Lesson Two

Layer 2: Should YOUR story be in Deep POV?

Writing a book in Deep POV is an intentional choice, just as any other choice in our writing is.

So far, I've outlined several benefits to using Deep POV; closer connection to the character, stronger voice, allows for greater "showing," etc.

But this doesn't mean every book is meant to be written in Deep POV. In fact, following a large cast may mean keeping an outsider POV in order to follow all the events. Or, if you are writing a book that relies on the readers knowing more than the characters, then Deep POV may not be right for your story.

Remember that Deep POV is a severely limited perspective—we can't learn anything outside of that character's point of view (or each character, if you are writing multiple POV).

Deep POV is ideal for stories that are character driven. This does not mean stories that lack plot. It means stories that intertwine the plot and the character journey so completely that one could not exist without the other. This can be done in most genres, and you'll find that my style as a book coach is to encourage enhanced character journeys no matter what. Readers read to see how a character moves through a situation in life, and how they change because of it. If their growth and journey is essential to your story, directly influenced by and because of the plot, then Deep POV may be the right move for you.

Making this decision requires answers to the following:

1. Whose story is this? (Who are readers supposed to care about?)
2. Is there more than one character whose story this is? Do they need their POV to be featured just as heavily as the other(s)?
3. If we limit the book through only a few POVs, what, if anything, will readers not learn that is essential to the story?
    a. Do they need to learn this information before (or in a different way than) the character does?
4. What genre is your book? Who is the main audience?
    a. Is Deep POV a common method of writing in your genre/audience?
5. What are the benefits of having such a limited perspective for your story?
    a. What are the cons?
6. Is your narrator (POV character) reliable or unreliable?
7. How would Deep POV enhance your story?
8. How would Deep POV limit your story?
9. Bonus Q: What does your gut say about using Deep POV in this book?

If you write a story in Deep POV, it's unlikely that working in a less limited or omniscient POV will in small increments will feel right for your story. The ones in which this is most common is thriller/suspense/mystery—when we see inside the villain's POV.

However, outside of that, it's ideal to limit the number of POV characters in your novel. We use Deep POV not only to create a strong character voice and connection to the reader, but to offer a limited view point of the story. The more POVs we have, the less intimate a story may feel.

Homework

For your homework, **I want you to pick one of your stories in progress,** especially one that you are on the fence about POV-wise; whether it's already written in deep POV, needs to be changed to it, or you just have no idea yet.

Then, answer the following questions:

1. Whose story is this? (Who are readers supposed to care about?)
2. Is there more than one character whose story this is? Do they need their POV to be featured just as heavily as the other(s)?
3. If we limit the book through only a few POVs, what, if anything, will readers not learn that is essential to the story?
   a. Do they need to learn this information before (or in a different way than) the character does?
4. What genre is your book? Who is the main audience?
   a. Is Deep POV a common method of writing in your genre/audience?
5. What are the benefits of having such a limited perspective for your story?
   a. What are the cons?
6. Is your narrator (POV character) reliable or unreliable?
7. How would Deep POV enhance your story?
8. How would Deep POV limit your story?
9. Bonus Q: What does your gut say about using Deep POV in this book?

*If you are having trouble doing this homework on your own WIP, then grab a book you are familiar with and answer these questions.

What is the consensus? Should your story be in Deep POV? And how many POV characters are absolutely necessary?

Your end result here doesn't mean this is the only choice for your work. It's just to get you to think about the reasoning for or against using Deep POV and when it is essential.

Even if we aren't making deliberate choices as we write our first draft, when it comes to revisions and readying a manuscript for readers, every decision from that point on must be deliberately chosen.

By the end of the class—and the end of exploring the layers of Deep POV—you'll know for certain if your book should be in Deep POV or not.