



## RAIDER WRITING MONTH 2012

Workshops and Write-Ins  
Oakton Community College

### WORKSHOP #4: PANNING FOR PLOTS

*Tu 10/30: 1:30 to 2:15 PM, Oakton Community College Library Classroom 2418*

This workshop takes a spin on a chapter from Chris Baty's book, *No Plot, No Problem!*. We'll do a bit of thinking about our plots as the count down to the frenzy comes to a close!

### TWO MORE DAYS!

I'm so happy that you're planning to join the RaiderWriMos this year. We hope you'll join us for our kickoff party/write-in this Thursday!

- Plan to join us next week for **Kickoff Party/Write-In**
  - Th 11/1: 10:00-11:00 AM and 1:30-3:00 PM, Oakton Community College Library Classroom 2418

### FOR MORE INFORMATION . . .

OCC's NaNo Guide: <http://researchguides.oakton.edu/nanowrimo>

Lori Oster's RaiderWriMo page:

<http://www.oakton.edu/user/0/loster/RaiderWriMo.html>

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## ON PLOTS

Your plot is simply the movement of your characters throughout the book. If you have characters, you have a plot! This is good news, right, because you already have characters. Right?!

Just a reminder: It is OKAY to jump into the frenzy on Thursday with absolutely no plans whatsoever for your novel. Some people are plotters, and some are . . . not. And sometimes, people do so much planning that they find it hard to actually *write* when the time comes. It's all about doing what's best for you. After all, as Chris Baty says: No plot? No problem!

## PERCOLATE THAT PLOT!

Not sure what, exactly, your characters will be doing in your book? If you want to do some plotting before you actually start writing, Chris Baty (95) suggests considering the following:

1. Can someone in your story get fired?
2. Can a relationship or marriage implode?
3. Can someone get a disease?
4. Can someone die?
5. Can an unexpected windfall occur?
6. Can someone be wronged, and set out to exact vengeance?
7. Can someone find a precocious or unusual object?
8. Can your character set off on an impossible quest or journey?
9. Can someone become something they're not?
10. Can someone fall in love with someone who is off-limits or wildly inappropriate?
11. Can your character be mistaken for someone else?

Do these sound familiar? That's probably because almost every movie or story you've ever read has been driven by one of these situations.

Does this fact bring you down? Don't let it! Remember, the difference between an unputdownable story and a not-so-great one isn't the plot, it's the manner in which the story is told. So worry less about developing a unique plot, and more about creative execution.

## USE THE WHAT-IFS

I've found all of my story plots by asking *What if?* Half of the plot for my YA series came to me after I read an article in *Scientific American* that prompted a big what-if. The other half came to me as a child, when I observed a character trait in my sister and asked another big what-if. Don't underestimate the power of what-ifs when it comes to plotting.

## ASK AROUND

Now that you're a member of a writing community, ask around and see what has inspired your fellow writers' plots. My guess is you'll receive answers that surprise you!