Cradle to Grave Novel Planning 2016

Before you start—plan the project

Define the work

Genre	
Book (60,000) /Novella (10,000-60,000)/Short Story (<7,500)	
Concept (topic sentence, 15 words or less)	
Team or solo? Writing ally if solo, define roles if team	
Will you outline or not? How detailed?	

Set your timeline

How much time do you want to devote planning? (Worksheets for characters, plot, etc.)	
Is the publication deadline set in stone? (If so, plan backwards from deadline)	
Who is timeline dependent on?	
Team: editor, beta readers, cover artist, agent, publisher	

Task	Plan	Write	Edit	Finish
Time				

Set your budget (ballpark)

- How much are you willing to spend? Shorter time frames = more cost
- Self-published or traditional?
- Cost of research, printing, promotional items

Task	Research	Edit	Cover	Format	Marketing	Printing
Cost						

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Doing the research and world-building

- Accurate research if alt-history or nonfiction
- World-building: consistency
- Legal issues: copyright/trademark issues, title and concept check for too similar, citations/quotations

During the writing process

Benchmarks	
Daily word count goal?	
Set amount of daily writing time	
Set time to finish each chapter/scene/part	
First draft	

I'm done! No, you're not. What should you be doing?

- Read out loud to yourself
- Print in different font and read it backwards, one sentence at a time (after completing each chapter and after finishing draft)
- Fix all those errors: continuity, typos, punctuation, problems with voicing, character inconsistencies, echo words (word frequency analysis)
- Contact editor(s), beta readers, cover artist

Benchmarks

- Revised draft ready for editor
- Beta version (Espresso Book Machine)

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Now I'm really done, right? No, you're not: what should you do while the editor is editing and the beta readers are reading?

	Research covers: how will you stand out while staying consistent within your genre?
	Research book pricing: how much do comparable books cost?
	Decide on publishing venue (if self-pub) or agent (if trad)
	Research interior text formatting: professional or self?
	Prepare query letter if going to agent (publisher will take over)
	Write back cover copy and summary for promo
	Write your author bio
	Get your cover designed
	Do you want your cover designer to create promo materials? Web banners, etc.
	Create promotional materials and preview
	Create your author web site & buy domain name
	Decide on your social media platform
	ISBN: purchase or CreateSpace assigned?
	Register copyright?
	Set up your sales/expenses spreadsheet

Benchmarks

- o Cover completed
- o Media presence established

Revisions, revisions

- Incorporate changes / suggestions from beta readers / editors
- Send to formatter or do it yourself

Benchmarks

- o Final draft
- o Formatted draft

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Put it to bed! Your self-published novel

	Upload your book, including cover, to publisher • For printed copies: CreateSpace, Ingram Spark, BookBaby, Blurb, Vook • For e-books: KindleDirect, Kobo, Smashwords, Lulu, iBooks, BookBaby, Nook
	Order your printed copies
	Send out Advance Review Copies (ARCs), if desired
	Print marketing materials (include ARC comments if you get any)

Benchmarks

  o *I HAVE A BOOK! I'm done!*

No, you're not. Don't forget: you still need to sell this book, right?

- Set up your book signings, your press kit
- Go to conventions and sell your books
- Accounting for your book sales: taxes?!

Okay, now I'm really, really done, right? No, you're not, it's time to start your new book!