

DIALOGUE

Dialogue is not real talk.

Dialogue is highly selective language that either reveals character or moves the story forward. What is the conflict at the core of the scene? Do the characters in scene discuss the desire of one of the characters? Who speaks against the desire? Directly or indirectly?

VALUES IN CONFLICT: Great drama is not the product of two individuals butting heads, but the product of values and ideas coming into collision. Conflict of values involves a fight over what people believe in and what actions they consider to be right or wrong.

WRITING SCENES:

- Before writing any scene, state your protagonist's character change in one line.
- Where is the scene positioned in your protagonist's character arc?
- How does the scene propel the story or the protagonist to take another step?
- What are you trying to accomplish with the scene?
- Whose desire will drive the scene?
- What strategy will they use to achieve their desire? Direct or indirect?
- What is the endpoint of the character's goal in the scene?
- Who will oppose the character's desire?
- Will the scene build to an apex of conflict or a peaceful solution?
- Will there be a twist?
- Does one character make a value judgement about an action? Event? Character?
- Do key words, phrases, sounds, images reflect the theme of your story?
- Make sure that each character has a unique voice.

The mantra of good characters: "*I WANT, THEREFORE I AM.*"