

Your 
Book Bakery

12 Weeks to a Manuscript

**FICTION
EDITION**

Your Book Bakery, Fiction Edition

Group-Coaching Program Manual

Jennifer Harshman, The Book Baker®

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Requirements and Recommendations

To succeed in any project, you must have the required tools. It probably will sound silly to you, but some people aren't aware that they need a computer if they want to write a book. Yes, you can write it all longhand if you'd like, and plenty of people do. But eventually, you'll have to type it up and send it to someone, and that requires a computer and internet access. You'll also need a public library card or Amazon account because you're going to need some books. But you already knew that, right?

To succeed with Your Book Bakery, Fiction Edition, you must follow the recipe. This means committing to things like this:

- I will use the tools Jennifer Harshman provides and follow the process she recommends.
- I will write for one hour or produce 2,000 words every day during the writing phase.
- I will investigate every resource Jennifer recommends. This means clicking the links, watching the videos, or whatever may apply.

One of the things I stress with all of my clients and students is making sure you are participating in self-care and rewards. Motivation is like food—most people need some every day. Rewards motivate most people. Self-care keeps us healthy. Only you get to decide what constitutes self-care and rewards for you.

Make a list of small things that you could use daily for self-care and for rewards. An example is using scented candles while writing (self-care) and listening to a favorite song after producing your daily word count.

Now make a list of medium-sized ones for weekly use.

Finally, choose one big reward you'll give yourself for finishing your manuscript.

Week 1: Setting Up Your Kitchen

Welcome to the inaugural week of Your Book Bakery, Fiction Edition! This week is all about setting the stage for your book baking, creating the ideal environment for your creativity to flourish. Just as a baker meticulously arranges ingredients before the first scoop, prepare your workspace and define the parameters of your novel.

Creating Your Book-Baking Kitchen

Imagine your writing space as a kitchen you get to equip to serve you best. Set aside a dedicated space for your writing endeavors. Whether it's a cozy corner of a room, a sunlit study, or a local coffee shop, make it a place where you can turn on the tap and words start to flow.

Crafting Your Writing Schedule

Just as a baker follows a recipe, establish a writing schedule that suits your lifestyle. Consistency is key, so choose times when you're most alert and receptive to creative sparks. Many people find that it takes time to build the habits, but once they're constructed, they serve.

Choosing the Right Tools

Select the tools that resonate with your writing style. Whether it's the tactile pleasure of a leather-bound journal or the efficiency of a digital device, your tools should enhance rather than hinder your creative process.

Defining Your Literary Territory

Every book needs a vision, a purpose, and an intended audience. This week, look at these:

Setting the Genre

Like choosing the type of cake, decide on the genre of your novel. Is it a suspenseful mystery, a heartwarming romance, or a mind-bending sci-fi adventure? This decision will guide your narrative choices.

Identifying Your Target Readers

Every baker knows their audience. Determine the demographic you wish to captivate with your story. Understanding your readership influences the tone, themes, and characters of your novel.

Establishing Your Writing Goals

Clearly outline what you hope to achieve with your novel. Are you aiming for publication, seeking personal fulfillment, or hoping to connect with a specific community? Defining your goals provides a roadmap for your writing journey.

A Word of Encouragement

Just as a baker visualizes the final confection before beginning, picture the satisfaction of holding your completed novel. This week, relish the anticipation, savor the excitement, and know that you're on a transformative adventure. The oven is preheating; your ingredients are ready. Get ready to infuse your novel with the passion only you can provide. Next week, we'll begin the research phase of Your Book Bakery, Fiction Edition. Enjoy preparing! 📖 ✨

Week 2: Diving into Research

Welcome back! In Week 2, we're stepping into the research phase, where you'll gather the essential ingredients that will infuse your novel with depth and authenticity. Just as a baker selects the finest components for a delightful creation, you'll enrich your storytelling.

Research is the cornerstone of a well-crafted novel. This week, explore the following:

- **Defining Your Research Scope:** What aspects of your novel require in-depth exploration? Characters, settings, historical contexts—pinpoint them.
- **Utilizing Reliable Sources:** Every baker trusts reliable sources for their recipes. Similarly, identify credible resources for your novel's research. This could include books, articles, interviews, or firsthand experiences that bring authenticity to your story.
- **Immersing Yourself in the World:** Get into the world of your novel. Visit locations if possible, explore cultural nuances, and understand the intricacies that will enrich your storytelling.
- **Fleshing Out Characters and Settings:** Your characters and settings are the flavor and texture of your novel. Some novels (or series) are character-driven; others are plot-driven. Even those that are plot-driven need three-dimensional, believable characters.

Character Profiles

Build comprehensive profiles for your characters. What motivates them? What challenges do they face? Just as a baker considers the characteristics of each ingredient, define the unique qualities that make your characters memorable.

Setting Details

Your novel's setting is its backdrop. Like a baker selecting the perfect setting for a celebration, choose details that enhance the atmosphere. Whether it's a bustling city or a serene countryside, let your setting contribute to the narrative.

Developing Plot Threads

Plot threads are the narrative twists that keep readers engaged. Like a baker weaving flavors into a harmonious blend, start developing the threads that will create suspense, surprise, and emotional resonance.

A Word of Encouragement

Research is one thing that keeps your novel from leaving a bad taste in a reader's mouth. This week, relish the exploration, savor the knowledge you're acquiring, and trust that each detail adds richness to your narrative. Good research is a secret ingredient, although it shouldn't be. In Week 3, we'll roll up our sleeves and dive into drafting your novel. Have fun researching! 📖☀️

Week 3: Draft Delight

Week 3 is where the magic happens—the drafting stage. It's time to roll up your sleeves, gather your literary ingredients, and start mixing the elements that will form your novel. Just as a baker skillfully combines flour, sugar, and eggs, you get to blend plot, characters, and setting to create a literary masterpiece.

Setting Your Writing Scene

Establishing Writing Rituals

Every baker has their rituals in the kitchen. You need your own. Create a conducive writing environment. Whether it's a cozy nook, music, or a cup of tea, set the scene for your writing sessions.

Defining Your Writing Goals

Just as a baker follows a production schedule, you must set clear goals for your writing sessions. How many words do you aim to write each day? What plot points or scenes will you cover? Having a roadmap ensures a smoother writing process.

Embracing the First-Draft Mentality

Release the pressure of perfection. Your first draft is like a baker's rough dough—it's the starting point. Allow yourself the freedom to explore, knowing that revisions will refine and enhance your narrative.

Forming Plot and Characters

Crafting Engaging Opening Scenes

The opening of your novel is the first bite into a food. Craft scenes that captivate and draw readers in. Whether it's an intriguing dialogue, a moment of tension, or a vivid description, make it irresistible.

Introducing Dynamic Characters



Characters are the heart of your novel. You have to bring them to life. Show their quirks, motivations, and conflicts. Let readers connect with them on a personal level.

Building Plot Momentum

Plot progression is the rising anticipation in a baker's kitchen. Build momentum in your story. What challenges do your characters face? What obstacles lie ahead? Keep readers eagerly turning the pages.

A Dash of Inspiration

In Week 3, embrace the joy of creating your novel's first draft. Allow your imagination to flow freely, and remember that this is just the beginning. Like a baker watching dough rise, you can relish the excitement of seeing your novel take shape. Next week, in Week 4, we'll add layers. Until then, happy drafting, Book Bakers!

Week 4: Adding Layers—Enhancing Your Draft with Speech and Stories

Welcome to Week 4, where we take your draft to the next level by adding layers of richness, just as a baker adds layers to a sumptuous cake. This week is all about infusing your narrative with vivid stories and speech to make your novel truly unforgettable.

Elevating Descriptive Language

Like a baker carefully choosing premium ingredients, enhance your writing with descriptive language. Paint scenes with vivid details, appealing to the senses and immersing readers in your world.

Delectable Dialogue

Whether monologues or dialogues, the things your characters say are the chocolate chips in your narrative cookie. This is related to the next item: Consider having them share anecdotes. Those stories can add depth and emotional connection, making your novel more relatable.

Deepening Character Arcs

Characters should change in some way over the course of your story. Dive deeper into character development. Explore their growth, challenges, and transformations. A well-developed character arc is the key to a satisfying reading experience.

Introducing Plot Twists

Plot twists are the unexpected spices that keep readers hooked. Surprise your audience with unexpected turns. Whether it's a shocking revelation or a sudden change of events, keep them eagerly anticipating what comes next.

Embracing the Creative Flow

Allow your creativity to flow freely. Like a baker experimenting with new flavors, explore different avenues in your writing. Be open to unexpected ideas and let your imagination lead the way.

Encouraging Peer Feedback

Share your draft with trusted peers or writing groups. Just as bakers rely on taste testers, you'll want to gather feedback on your narrative at some point. External perspectives can provide valuable insights and help you refine your work.

Ready for the Next Chapter

As you infuse your draft with character speech and stories, relish the process of transforming your manuscript. Next week, in Week 5, we'll focus on ensuring clarity and coherence in your narrative. Keep those creative juices flowing, Novel Bakers! 📖🍰

Week 5: Ensuring Clarity and Coherence

Welcome to Week 5, where we put your draft in the refining heat to ensure it sparkles with clarity and coherence, much like crystal-clear sugar strands on a perfectly baked confection.

Polishing the Prose

Clarity in Expression

Just as a skilled pastry chef meticulously crafts delicate decorations, refine your prose for clarity. Ensure your ideas are expressed with precision, leaving no room for confusion—unless it's intentional.

Cohesive Story Flow

Your narrative should flow seamlessly, like layers in a well-constructed cake. Check for transitions between scenes, chapters, and ideas. A cohesive flow captivates readers and keeps them engaged.

Identifying Missing Ingredients

Addressing Plot Gaps

Examine your narrative for any plot gaps or unanswered questions. Every plot point is an essential ingredient. Fill in the gaps to create a complete and satisfying reading experience.

Ensuring Character Consistency

Characters, like flavors, should remain consistent. Ensure their actions and motivations align with their established traits. This can be a challenge to balance with character arc.

Pruning and Trimming

Eliminating Redundancies

Just as a baker trims excess edges for a polished appearance, eliminate redundant phrases or unnecessary details. Keep your writing concise and impactful.

Streamlining Descriptions

Refine your descriptions to strike the right balance. Too much detail can overwhelm, while too little may leave readers hungry for more. Find the sweet spot that enhances your narrative.

Seeking External Perspectives


Beta Readers' Insights

Like a baker seeking feedback on a new recipe, share your draft with beta readers. Collect insights on areas that may still need attention. Fresh perspectives can uncover aspects you might have missed.

Revision with Precision

Use the feedback wisely to make precise revisions. Target areas identified by beta readers and refine your manuscript. This step is crucial for the overall perfection of your literary creation.

Onward to the Next Layer

As you ensure clarity and coherence in your manuscript, relish the process of refining your literary creation. Next week, in Week 6, you'll be evaluating and enhancing the emotional resonance of your narrative. Keep those creative fires burning, Book Bakers! 

Week 6: Stirring Emotions

Hello, Book Bakers! Welcome to Week 6, where we infuse your narrative with the rich flavors of emotion, much like adding exquisite spices to a culinary masterpiece.

Unleashing Emotional Depth

Character Emotional Arcs

Just as a dish is elevated by a blend of nuanced flavors, enrich your characters with emotional depth. Explore their arcs, ensuring they undergo meaningful emotional journeys.

Reader Empathy

Engage your readers' emotions by creating characters they can empathize with. Craft situations that resonate universally, inviting readers to connect with the emotional core of your story.

Setting's Emotional Impact

Just as the ambiance of a bakery sets the mood, consider how your story's setting influences emotions. Describe locations with sensory detail to immerse readers in the emotional atmosphere.

Weather and Mood

It's common knowledge that the weather influences people's mood, so leverage atmospheric conditions to enhance emotional scenes. Whether it's a storm brewing or a serene sunset, let nature amplify the emotional tone.

Conveying Emotion Through Speech and Character Action

Ensure that speech and action resonate emotionally. Let characters' words, tones, and movements reflect their feelings, adding authenticity and depth.

Balancing Dialogue and Narrative

Achieve a harmonious blend of dialogue and narrative. Just as the right mix of ingredients creates a delightful dish, balance these elements to maintain a compelling pace.



Symbolism and Motifs

Introduce symbols or motifs that carry emotional weight. Much like a recurring flavor in a recipe, these elements add layers of meaning and resonance to your story.

Emotional Impact Assessment

Revisit feedback with a focus on emotional resonance. Identify areas where readers felt deeply connected or moments that may require additional emotional nuance. Fine-tune scenes based on feedback, emphasizing emotional beats. Whether it's joy, sorrow, or anticipation, heighten these moments to intensify the overall emotional experience.

Anticipating Week 7

As you stir emotions into the heart of your manuscript, savor the creative process. In Week 7, we'll delve into the art of revision, ensuring your narrative is polished to perfection. Keep those creative flames burning, Book Bakers!  

Week 7: Revision of Plot and Characters

Hello, Book Bakers! We've reached the pivotal Week 7, where we pick up a chef's knife and begin carving—I mean revising. Think of it as the stage where you shape your manuscript into something structurally sound as well as tasty.

Comprehensive Manuscript Evaluation

Holistic Assessment

Step back and assess your manuscript as a whole. Just as a chef evaluates the entire dish before serving, examine the overall flow, pacing, and coherence of your narrative.

Addressing Plot Consistency

Ensure your plot unfolds seamlessly. Like layers in a cake, each plot point should build upon the last. Address any inconsistencies, and refine the plot for a satisfying reader experience.

Refining Character Dynamics

Character Cohesion

Ensure that your characters complement each other. Evaluate their interactions and relationships, refining dynamics to enhance narrative depth.

Character Growth and Resonance

Characters, much like flavors, should evolve. Ensure each character undergoes a meaningful journey, leaving a lasting impression on readers.

Encouragement

You have done a lot of difficult work, and I want you to take some time to reward yourself. Next week, we look at revising your prose.

Week 8: Language Revision

This week, we continue revising. Fine-tune your prose for precision and clarity.

Craft sentences with a rhythmic flow. Just as a melody captivates the ear, varying sentence structures captivate the reader, creating a harmonious reading experience.

Eliminating Redundancies

Like excess ingredients in a recipe, trim redundant phrases. Streamline your prose to deliver a crisp, impactful narrative that keeps readers engaged.

Language Precision

Every word is a flavor in your literary dish. Choose them with precision. Eliminate unnecessary words and ensure each one serves a distinct purpose.

Eliminating Pet Phrases:

Identify and replace overused phrases. Like a well-spiced dish, your narrative should offer freshness in every bite.

Iterative Improvement:

Approach revision as an iterative process. Each round of refinement brings your manuscript closer to perfection, ensuring it's a literary feast for your readers.

Anticipating Week 9

As you meticulously revise and polish, savor the transformation of your manuscript. In Week 9, we'll delve into the intricacies of sentence structure, ensuring each sentence is a delectable morsel for your readers. Keep those creative ovens warm, Book Bakers! 📖🍰

Week 9: Sentence Structure Variety

Week 9 marks the exciting chapter where we elevate your manuscript by focusing on sentence structure.

Varying Lengths for Impact

Like the layers of a cake, mix short and long sentences for a dynamic reading experience. Achieve a rhythm that keeps readers engaged, savoring each sentence.

Structural Diversity:

Experiment with various sentence structures—simple, compound, and complex. Each structure adds a unique flavor to your narrative, creating a symphony of prose.

Eliminating Ambiguity:

Clarify your ideas with precision. Just as a chef ensures each ingredient is discernible, make every thought and concept crystal clear to your readers.

Maintaining Consistency:

Like a well-balanced recipe, maintain consistency in your writing style. Readers appreciate a cohesive narrative that feels harmonious from start to finish.

Reviewing Sentence Flow:

Read your sentences aloud, assessing their flow. Much like a baker listens for the perfect sizzle, ensure your sentences resonate with a melodic cadence.

Collaboration:

Engage with fellow Book Bakers for collaboration. Just as a kitchen buzzes with teamwork, a collective effort enhances the richness of your manuscript.

Elevating Vocabulary:

Introduce nuanced vocabulary. Like a chef selecting premium ingredients, choose words that add sophistication to your prose without overwhelming the reader.

Embracing Elegance:

Craft sentences with an elegant touch. Picture your sentences as finely decorated pastries, inviting readers to indulge in the artistry of your language.

Beta Reader Feedback

Ask for feedback. Just as a chef values the opinions of taste-testers, you can use feedback to enhance the overall flavor of your manuscript.

Anticipating Week 10

As we conclude Week 9, revel in the refined symphony of your sentences. In Week 10, we'll shift our focus to unleashing the power of marketing to share your book with the world. Keep those creative ovens ablaze, Book Bakers! 📖🍰

Week 10: Marketing – Cake Display Cases

Week 10 is where we talk about marketing, something that never ends. In the bakery world, marketing involves ads and offers, signage, and display cases. Think of marketing your book in those same terms.

Building Your Author Brand

Crafting a Flavorful Author Persona:

Develop a compelling author persona. Your brand is the aroma that precedes your literary creation, enticing readers to indulge in your unique voice.

Creating an Author Platform:

Establish your online presence. Like a baker showcasing their masterpieces in a shop window, your platform is where readers discover the magic you bring to the literary table.

Unleashing the Power of Social Media

Strategic Engagement:

Navigate the social media landscape strategically. Much like a chef engaging with patrons, interact thoughtfully to build a community around your book.

Showcasing Sneak Peeks:

Tease your audience with enticing snippets. Just as a baker previews the day's specials, offer glimpses of your book to pique curiosity and generate excitement.

Creating a Buzz:

Generate anticipation for your literary launch. Think of it as building suspense before revealing a stunning culinary creation to eager patrons.

Collaborative Launch Events:

Consider joint ventures with fellow authors. Collaborative events are like hosting a grand banquet, where multiple delights are presented to a diverse audience.

Savoring the Success

Celebrating Milestones:

Acknowledge and celebrate every achievement. Like a baker relishing the applause after a successful dessert, take pride in each step toward your book's success.

Engaging with Readers:

Foster connections with your audience. Just as a chef interacts with diners, engage with readers to create a lasting bond beyond the pages of your book.

Your Book's Coming Debut

As Week 10 unfolds, envision the grand debut of your literary masterpiece. With marketing mastery, your book will take center stage, captivating hearts and leaving a lasting imprint on readers. Get ready to bask in the sweet aroma of success, Book Bakers! 🚀 📖

Week 11: Next Stage—Engaging an Editor

Welcome to Week 11, Book Bakers! You're going to finish the stage where you do all you can do, and then you're going to hand it off to an editor.

Final Polishing

Refine every detail of your manuscript. Like a chef perfecting the final touches on a gourmet dish, ensure that each word contributes to the overall brilliance of your book.

Addressing Feedback

Embrace feedback with an open heart, and say, "Thank you" no matter how good or bad you think that feedback is. They cared enough to share with you. Much as a chef values the opinions of food critics, use constructive feedback to enhance the flavors of your story.

Basking in Your Accomplishment

This week is all about savoring the fruits of your labor and celebrating completing your first draft. Reflect on your journey. If you've kept a log or journal, now is a great time to look through it.

In any case, take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey you've been on. Just as a baker appreciates the steps in the process of producing a pastry, you get to acknowledge the growth and transformation of your manuscript.

Celebrate each milestone you've attained, and continue to do that at each one going forward. Like toasting to achievements in a culinary career, recognize the significant moments in your book-writing adventure.

Engaging an Editor

Every book needs to be edited prior to publication. I would be remiss if I didn't stress the importance of this. It does not have to be me, but please do choose someone who is skilled. Let me know if you need a recommendation, as I have a network and can recommend editors.

Preparing for Publication

After your book has been edited, someone must format it. You can do it or pay someone to do it. Much like a chef carefully plating a dish for a banquet, you'll want your book to be visually appealing and reader friendly. Just in case you don't already know, this is also a service I offer.

Choosing Publishing Platforms

Select the publishing platforms that suit your goals. Similar to choosing the right venue for a grand celebration, opt for platforms that align with your vision for the book. If you need assistance uploading to Amazon, let me know.

Preparing for the Next Chapter

Anticipate the exciting chapters ahead. A baker envisions future culinary creations, and you should do the same for your continued growth and success.

Week 12: While You Wait

Congratulations! 🎉📖 You've reached the grand finale of Your Book Bakery: Fiction Edition. This is where your creation gets ready to be served to your eagerly awaiting audience. Just as a chef meticulously plates their dishes, we'll focus on the art of presentation to make your book truly irresistible.

While you wait for your book to be edited (and formatted, if you're not doing that yourself), do not touch your manuscript. You will get burned, and your editor will curse your name. Well, maybe they won't, but it's extremely important to leave it alone. Think of it as the cake being in another room while someone else works on it. You can't touch it if that's the case, can you?

What *can* you do while you wait? Oh, there's plenty.

Designing a Mouthwatering Book Cover

Unless you are a professional designer, please do not attempt to create your own book covers. Collaborate with a skilled designer. Your book cover is the image in the cake catalog. It entices readers. Ensure it's as captivating as the creations in a bakery display. If you need a referral, just let me know.

Choosing Fonts and Layout

Your formatter should be able to advise you on this, and they may suggest or insist on things that you hadn't thought of, but that doesn't mean you can't sniff around and see what you like and don't like. You need to ensure that your book's visual presentation enhances the reading experience.

Planning Your Book Launch

Event Logistics

Strategize the logistics of your book launch event. Like planning a grand banquet, organize the details to ensure a seamless and memorable experience for your audience.

Invitations and Promotions

Spread the word about your literary banquet. Similar to inviting guests to a grand feast, use invitations and promotions to attract readers to your book launch event.

Engaging with Influencers

Connect with literary influencers. Much like a chef gaining the endorsement of a renowned food critic, leverage influencers to amplify the buzz around your book.

Utilizing PR Strategies

Employ effective PR strategies. Think of it as sending out aromatic invitations to media outlets, enticing them to savor the flavors of your literary creation.

Discussing Your Literary Masterpiece

It's a good idea to talk about your book before you publish it. When the time comes, announce the arrival of your literary masterpiece to the world. Imagine it as presenting a show-stopping dish to a captivated audience.

The Grand Unveiling

As Week 12 unfolds, envision the grand unveiling of your literary banquet. With meticulous presentation, your book will be a feast for the senses, leaving readers eager to indulge. Get ready to witness the culmination of your Book Baking journey! 📖 🎉 🌟

Engaging with Your Readers

Before and after publication, connect with your readers, and build a community. Similar to a baker engaging with customers, you must create a relationship with your audience, growing a community of people who love your books.

Congratulations!

Savor the taste of victory with your creative endeavors. You've not only written a book; you've crafted a treat that will resonate with readers for years to come. Cheers to your achievement! 📖 🎉 🌟