

Chris Bradford's Five Top Tips For Writing Adventure Stories

1. Start with a bang!

Your first paragraph has to capture the attention of the reader. Ensure your opening begins in the middle of the action, like this: "Jack's blood pounded in his ears. His heart raced. His lungs burnt for oxygen. But he couldn't stop now."

2. Keep it short and punchy.

If you want to give a sense of action and speed, short sharp sentences are best. But be careful not to use short sentences all the time, otherwise the effect will be lost. It's the contrast between long and short that results in this feeling of speed. It may help if you think of sentences as the 'rhythm' of the story, like a heartbeat.

3. Research your topic.

Whatever you decide to write about (martial arts, cars, scuba diving, sailing, rock climbing, etc), do a little bit of research first. This will give you ideas for your plot, as well as make the story seem real. For example, while researching *Young Samurai*, I discovered the legendary Butterfly Kick was real and got Jack to learn the technique in the first book, *The Way of the Warrior*.

4. Ensure every word counts.

Check every word you've written is actually needed in the story. Over-description, too many adverbs, repetitions can all make your book feel bloated, slow and dull to read. So once you've finished your story, read through it again and remove any unnecessary words that slow up the action or do not add to the story. For example, 'He shouted loudly' – the adverb 'loudly' can be deleted, since the act of shouting is loud and this word is not adding to the story.

5. Write the story you would love to read yourself.

That's what I did! I've been training in martial arts since I was 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ years old and I've always wanted to be a samurai or a ninja, so I wrote a story about being one. The formula for a good adventure story is simple – if you get excited by your idea, then others will too.

For more information on Chris Bradford and *Young Samurai*, visit www.youngsamurai.com