Genealogical Crime Mystery

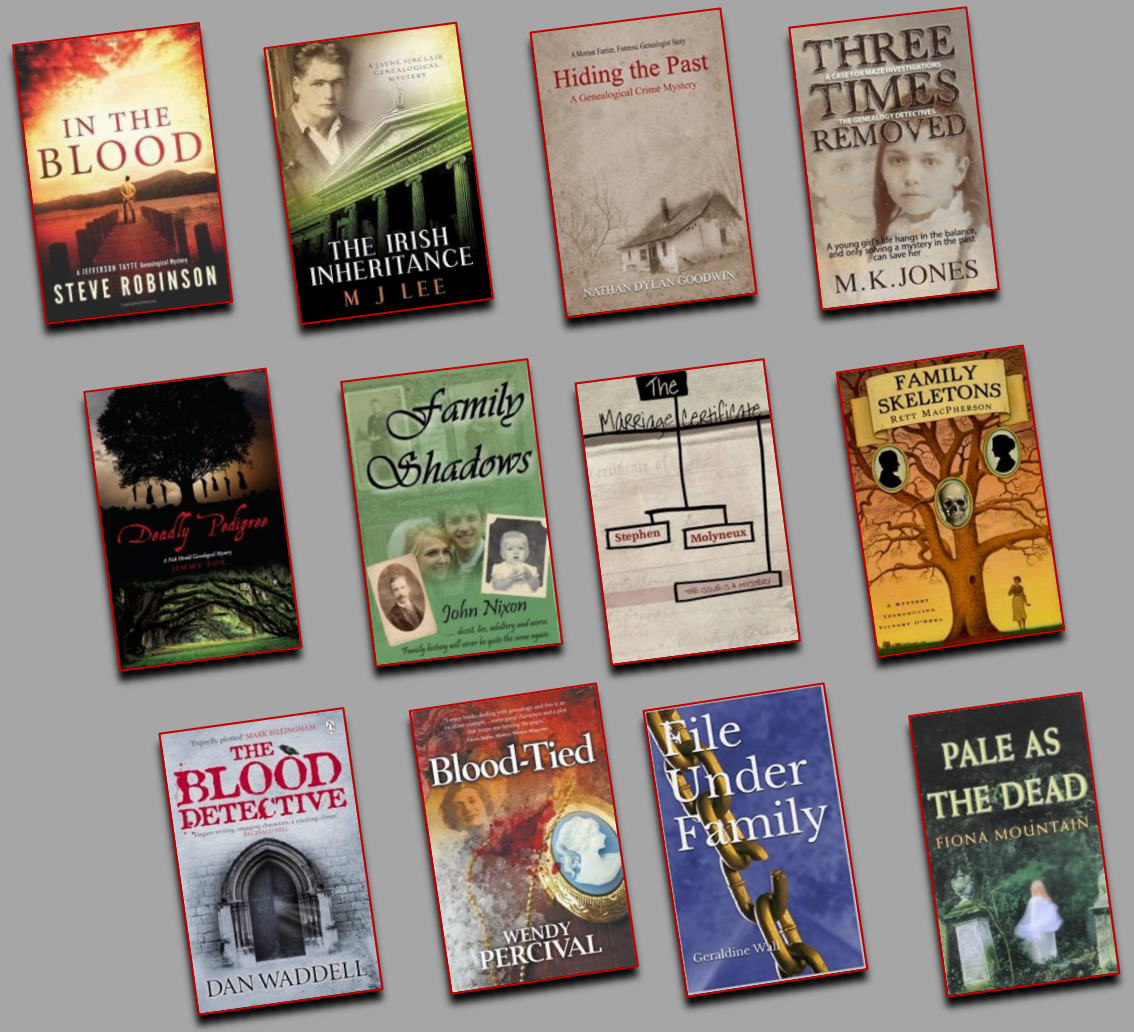
Creative Writing Course

Session overview

Week 7 – Writing, Editing & Publishing your story

- **Reminder of previous weeks' learning**
- **Formatting & editing**
- **Publishing**
- **Information on final submission**

Your final manuscript...



- Adoption
- Illegitimate children
- Fake identity
- Missing person / artifact / treasure
- Concealed criminal activity – often murder

Most genealogical crime mysteries boil down to this central theme:

Family secrets & hidden pasts

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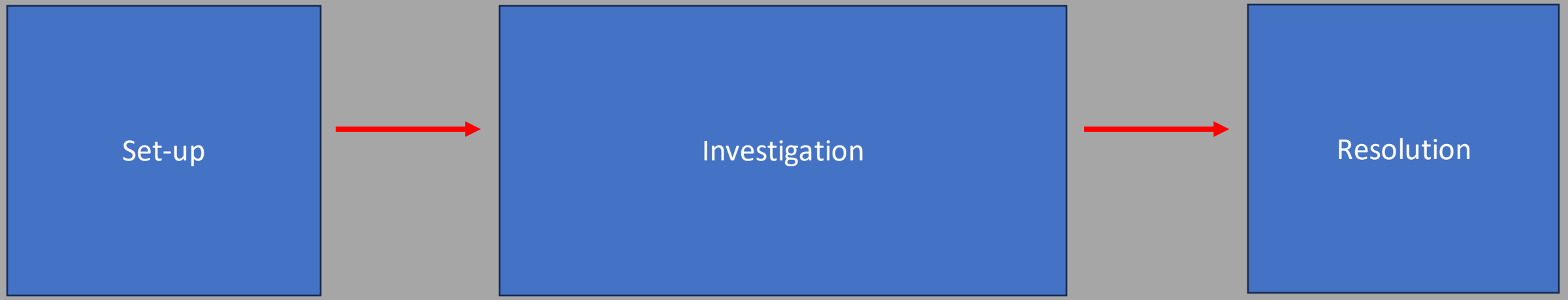

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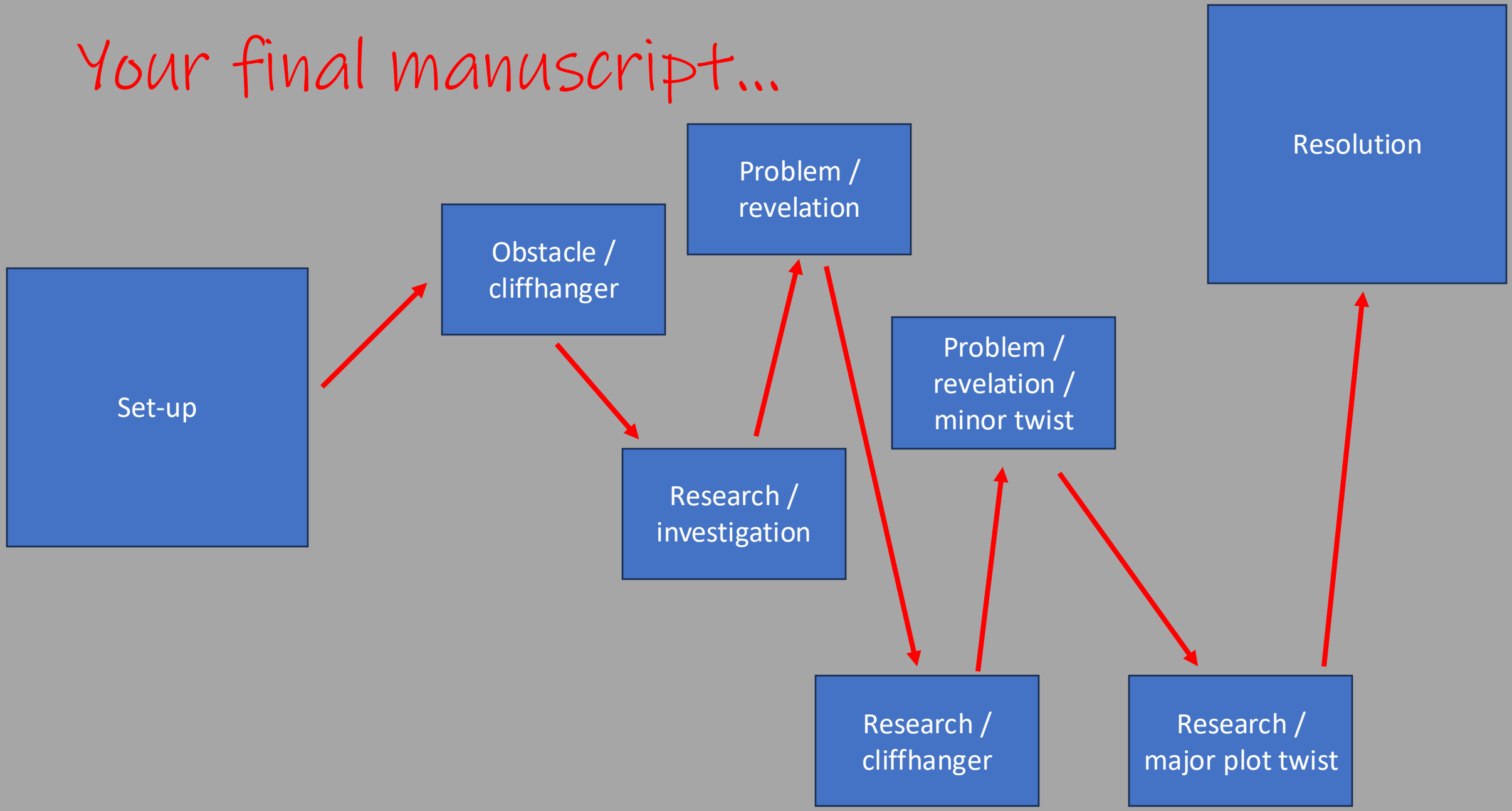

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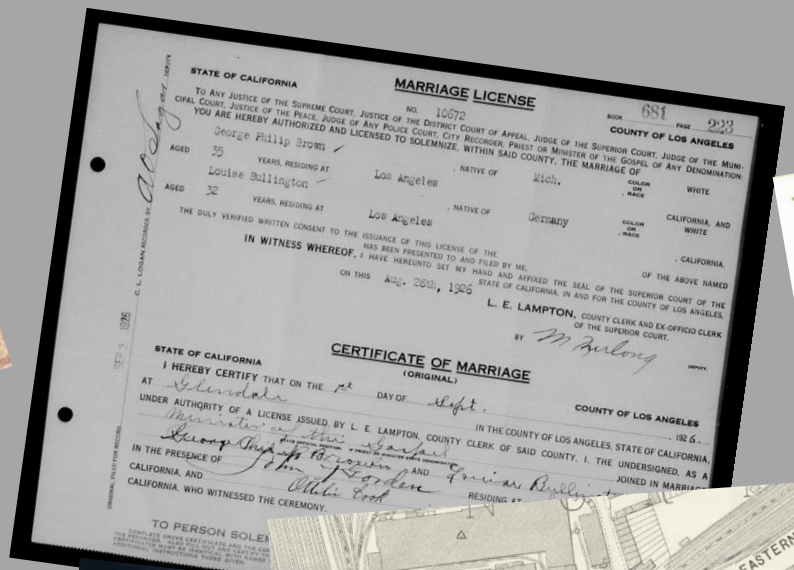
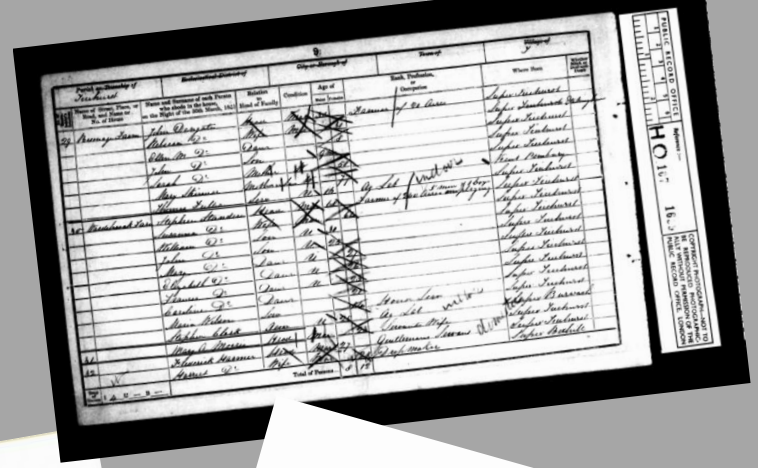
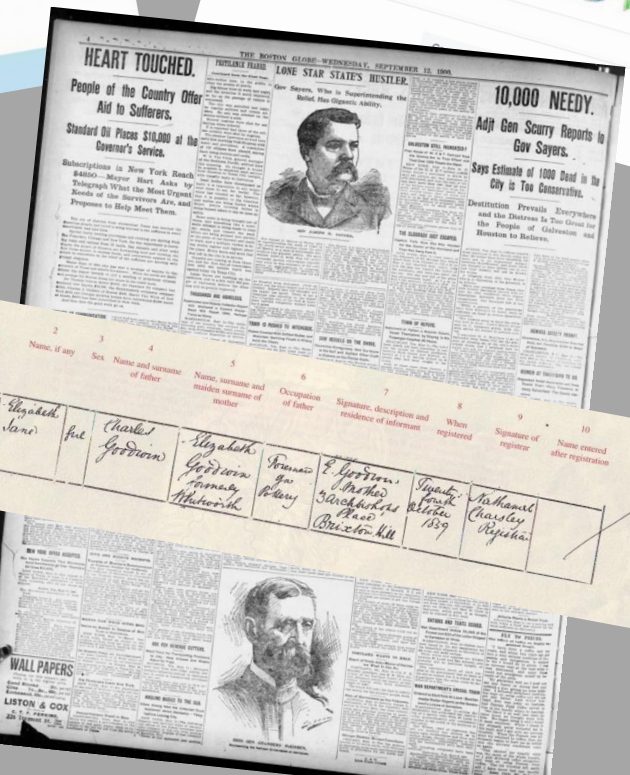
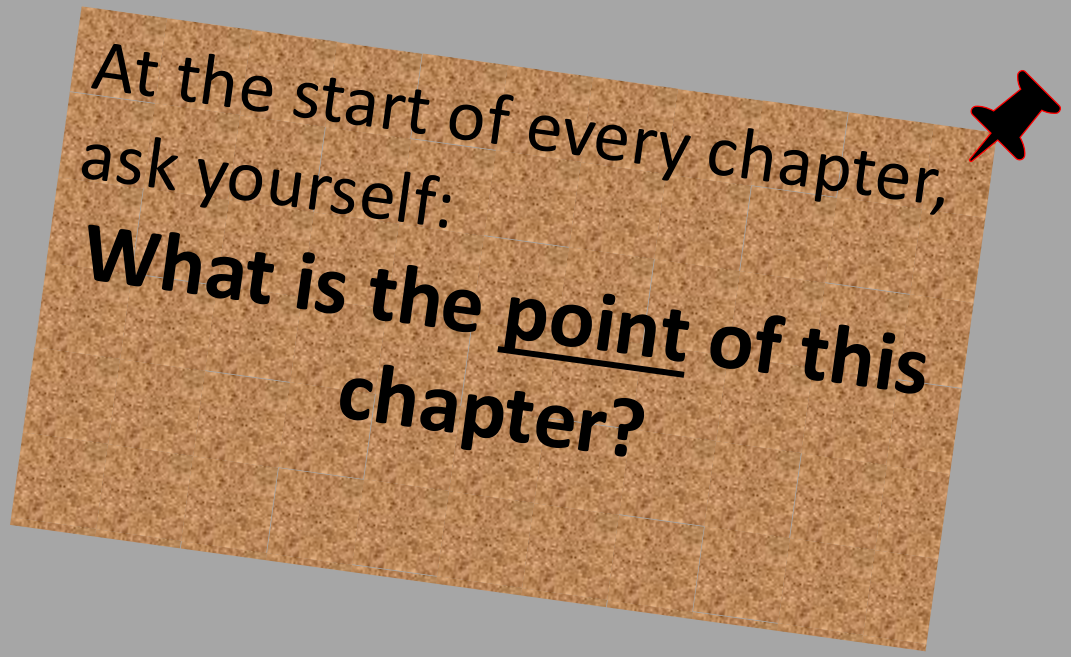






Your final manuscript...

- **You're going to achieve this by (usually) switching between two timelines.**
- **Past / present or past past / present present or in a way which works for you**
- **<u>Modern narrative is usually driven forwards by the main genealogist character conducting genealogical research</u>**
- **<u>Past narrative is usually driven forwards by the characters and their story (tied around the central themes)</u>**

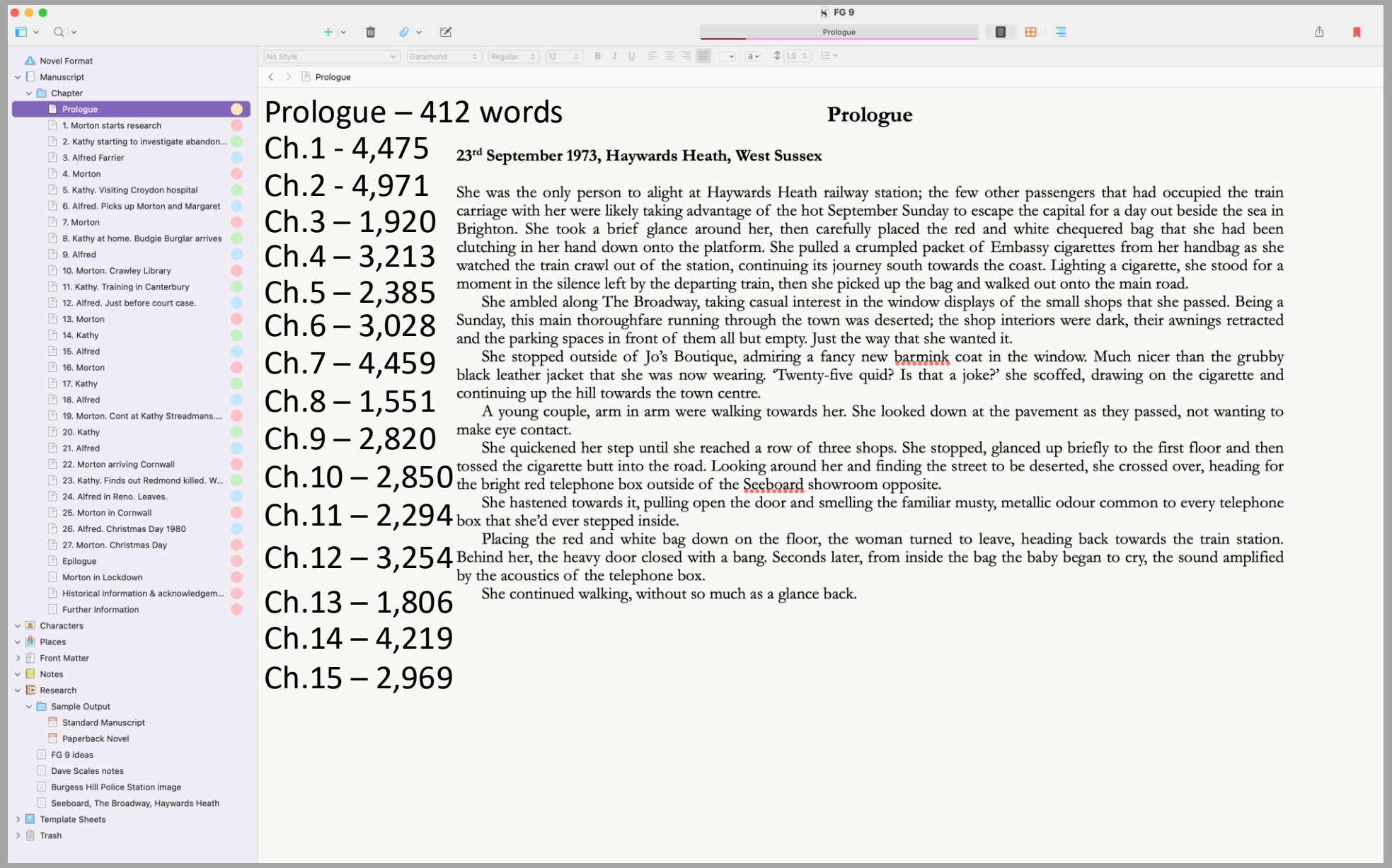


Your final manuscript...

Your final manuscript...

Your final manuscript... Show don't tell!

Chapter lengths…



Book lengths…

Hiding the Past: 84,000

The Lost Ancestor: 100,000

The Orange Lilies (novella): 39,000

The America Ground: 95,000

The Spyglass File: 106,000

The Missing Man (novella): 49,000

The Suffragette's Secret (short): 35,000

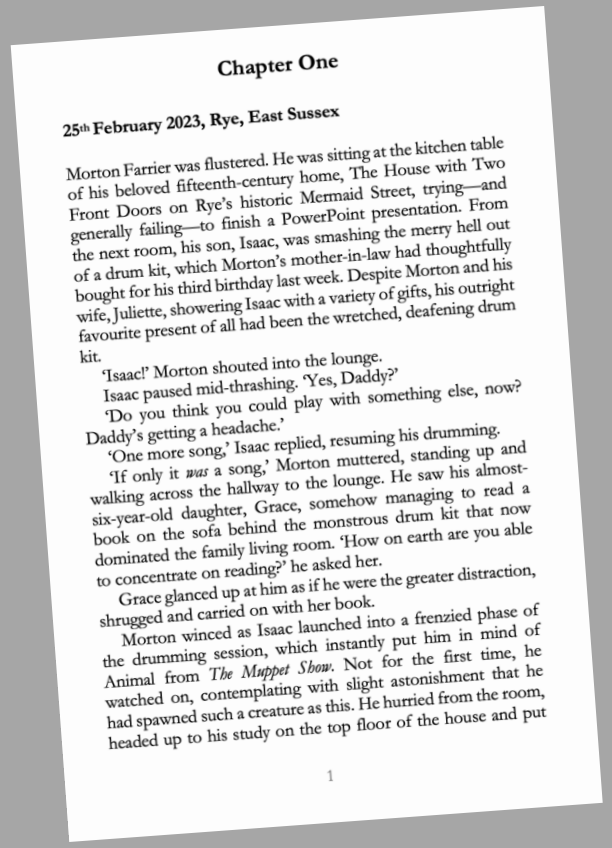
The Wicked Trade: 110,000

The Sterling Affair: 140,000

The Foundlings: 87,000

The Deserter's Tale (novella): 40,000

Your final manuscript...



Chapter One

25th February 2023, Rye, East Sussex

Morton Farrier was flustered. He was sitting at the kitchen table of his beloved fifteenth-century home, The House with Two Front Doors on Rye's historic Mermaid Street, trying—and generally failing—to finish a PowerPoint presentation. From the next room, his son, Isaac, was smashing the merry hell out of a drum kit, which Morton's mother-in-law had thoughtfully bought for his third birthday last week. Despite Morton and his wife, Juliette, showering Isaac with a variety of gifts, his outright favourite present of all had been the wretched, deafening drum kit.

'Isaac!' Morton shouted into the lounge.

Isaac paused mid-thrashing. 'Yes, Daddy?'

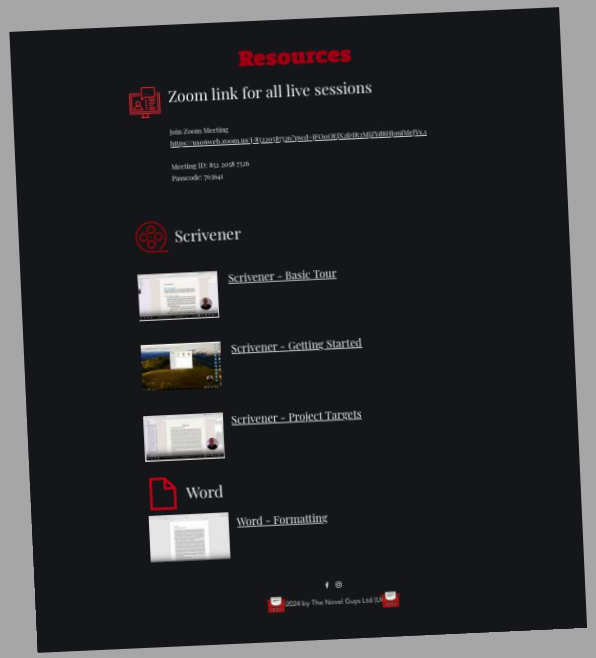
'Do you think you could play with something else, now? Daddy's getting a headache.'

'One more song,' Isaac replied, resuming his drumming.

'If only it *was* a song,' Morton muttered, standing up and walking across the hallway to the lounge. He saw his almost-six-year-old daughter, Grace, somehow managing to read a book on the sofa behind the monstrous drum kit that now dominated the family living room. 'How on earth are you able to concentrate on reading?' he asked her.

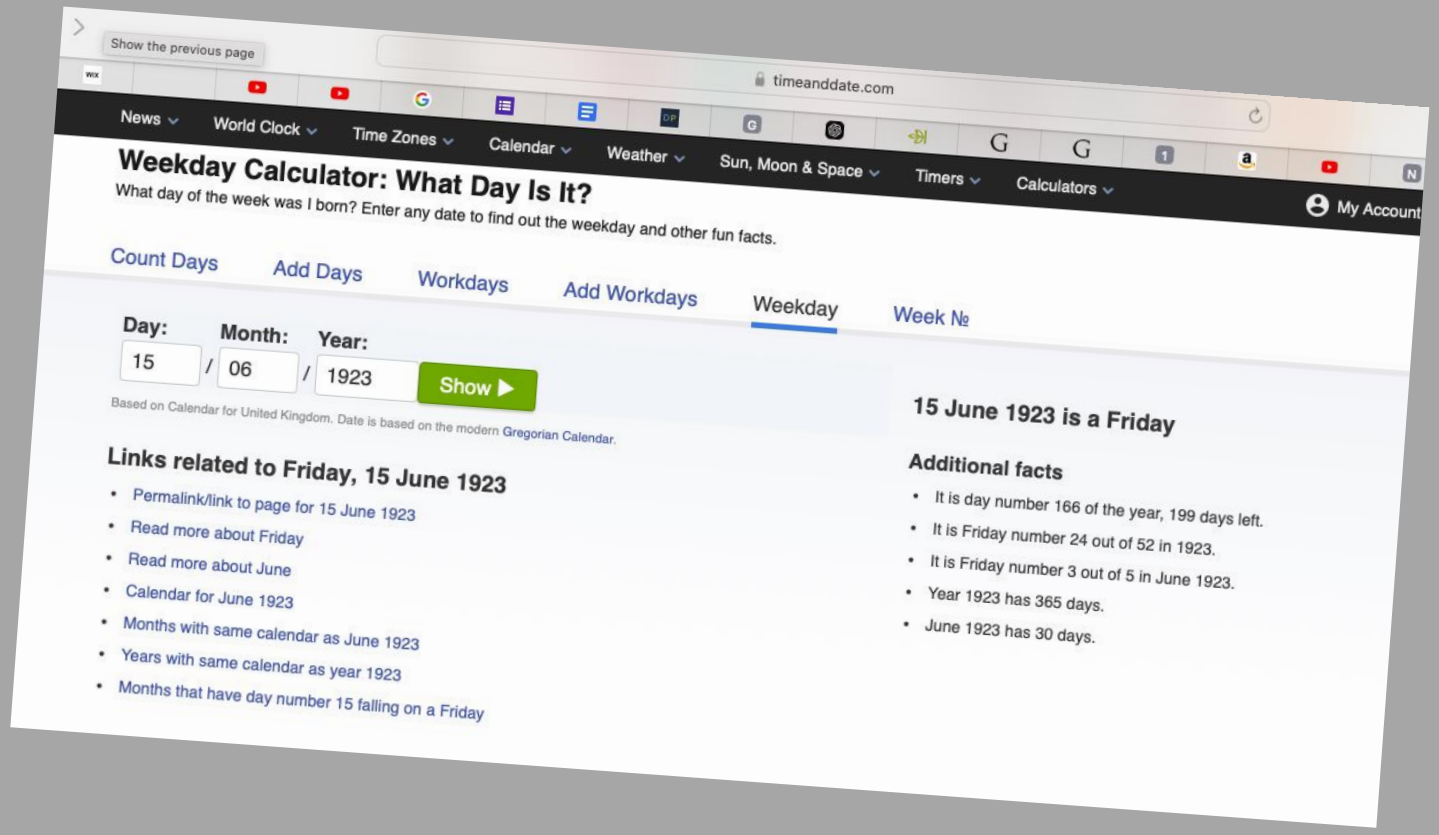
Grace glanced up at him as if he were the greater distraction, shrugged and carried on with her book.

Morton winced as Isaac launched into a frenzied phase of the drumming session, which instantly put him in mind of Animal from *The Muppet Show*. Not for the first time, he watched on, contemplating with slight astonishment that he had spawned such a creature as this. He hurried from the room, headed up to his study on the top floor of the house and put



Your final manuscript...

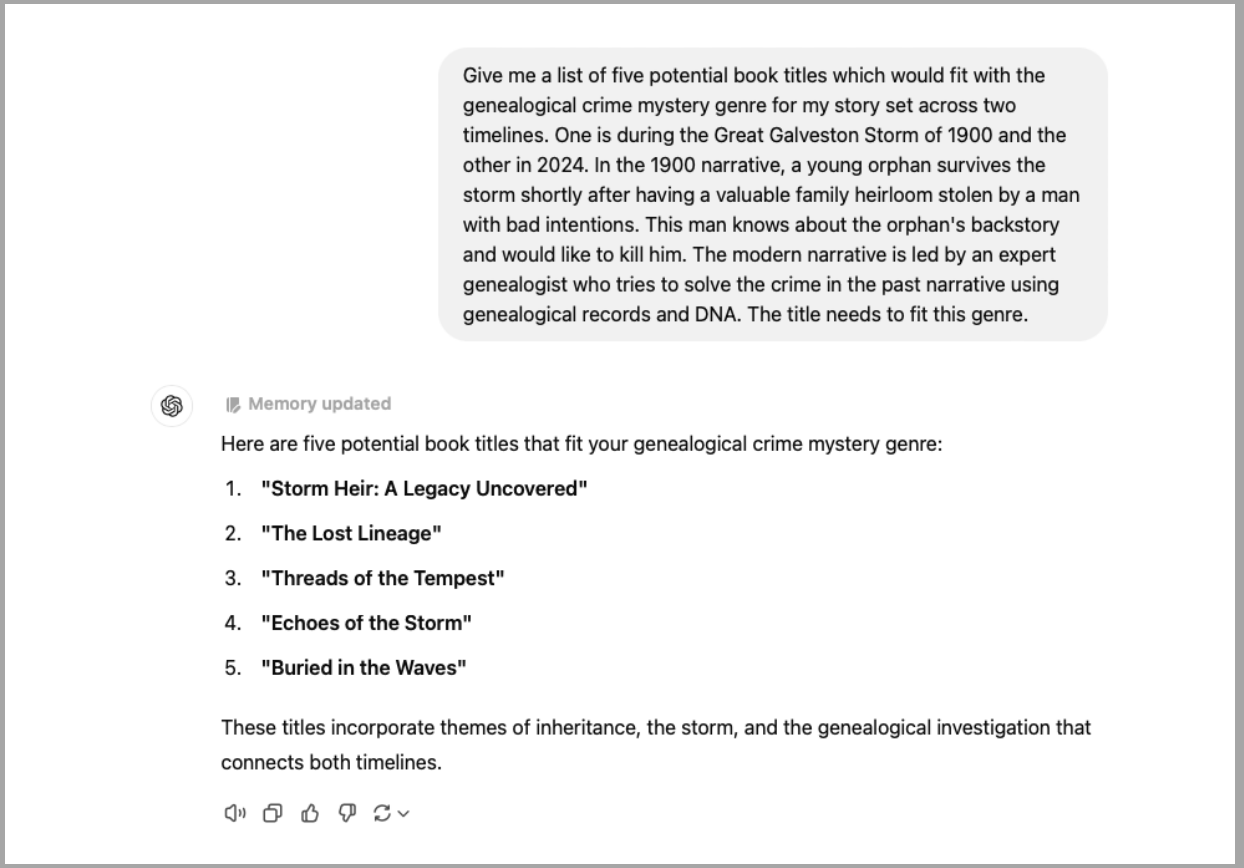
Ancestry
FamilySearch
MyHeritage
Findmypast
TheGenealogist



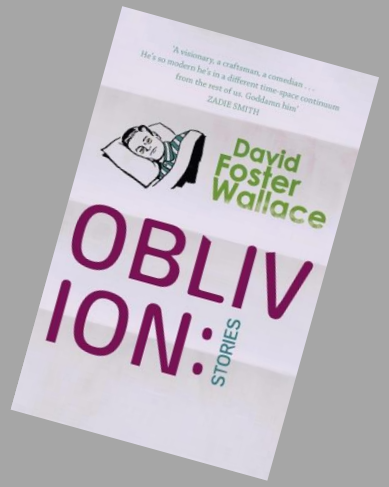
The Future!

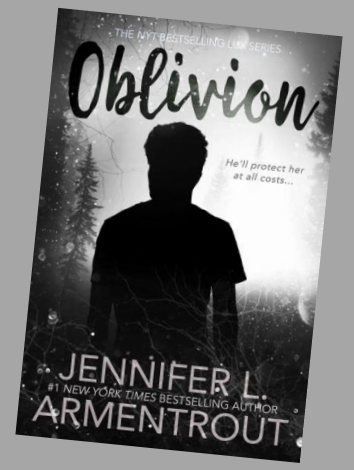
Book title…

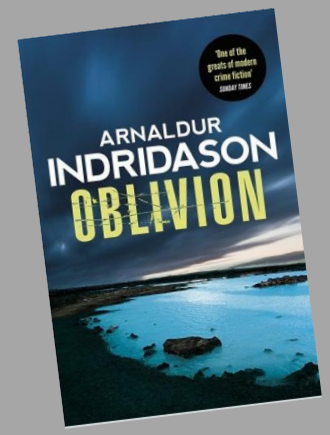
- Don’t fret about it yet!
- Try and think of several ideas
- Ask other people’s opinions
- Use AI to help



Book title…



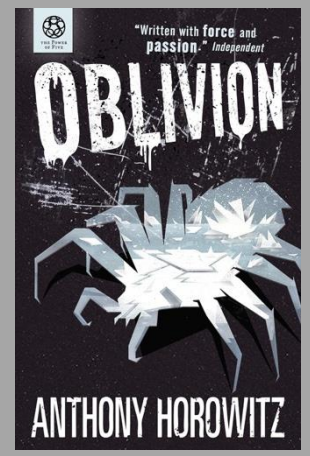




Legalities…

- **General rule is that titles cannot be copyrighted, especially with common words / phrases**
- **Trademarks are a BIG no!**

1. **Harry Potter** (series) – J.K. Rowling
2. **The Hunger Games** (series) – Suzanne Collins
3. **Twilight** (series) – Stephenie Meyer
4. **The Lord of the Rings** (series) – J.R.R. Tolkien
5. **Percy Jackson** (series) – Rick Riordan
6. **Goosebumps** (series) – R.L. Stine
7. **The Chronicles of Narnia** (series) – C.S. Lewis
8. **A Song of Ice and Fire** (series) – George R.R. Martin
9. **Fifty Shades of Grey** – E.L. James
10. **Nancy Drew** (series) – Edward Stratemeyer (Stratemeyer Syndicate)



Make time to write...

YOUR BOOK

BY

YOU

Traditional or Self-Publish route?

Pros of self-publishing for me:

- **Significantly higher royalties**
- **Complete creative freedom**
- Protect own brand
- Flexibility (deadlines / future projects, etc)

Cons of self-publishing for me:

- All marketing / publicity is down to me (& my team)
- Advertising is down to me (& my team)
- Every aspect of publication / book covers / proof readers / editors, etc is down to me
- All of the above costs money!
- Harder to get in regular book stores
- Easier to get any of the above wrong!

Pros of traditional publishing for me:

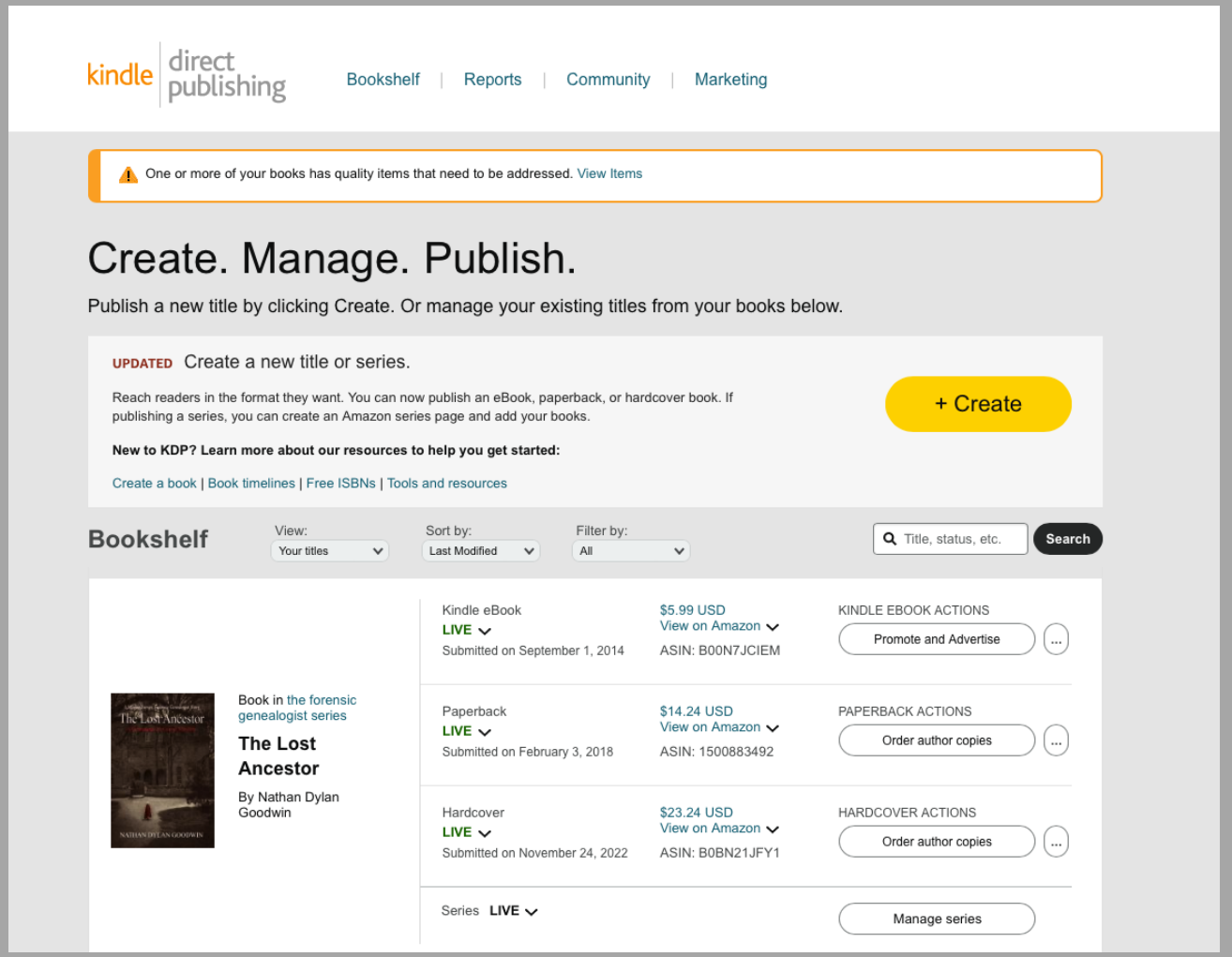
- All marketing / publicity is done in-house (if they do it!)
- Expert teams for cover design / proofing / editing (but they still get it wrong)
- They cover the costs of everything (prior to paying out royalties)
- Easier access to book stores

Cons of traditional publishing for me:

- **Significantly lower royalties**
- **They control your name and brand**
- Vague commitments in contracts with regard to marketing and publicity
- Usually tied to them for future books
- Spend 90% of their marketing budget on top 10% of authors

Target reader

Self-publishing process...



Final submission!

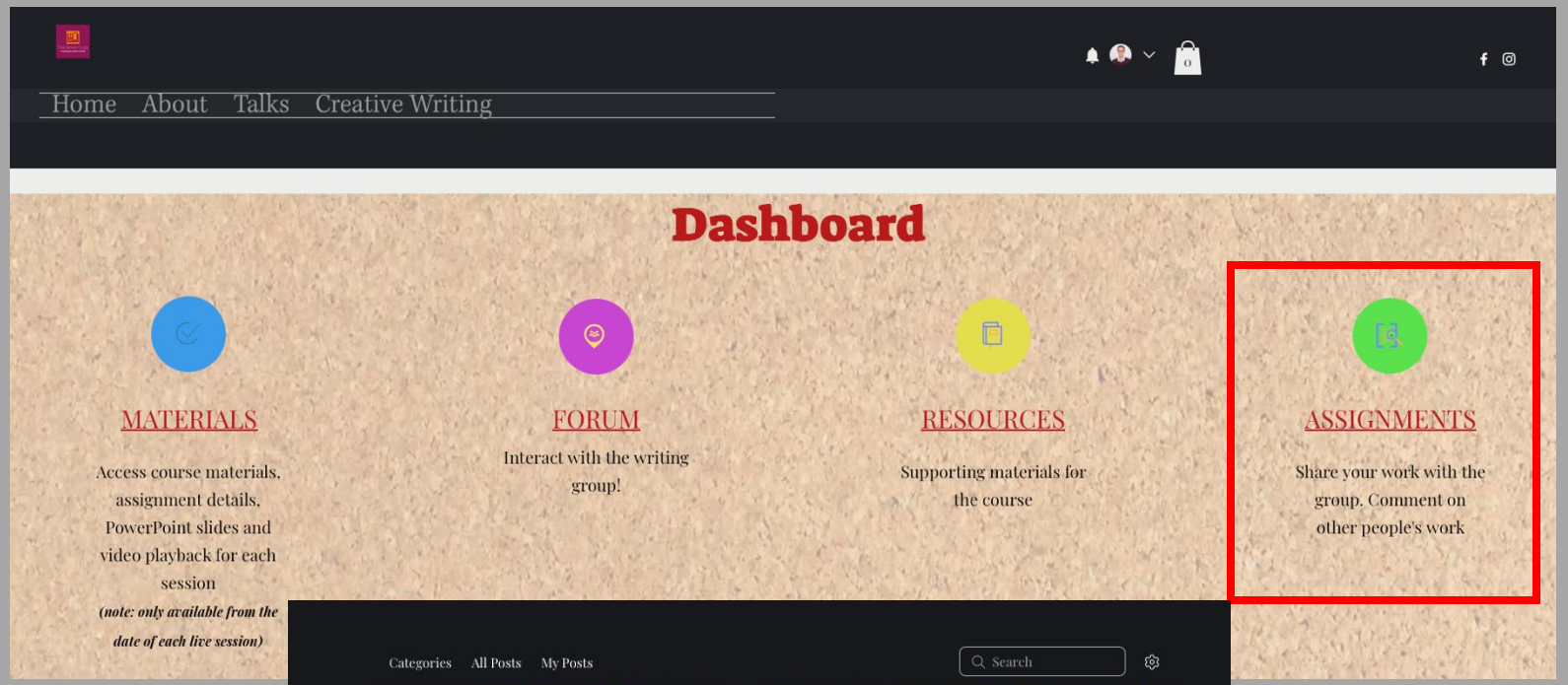
Submit a piece of writing up to 5,000 words

- This can be whichever part of the story you like.
- If you want formatting suggestions, save document in Word format

- Try and read some fellow students work and offer constructive criticism
- Name your document ***your name final***
- Deadline: **Tuesday 26th November** (6 weeks)

Things to consider:

- Everything you've learnt!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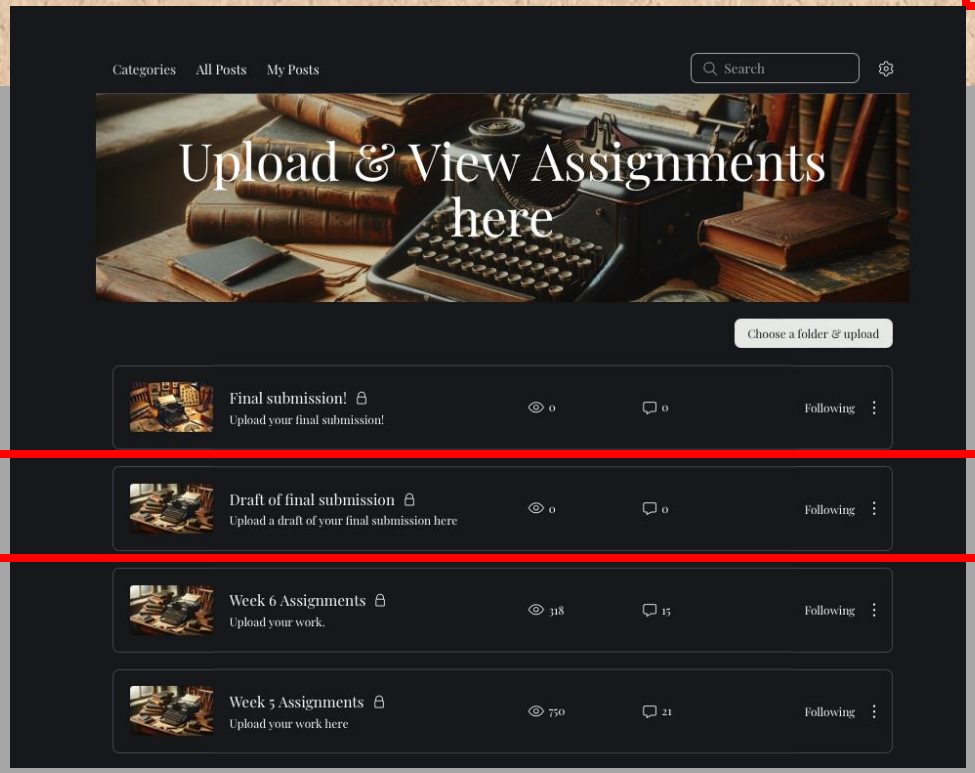
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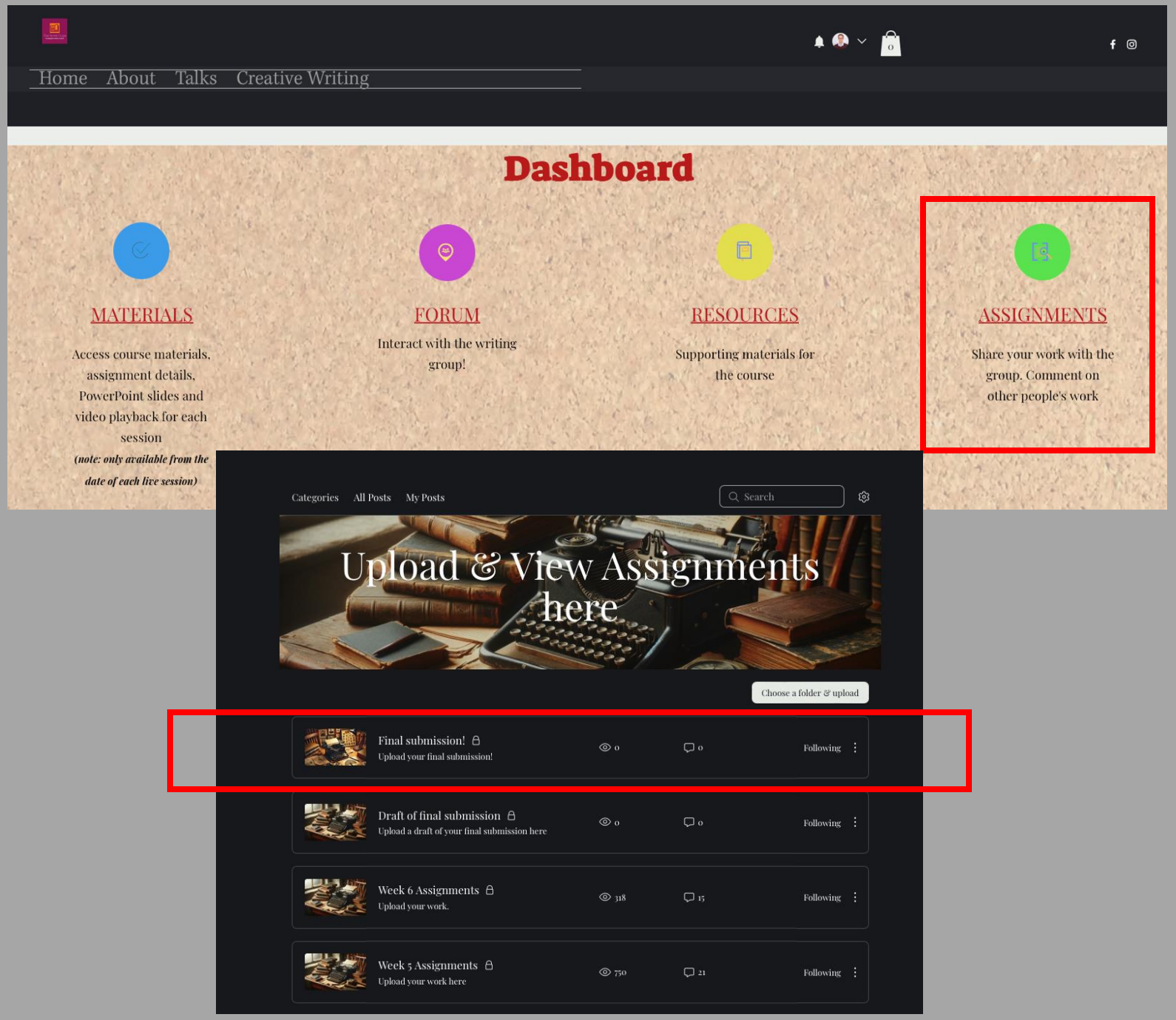
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Any questions?