

Chicken Scratch Books



Connecting Writing Elements

The Choices your main character makes need to be directly linked to their layers of Motive which need to be directly connected to the Theme you want your reader to understand.

1. Choices

- Instinctual choices are made based on personality, history, and risk tolerance. List a few of your protagonist's instinctual choice tendencies here:
 - _____
- Conscious choices are driven by their layers of motive. Look at your turning point scenes. Do the conscious, plot-driving choices being made connect to a clear motive?

2. Layers of Motive

- The most surface/shallow motivator is the Desire. What does your main character want to accomplish? List this Desire: _____
 - Are their conscious choices stemming from this Desire?
- The next layer of motive that drives your protagonist for most of the book is the Think Need. This is what they think they need to solve their problems. What do they think they need?

 - Are their conscious choices stemming from this Think Need?
 - Do they stay committed to this Think Need through change and failure?
 - Does it drive them to try new ways to solve their problem?
 - This Think Need will never completely solve their problem. Don't let it.
- The deepest motivator of all—one that the protagonist often doesn't even know about until near the end of their story—is the Root of All Needs. This is the motive that *really* will solve their problem. Maybe not the external conflict, but at least the internal conflict has a level of resolution when this motive is realized and acted upon. What is the root of all their needs?

3. Theme

- Typically just before the climax, your protagonist will learn what this Root of All Needs is. As they learn this, or at least get a glimpse of it, they change. This new understanding of themselves and their world—brought about by their choices—is the new guiding force to solve their problem.
- What they learn, the reader also learns. This is where Theme comes in.
- What do you want your reader to learn from your protagonist's journey?

 - How does this Theme connect to your main character's Root of All Needs?
 - Do the choices they consciously make (driven by their layers of motive) represent this theme?