

Cohesion Checklist

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How do you know if your characters, settings, and plots are truly cohesive? Once you finish your Story Plan Checklist, check the obvious first:

- Does your Story Plan Checklist read like a mini version of the novel?
- Are there any sections on the checklist you didn't fill out?
- Did you leave important characters off the list? If you put them on now and filled out their basics, and external and internal monologues, would the story be more cohesive?
- Are your story sparks intriguing enough, or can you punch them up more?
- Do your settings truly fit the characters and plot, or are they simply *there*?
- Do beginning, middle, and end internal monologues follow a progressive, logical course?
- Are resolutions logical? Predictable? Would a twist ending be more effective and exciting?

If you're satisfied that your story is cohesive, try one final test to be absolutely sure. Below, circle the answer that best fits your reaction to the question. Remember, anything but a resounding "Yes!" to each question means you need to go back to that element of your story and work in more cohesion.

Question	Answer	Areas to Rework
Are conflicts, goals, and motivations defined enough to pinpoint within the high-concept blurb?	Yes!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicts • Goals and Motivations • High-Concept Blurb
	No	
	Not Sure	
Do internal and external conflicts, goals, and motivations intersect, collide, and impact?	Yes!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and External Conflicts • Goals and Motivations
	No	
	Not Sure	
Do characters have	Yes!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters

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believable, identifiable, and compelling conflicts, goals, and motivations they care about deeply?	No Not Sure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicts • Goals and Motivations
Are the character's conflicts, goals, and motivations urgent and causal (can't have one without the other)?	Yes! No Not Sure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters • Conflicts • Goals and Motivations • Plot
Do the characters have the skills to achieve the goal if sufficiently motivated?	Yes! No Not Sure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters • Occupations • Goals and Motivations • Plot
Are the main characters directly involved in resolutions of internal and external plot conflicts?	Yes! No Not Sure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characters • Conflicts • Goals and Motivations • Plot
If the story was set anywhere else, would the setting make the characters and plot less cohesive?	Yes! No Not Sure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settings • Characters • Conflicts • Goals and Motivations • Plot

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