How to write a novel...
Check your impulse
Author’s earnings per year = £5k average
Source: Society of Authors
So why are you here – why isn’t your novel already written?
Getting started

‘That afternoon there was rain, just as she’d said there would be...’
Why do we abandon our beginnings?
The haves and the have nots
“The novel went through many drafts and there were large sections I cut completely. I find the initial writing (as opposed to the subsequent rewriting) hard and the results often feel lumpen.

A novel is such a mess for a long time and that’s what you have to be prepared to deal with – to face this mess every day.”

“How I write” Emily Perkins
Time Out Interview
1% inspiration 99% perspiration
Some key components of a successful first draft
‘Strong’ characters and good characterisation
Finding the plot
‘Immensely diverting … a pacy read, constructed with a crisp control of tension and narrative drive’

Observer
Structure
Writing what you know vs research
- either way, proceed with caution
Whose story is it anyway?

Narrative point of view
Showing vs telling
“dramatise, dramatise, dramatise”
Henry James
Effective dialogue, description, setting...
Knowing your reader...and by extension your market
Constructive feedback
A craft like any other
Further reading

• How novels work by John Mullan

• Creative Writing: a workbook with readings (ed. Linda Anderson,)

• The Creative Writing Coursebook: Forty Authors Share Advice and Exercises for Fiction and Poetry by Julia Bell, Andrew Motion

• A Creative Writing Handbook: developing dramatic technique, individual style and voice

• From pitch to publication by Carole Blake