The Premise Alignment Pyramid

Twitter Pitch

Query Letter / Back Cover Copy

Synopsis

The Setup

Full Manuscript
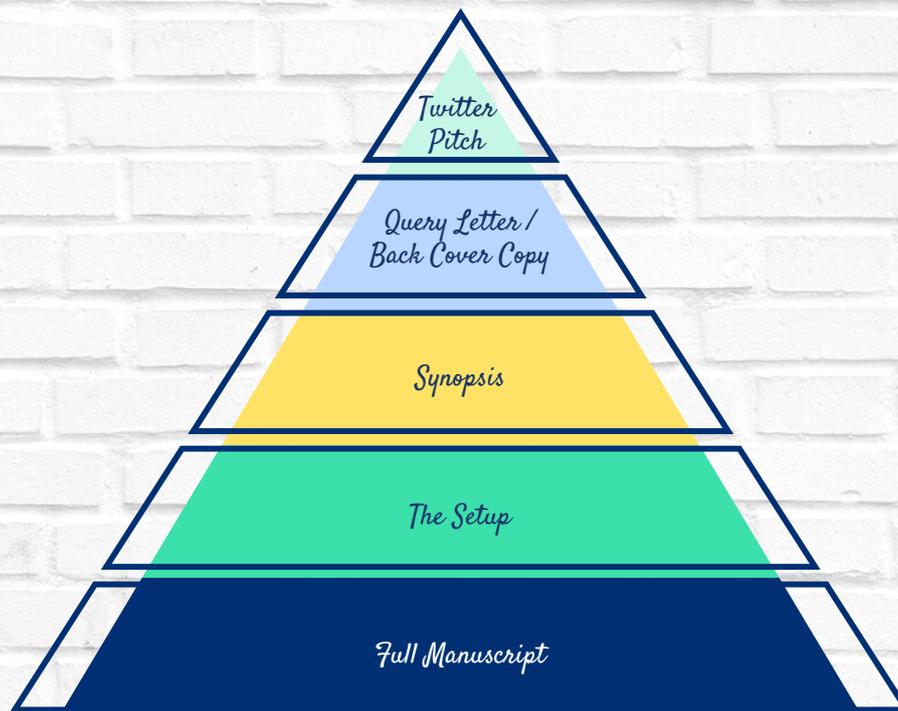
The minimum an editor/reader needs to decide whether or not the book is for them. This includes: who your main characters are (i.e. relevant information that signals either genre or enhances the conflict), what their main objective is, and the conflict that prevents them from achieving it.

A three-ish paragraph sales pitch of your book. Adds in details that develop the conflict or set the scene, i.e. location/setting, the circumstances that lead up to the inciting conflict, and what will keep the couple apart (the barrier to the romance). Can also hint at what the MCs' internal arcs will look like (GMCs).

Basically one big sketch of all the story/plot (external), character (internal), and romantic arcs in the book. All the choices made, turning points, and aha! moments go here, and anything that changes the characters in some significant way (physically, mentally, and emotionally). From start to finish!

The first 25 - 30% of your book that dives headlong into the story (i.e. your sample pages). Should actually introduce and *show* on-page everything you've mentioned in your pitch, query letter, and first few paragraphs of your synopsis, focusing on establishing the characters' normal world & internal conflict arcs.

Should take the substantiated expectations from the setup and subvert them in some way—not super twisty and turny (unless you're writing romsus or mystery), but to show a journey that ends in something that the secondary characters, MCs themselves, or readers didn't know the protag could have or do at the end.

What does your pitch need to contain for the stakes & conflict to be clear?

What new information does your query letter reveal/develop from your pitch?

What expectations or resolutions are you normalizing for your reader?

How and *does* your setup take the reader on the journey(s) you've sketched?

Did you answer/resolve all the implicit & explicit questions created?

The Ribbon Marker

Kate Marope is a freelance developmental editor who has been working with traditional and self-published authors for the last 7 years to find their voice and tell their stories in the most compelling way possible. Her content strives to encourage authors to precision self-edit with sagacity. Kate is a member of the Editorial Freelancers Association (EFA) and is currently an acquisitions editor at Harlequin's digital-first imprint, Carina Press.

Let's Connect!