

Defining (and Raising) the Stakes



Stakes make the reader care about whether or not your characters succeed. Use this worksheet to brainstorm ways your concept can include more explosive stakes, and see which ones feel right for your story.

1. Identify your story's key conflict (physical or emotional) in simple terms.

2. Brainstorm how that conflict can have physical AND emotional stakes.

3. How COULD you make it worse for your protagonist?

4. How COULD you add a deadline or ticking clock?

5. Brainstorm even more ways you COULD physically or emotionally complicate the situation.
