

## FICTION WORKSHOP ON PLACE

We all know that action and dialogue are important to a story, but place also plays an important part. If there's no sense of place the story almost floats in mid-air and the reader can find it difficult to identify with the character. It's like having your characters walk on to an empty stage. Yet large descriptive chunks or narrative lumps interrupt the flow of the story which many readers flick through to get back to an exciting part.

Settings/worlds are varied - Science Fiction; Fantasy/Imaginary; Historical; Present; Future.

Clues to the setting are language, music, clothes, customs, technology, fashion, etc.

1. Make description an active part of the story. Use description to set the scene, move the plot, set the mood, foreshadow events, provide a sense of character.
2. Describe what your character would notice/reveal of setting through character's level of experience. Character living in a world won't see the same things as a stranger and child won't understand what they see in the same way as an adult.
3. Use strong active words when writing description – not too many adjectives.
4. Use the mood of the character to show setting. Someone skipping along a leafy lane listening to the sound of lambs and laughing, with her dog by her side, is probably in a good mood. Someone plodding doggedly up a hill, sneezing with the pollen, is not.
5. Use all the senses.

Here are some websites which might be useful

<http://www.essortment.com/creating-perfect-setting-writing-fiction-61355.html>

<http://www.cthreepo.com/writing/laws.shtml> 10 Laws of Good SciFi

<http://www.writing-world.com/sf/setting.shtml>

<http://www.writing-world.com/sf/world.shtml> Fantasy

<http://www.writing-world.com/index.shtml> Home Site

<http://shalleemcarthur.blogspot.com/2011/03/creating-strong-settings-from-real.html>

<http://sarahduncansblog.blogspot.com/2010/03/too-many-cemeteries.html>