



Conflict and Suspense

James Scott Bell

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Conflict pulls readers into a story and suspense carries them along until its conclusion. Expert author of over 15 thrillers, James Scott Bell offers proven techniques that help writers craft fiction that their readers won't be able to put down. Learn how to believably weave conflict and suspense into a story, how to pace your story and keep the pressure on throughout, and how to bring it all to a gripping conclusion.

Conflict and Suspense Details

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From Reader Review Conflict and Suspense for online ebook

Melissa Mahle says

I tend not to read a lot of craft books, except if I am having a problem in a story. I recently read Bell's book because my latest action/espionage plot seems to just plod along. I needed to up the stakes and hit the gas in the pacing. Bell provides an excellent technical review on structure in relationship to conflict. I highly recommend it.

Thiago d'Evecque says

Livro muito bom com muitas ferramentas práticas para adicionar conflito e suspense pelo seu livro, desde o planejamento da história.

O autor define todos os conceitos de maneira clara e didática. Você aprende a pensar em ideias para histórias já imbuídas de conflito, personagens com traços que geram tensão, como iniciar o livro com conflito, estrutura para suspense e tensão, manter o 2º ato em movimento com cenas e sequências fortes, fortalecer descrições para fazerem "trabalho duplo", criar subtramas que se conectam com a trama principal, usar flashbacks melhores, diálogos, e váaaaarias outras técnicas.

Um dos meus favoritos.

Suzanne says

Another one for the keeper shelf from JSB. It includes some of the same concepts as Plot & Structure and Revision & Self-Editing (like the LOCK system and the character grid), but puts them in the context of increasing suspense and intensifying conflict. If you're trying to diagnose or avoid pacing problems in your novel, there are a lot of excellent considerations here.

Kelsea says

As with nearly every James Scott Bell writing book I've read, this one was excellent! On topic, with relevant examples from well-known books and movies, clear explanations and actionable items. Personally, I found that many of the suggestions were things I'd already discovered through trial and error, but there were new ideas I hadn't considered yet. Great for beginner writers, but also a useful refresher/checklist for more experienced writers.

G.M. Burrow says

Chockfull of brilliant pointers. What struck me as I kept reading advice like "Ramp up the tension!" "Tighten

it some more!" "Make bad things happen!" "Make *worse* things happen!" "Make your hero work harder!"--is how much more we'd enjoy our roles in God's story if we remembered that our best writing advice comes from observing the conflict and suspense in the best story ever told--*this* one. Ours.

Suzannah says

I took a quick break from my reading and other jobs to zip through this little book, and I'm so glad I did. I'm mostly self-taught in writing and plotting, and I do recommend the approach I took--learning by observance of plots you like--but this filled in the gaps I had and gave me a simpler understanding of the process.

My only criticism of this enormously helpful book (which I am so looking forward to putting into practice) is that while some of the author's advice would apply to any writer in any genre or any time, some of it is based upon a modernist understanding of story which authors like Jane Austen, Sir Walter Scott, JRR Tolkien, or Evelyn Waugh could and did easily ignore. But anyone who reads those or other authors attentively should be able to see where they diverge with this book.

Thanks, Mr Bell.

Vicki Hopkins says

Fantastic book. I love writing conflict into my stories. Frankly, it's the spice that keeps them going like the Energizer Bunny. People accuse me of torturing my characters, and this books gives me affirmation I'm doing it right.

James Scott Bell tells it like it is, with humor and great examples. It's nice to know when I get to my cliffhanger in my current novel, it's okay to hang my antagonist over the edge and drag my reader with him.

If you're a published author or aspiring writer, this is a wonderful reference. Frankly, it's the best of any how-to book I've purchased.

Bobbi says

Every book about writing that I've read gives me something; inspiration, direction, focus, or just the urge to sit down and write. So I'm tempted to give this 4 stars, but the annoyance of constant typos and missing words or letters is enough to drive that back down. I enjoyed this book, and it did give me some good ideas, although it is a bit smug and self-satisfied.

Claudio says

Este libro me ha impactado y dado vuelta. Es un libro con teoría, pero en esencia práctico y centrado. Se convirtió automáticamente en mi biblia de escritor y si bien lo tenía en versión digital, me lo compré en formato físico para poder subrayar y anotar.

No me casaré de decirlo: es un libro soberbio, indispensable si te interesa el tema.

Amanda at Nerdification Reviews says

I recommend reading *Conflict & Suspense* by James Scott Bell if you have finished a first draft and are ready to take the story you've written to the next level. We all know that conflict makes a compelling story, but how do you ensure you have enough? Or that the conflict you do have was executed correctly?

This book will explain what you tried to do, how you did it wrong, & what you can do to make it right. It'll also explain what you did right, but how you can still make it better.

nananatte says

This book is just GREAT!

Easy to read, loads of samples, straight to the point...

You'll get lots of practical advice for what you are looking for if you want to improve your current draft.

Lee Dunning says

I picked this book up on a whim. I just signed up for the 30-day free trial of Amazon's new Kindle Unlimited, and I snagged a bunch of books that had been languishing on my wish list, and this was one of the ten that made it from my list to my Kindle.

So, first of all, confession time. I added the book to my wish list based on the cover and a misunderstanding of the title. The cover shows a couple of chaps slashing at one another in a fencing display. The title also uses the word "conflict" and my mind jumped to "how to write fight scenes". Stupid brain.

This book has nothing to do with actual physical confrontation. It's about how to add conflict, drama, mystery and suspense in your writing through sentence structure, word choice, imaginative verbs, body language, appropriate use of cliff hangers, etc. And it's not just a 35 page "wham bam thank you ma'am" sort of writing book. It's 274 pages of detailed discussion on how to keep people turning the pages of your book. Many examples are utilized, and even though Mr. Bell has a tendency to reach for cinema examples (along with many literary examples), I don't mind so much because he also discusses the decisions directors like Alfred Hitchcock made in designing scenes in their movies, how they turned the mundane into something different and exciting.

And before you turn away because you think this book is only useful for those writing thriller or horror novels, stop and reconsider. Conflict, tension, uncertainty... these are elements needed in all styles of writing. That means you romance writers. You too chick lit, folks. What keeps us reading is wondering what is going to happen to the characters we've become invested in. You want to add interest to a boring scene where two friends meet for coffee? This book will explain what you're doing wrong and how to fix it. Turn that scene of boring, domestic, every day monotony into one that gets people's imaginations working.

I was quite enamored of what I read, and bookmarked several sections to go back to and read as a reference

or refresher. And once I was done I realized that another of his books, "Write Great Fiction - Plot & Structure" is the manual for my writing class I'm signed up for the fall semester at college. For once, I may actually enjoy reading my college textbook!

Highly recommended.

Jennifer Harper says

For a writer trying to hone my craft I found this book practical and insightful. Most of the stuff I knew, but it helps to have the information refreshed. This book is written in an engaging, optimistic style. A must read.

Teri-K says

If there's anything an author should know about creating conflict and suspense in their stories that isn't in this book, I'll be shocked. It's extremely thorough. It's also geared to be very helpful, with many clear steps to adding and increasing the tension in your writing. I plan to go through this book page by page and try everything when I'm ready to revise.

Highly recommended.

Lee Thompson says

Well worth your time and money if you want to improve as a writer. I just stole this from the book (because I agree with it completely) "Getting the words down is what makes a disciplined writer. Getting them down with the craft working for you is what makes a professional writer."

Highly recommended.
