SIX MONTH NOVEL

URBAN WRITERS' RETREAT



COMPARISON NOVEL

SIXMONTHNOVEL.COM






YOUR COMPARISON NOVEL

This is an inspiring model that you can keep to hand as a reference book while you write. Don't choose anything with a plot too similar to your own, both to avoid inadvertent plagiarism and because you're more likely to compare your scrappy draft writing with the published novel and get demoralised if it's too close.

So what do you use? Choose a novel you love and where you can identify elements that you'd like to emulate in your writing, that's a standout example of your genre, or that does an aspect of writing you find hard particularly well. You're looking for a novel that will illuminate or guide your work in some way. So perhaps you struggle with characters and dialogue so you choose a novel you admire for the natural conversations and the way a few lines tells a lot about a character. Or perhaps you really admire your comparison novel's structure, pace, the way the writer uses language or deals with multiple narratives, the world-building, the narrator's voice or the emotional journey it takes the reader on.

We're asking you to choose one main comparison novel, but don't overthink this because you can always pick up additional books to use as models later if you decide you need help with, say, description. As long as it's a book you admire and you have an idea of how it connects to the vision you have of your book/writing, you can learn from it and use it to improve your own novel.

You're going to re-read the book, or skim it quickly if you're short on time, with a notepad next to you. At the end of each scene or chapter (this is much less time-consuming than letting yourself make constant notes), stop and make a brief note about the most important thing that happened, plus anything that strikes you or that you found particularly effective. You're making a bare skeleton outline of the novel that can help you think about how plot is built and fits together, and also highlighting specific points of inspiration. When you've finished reading, jot down your immediate responses to these questions.

Your comparison novel:

Why did you choose this book? What element/s are you comparing and what do you want to pay attention to?

What about the protagonist draws you in, catches your sympathy, makes you care?

Who narrates the novel? What is their point-of-view and tone of voice? Do they comment on the action? How does this voice makes you feel towards the situation or characters?

What is the main conflict or problem?

What scene or aspect of the book do you like most and why?

Is there anything you aren't so keen on and why?

How does the novel end? Is it satisfying? How do you feel after finishing? Does it work?

What lessons are you taking from this book to put into your own writing?

CHAPTER	WHAT HAPPENS	NOTES

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