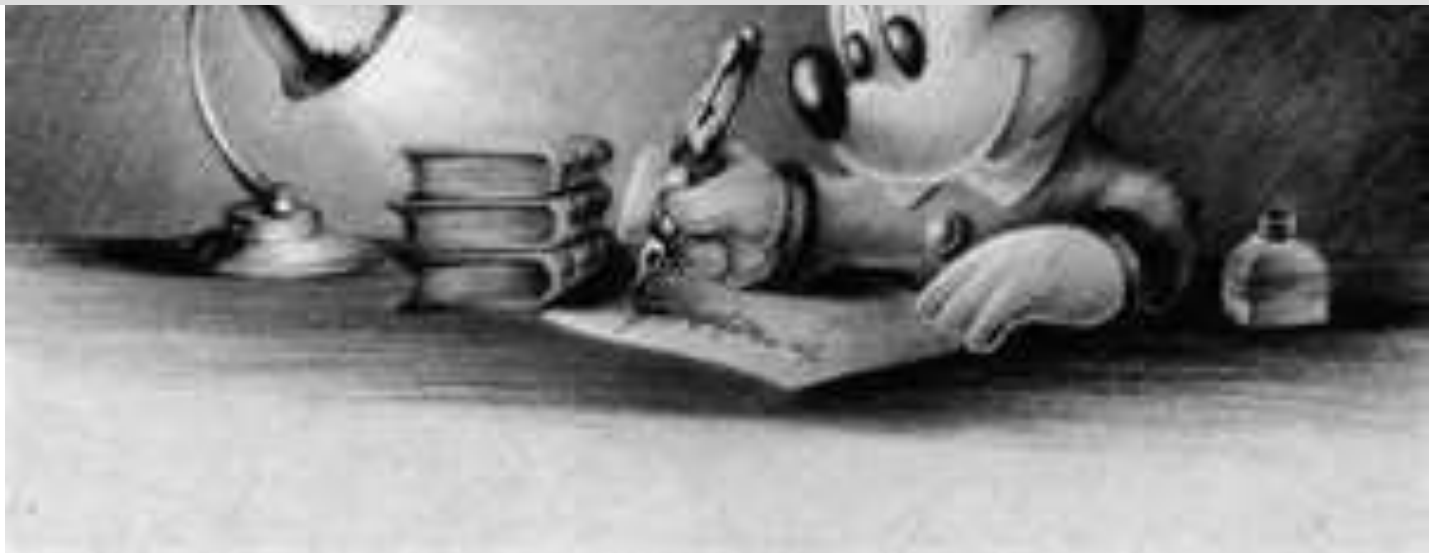


SHORT STORY WRITING



Short Story Introduction

- **The short story is a very specific genre with very specific criteria**
 - It follows the plot curve.
 - It is meant to be read in one sitting → 30 minutes to 1 hour.
 - It has one main character and one main conflict



Short Story Writing Tips

- Get the reader hooked IMMEDIATELY!
You don't have a lot of pages for background and introduction like you would in a novel.
- Try focusing on a specific time in your main character's life instead of his/her entire life.
- If a line or piece of dialogue is not developing your character or pushing your plot forward, leave it out!

The Basic Outline

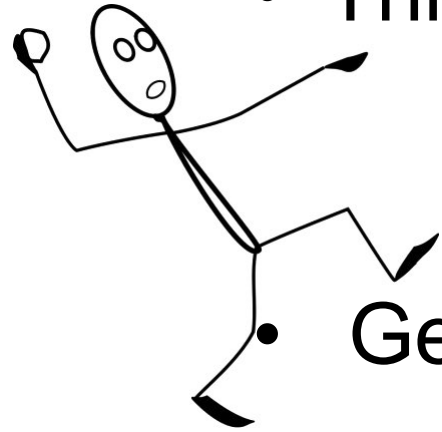
- Put a man up a tree
 - Start with a clear situation – a problem your protagonist must get resolved

- Throw stones at him

- Show the problems, make them worse, show misunderstandings, lost opportunities, catastrophes, etc.

- Get him down

- Solve the conflict in some way: happy, sad, surprising, etc

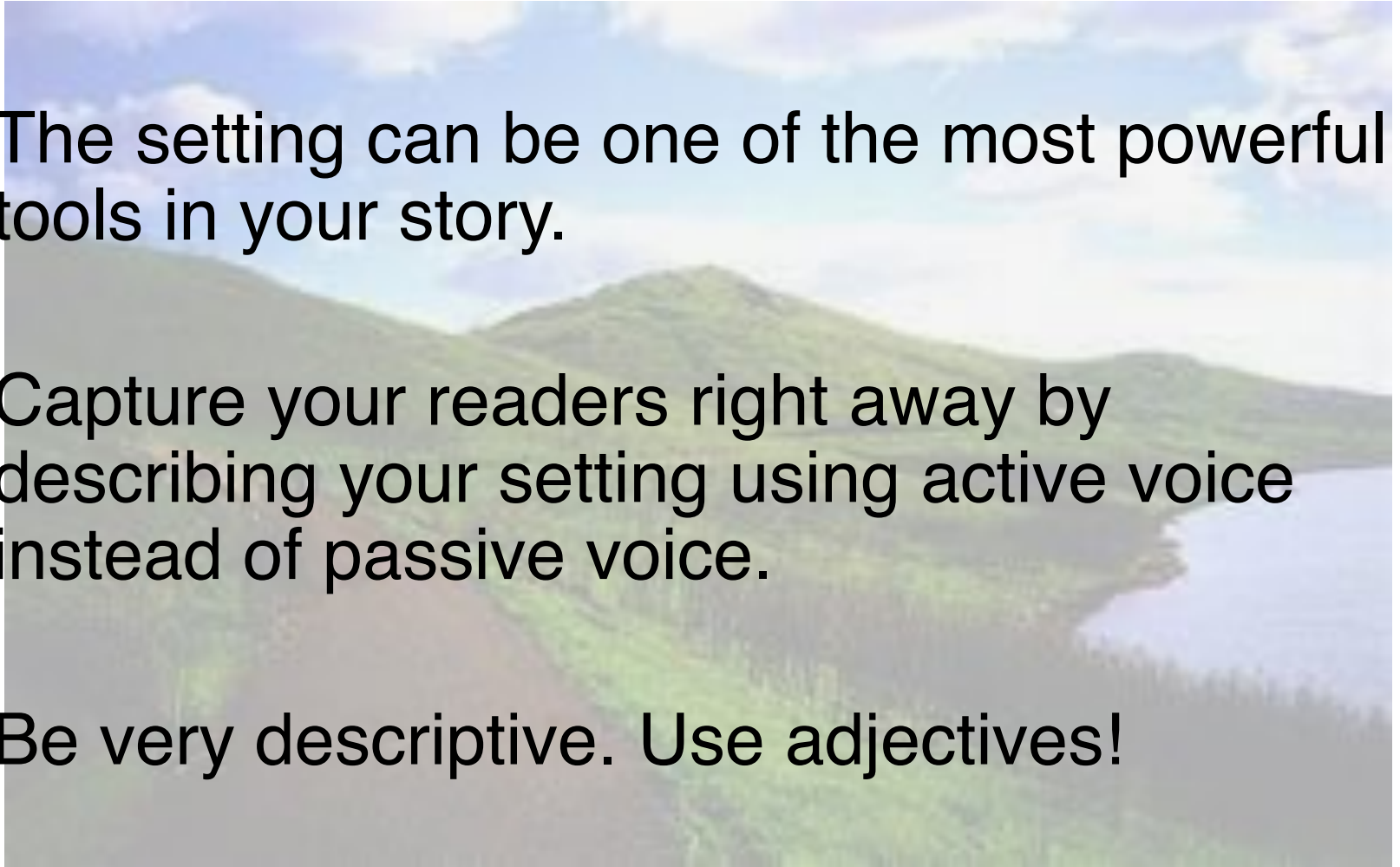


Creating Characters

- Before you begin writing, create a character sketch for your main characters (most importantly your protagonist & your antagonist)
- Include the following in your sketch:
 - Name
 - Age
 - Height
 - Eye color
 - Hair color
 - What is the character's major goal?
 - Why is this goal so important to the character?
 - Are there any events in the character's past that affect the significance of this goal/have influenced this goal?
 - Describe your character's life till now, motivations, family situation, pet peeves, typical day, vices, nickname, strengths, weaknesses.

Set the Scene

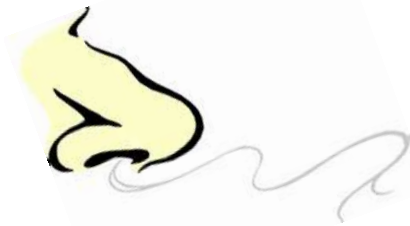
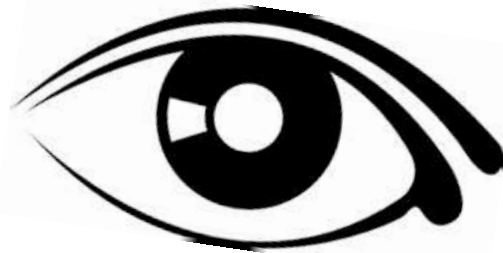
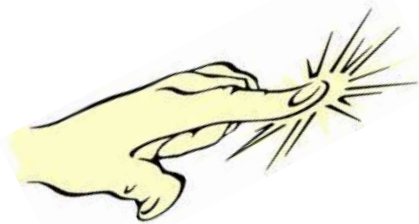
- The setting can be one of the most powerful tools in your story.
- Capture your readers right away by describing your setting using active voice instead of passive voice.
- Be very descriptive. Use adjectives!



Take a sensory approach

Directions: describe the following areas using all five of your senses

- Kitchen
- Times Square
- The Beach
- A Train



Define your Point of View?

- **1st person**: told by the main character from an “I” perspective.
 - “Unites narrator and reader through a series of secrets” when they enter one character’s perceptions. However, it can “lead to telling” and limits readers connections to other characters in the short story.
- **3rd person**: told by one “on-looking” character from the “he,” “she,” “it” perspective.
 - “Offers the intimacy of one character’s perception.” However, the reader must deal with the “character’s absence from particular scenes.”