

## CREATING A WRITING PROJECT NOTEBOOK

One of the easiest ways to organize everything related to working on a project is to use a loose leaf binder with tabbed indexes. The size of the binder depends on the size of the project and the amount of materials that will be included from start to finish and promotion of the project.

An alternative to having a notebook with actual printed papers is to simply have a specific computer file for each project. You can include the same sections and basic story-specific items as listed below for a notebook. ***Important Note: If you only use a computer file method, be very sure to back-up the entire file in more than one place. Too many writers I've known have lost their computer files due to a bad disk or a failed computer and not had a hard copy of their project to recreate their work. You do not want to suffer this experience.***

### Sections to Include:

#### Business Items

- Status record of submissions, sale, payment info
- Promotional record of distributors, advertising material
- Promotional record of where and when promoted the work
- Contest entry record

#### Plotting Items

- Photos of characters – for a quick basic visual to refer to while writing
- Character grid – a quick comparison of the backgrounds, the inciting incident, long range and short range goals, character flaws, relationship barriers/conflicts, black moment effects, and the epiphanies about the relationship
- Character contrast chart – with as little or as much physical, personality, and other details as you want to know about each character
- Basic storyboard - method of determining when specific plot events need to occur (Word table)
- Story progression spreadsheet – overall constantly updated look on the story progression
- Calendar – to keep track of when and where events in the story happen (Word calendar)
- Timeline chart – to keep track of when and where events in the story happen (particularly useful for writing a series)

#### Research Items

- Setting details – can include sketches of a ranch layout or a small town's layout with certain businesses pertinent to the story, photos of the character's house with layout, etc.
- Clothing details – favored clothing of the characters, clothing related to a specific time period
- Occupation details – common information about a character's job, specific job-related lingo
- Vehicle details – photos or descriptions of the characters' vehicles if needed
- Time period details – information on lingo of the time, cultural aspects, a timeline for events or inventions (particularly helpful when writing historical stories)
- "World" details – specifics you create to build a fantasy world, your paranormal story's rules (such as about vampires, shape shifters and what they can do and not do)

#### Printed Project Items

- Synopsis
- Query letter(s)
- Copies of each chapter