STORY SPRINT

WRITE A MYSTERY

society of young inklings

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CREATIVITY CONTRACT

I, _____, accept the Story Sprint challenge.

I will start on _____, at _____ o'clock.

I will finish by _____, at _____ o'clock.

If I get stuck along the way, here's one thing I'll do to move forward: _____

_____

When I finish, here's how I'll celebrate: _____

_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

STORY SPRINT PARTY

READY ...

00:00: Start with Sketch Your Idea: Limbering Up video
00:12: Sketch Your Idea: Do the Work video
00:20: Sketch Your Idea: Cool Down video
00:30: Write your first scene

SET ...

00:40: Develop Your Idea: Limbering Up video
00:48: Develop Your Idea: Do the Work video
00:55: Storyboard Your Plot
01:05: Developing Ideas: Cool Down video

01:15: **SNACK BREAK!!**

GO!

01:30: Sprint One video + write!
01:45: Sprint Two video + write!
02:00: Sprint Three video + write!
02:25: Sprint Four video + write!

CROSS THE FINISH LINE

02:40: Smooth Out Rough Edges: Intro
02:45: Smooth Out Rough Edges: Choose Your Approach
03:00: Finish with Make it a Book!

If you can't finish a section of your story on time, don't worry! Keep pushing yourself to write fast, but if you're not 100% done at the end of the sprint, you can always go back and finish scenes later.

If you and your friends want to add extra time here and there, you're welcome to "break the rules." Remember, racing the clock in a story sprint is designed to be fun! There's truly no right or wrong way to do it.

OTHER SCHEDULE OPTIONS

The longer you spend on your sprint, the more challenging your goal can be. Each time you take on a sprint, set a specific writing craft goal that takes your current skills to the next level, such as:

- a believable criminal character
- an intriguing, unique detective
- a suspenseful plot with twists and turns
- a satisfying, well-crafted resolution

FOUR SESSIONS

We recommend that you spend 1.5 to 2 hours in each session.

Session One: Sketch Your Idea
Develop Your Idea

Session Two: Sprint One
Sprint Two

Session Three: Sprint Three
Sprint Four

Session Four: Smooth Rough Edges
Make it a Book

TWO WEEKS

We recommend 3 to 5 hours per week broken into 30 - 45 minute sessions.

Week One: Sketch Your Idea
Develop Your Idea
Sprint One
Sprint Two

Week Two: Sprint Three
Sprint Four
Smooth Rough Edges
Make it a Book

SIX WEEKS

We recommend 1 - 2 hours per week broken into 30 - 60 minute sessions.

Week One: Sketch Your Idea

Week Two: Develop Your Idea

Week Three: Sprint One
Sprint Two

Week Four: Sprint Three
Sprint Four

Week Five: Smooth Rough Edges

Week Six: Make it a Book

MYSTERY SCENARIO #1

What happened?

Who did it?

Where?

Possible motives?

Possible clues?

Possible investigation mishaps?

MYSTERY SCENARIO #2

What happened?

Who did it?

Where?

Possible motives?

Possible clues?

Possible investigation mishaps?

DETECTIVE PROFILE

Detective's Name: _____ Age: _____

Physical features that make my detective unique:_____

_____

Sights, sounds, and the feel of my detective's neighborhood: _____

_____

A regular day would usually include: _____

_____

Items my detective carries daily: _____

_____

My detective's strengths :_____

_____

My detective's weaknesses: _____

_____

In the main setting, my detective feels: (circle one) **COMFORTABLE** **OUT OF PLACE**

Characters who might help my detective in the story: _____

_____

Characters who might distract or create challenges for my detective in the story: _____

_____

My detective wants to solve the mystery because: _____

_____

CRIMINAL PROFILE

Criminal's Name: _____ Age: _____

Physical features that make my criminal unique:_____

_____

Sights, sounds, and the feel of my criminal's neighborhood: _____

_____

A regular day would usually include: _____

_____

Items my criminal carries daily: _____

_____

My criminal's strengths :_____

_____

My criminal's weaknesses: _____

_____

In the main setting, my criminal feels: (circle one) **COMFORTABLE** **OUT OF PLACE**

Characters who might help my criminal in the story: _____

_____

Characters who might suspect or create challenges for my criminal in the story: _____

_____

My criminal commits the crime because: _____

_____

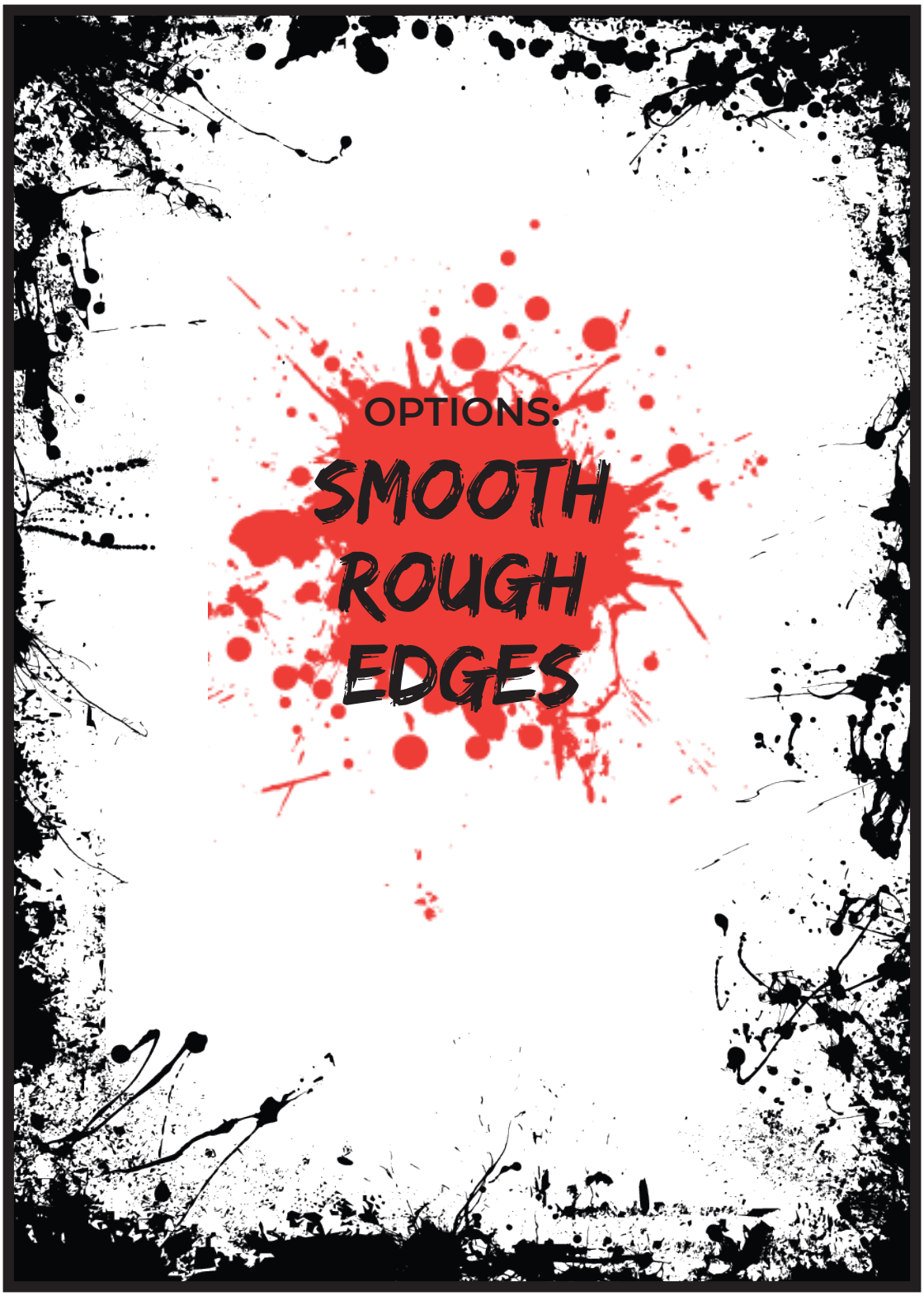
HOW THE MYSTERY MIGHT SHOW UP

FIRST SCENE LOCATION

Think about locations that will show your character's strengths and weaknesses.

MAP THE CLUES

Draw a bird's eye view of your setting, using labels to add the important clues and details. Where is the mystery discovered, and where is it ultimately solved?


OPTIONS:
SMOOTH
ROUGH
EDGES

FORESHADOWING

What feels unbelievable in your reveal?

(circle one that you'd like to solve)

How might you foreshadow this element earlier?

Choose one, and jot a few notes about your plan.

What will your character (or the world) lose if the mystery isn't solved? _____

_____

Brainstorm ways to show that disaster more clearly.

How much time is there before the worst happens? _____

How might you make that deadline more obvious? _____

_____

_____

Brainstorm mistakes and mishaps you might add to the story.

RED HERRING

What clues could be a red herring?

Sketch three possibilities for how to plant your red herring in the story.

FOR STUCK MOMENTS ...

Sprints are all about speed, but sometimes you hit a wall. When you need to slow down and think, these bonus brainstorming and planning sheets are here to help.

ABOUT MY SETTING

Think about the world of your story in general, here. What details will help your reader see and feel the tone of the time and place?

Objects You Might See

Weather You Might Experience

Sounds You Might Hear

Smells or Tastes You Might Encounter

CREATE A SETTING

Brainstorm sensory details to bring a scene's location to life.

Details that show what the place looks like

Details that show how the place sounds

Details that show how the place smells

Details that show how this place feels

MY DETECTIVE'S SIDEKICK

Character's Name: _____ Age: _____

Talents: _____

_____

Weaknesses:_____

Sometimes this character argues with my detective about: _____

_____

This character usually agrees with my detective about: _____

Ways this character helps my detective: _____

_____

Ways this character makes things more difficult for my detective: _____

_____

This character met my detective when: _____

_____

The thing my detective likes most about this character is: _____

_____

If my detective were introducing this person to someone else, he/she would say: _____

_____

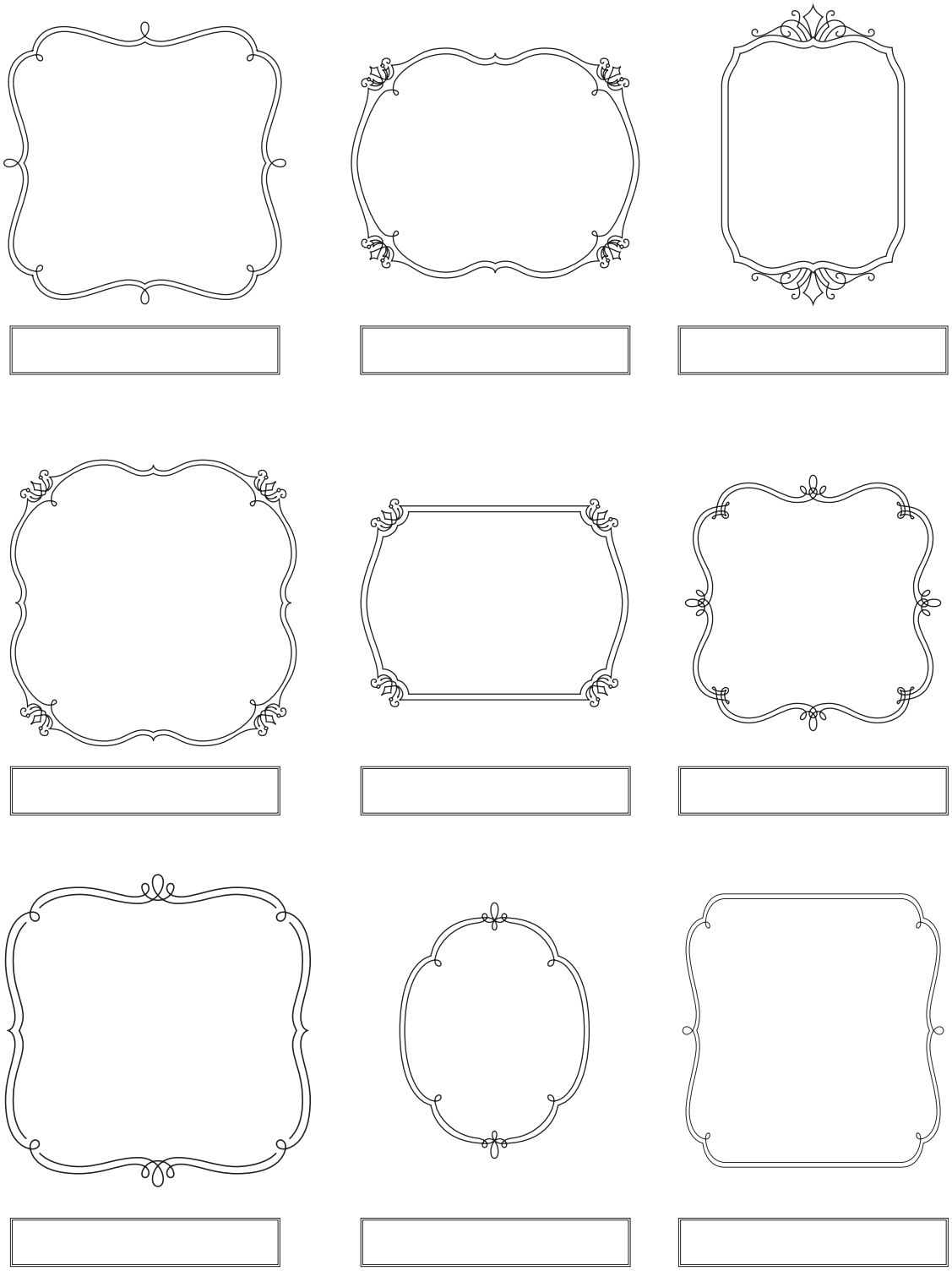
_____

This character cares about solving the mystery because: _____

_____

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Draw your supporting cast of characters here. Consider suspects, officials, your detective's sidekick, and anyone else affected by the crime.



TAKE THREE

Take the basic idea for a scene and brainstorm three ways the scene might go.
Let each possibility build on the last.

Main discovery in the scene: _____

_____

_____

_____

IDEA ONE:

IDEA TWO:

IDEA THREE:

Main discovery in the scene: _____

_____

_____

_____

IDEA ONE:

IDEA TWO:

IDEA THREE:

MOTIVES

Brainstorm reasons your criminal acts the way they do.

If they're motivated by greed or power ...

If they're motivated by revenge ...

If they're motivated by loyalty ...

If they're motivated by a "cause" ...