



PLAUSIBILITY AND POSSIBILITY

AUDIO NOTES OUTLINE

Characters can function plausibly while still allowing for dramatic possibility.

CHARACTERS ARE PEOPLE UNDER PRESSURE

Your story needs to open up your characters to dramatic possibility while not breaching plausibility.

Draw a diagram of how characters might move between these two points

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN GENERATING SCENE IDEAS

Note which relate to plausibility and which relate to possibility:

1. Would she could she?
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



APPLY THESE QUESTIONS TO YOUR WORK AND SCENES

1. Are you characters _____?
2. Do they _____?
- 3.

Look at your scene list and identify characters who aren't working as hard as they could be.

EXERCISE: EXPANDING STORY IDEAS

Read the story ideas below. Choose one and in the **Expanding Story Ideas Forum** list some ideas for what could happen next. Make sure the ideas generate dramatic possibility without challenging plausibility.

1. Horatio is a hard-hearted thief, intent on collecting enough gold pieces to buy his freedom from the Galactic Colony. While raiding the dead body of a prostitute out in Quadrant Four, he discovers a helpless newborn child. What does he do?
 - He wouldn't instantly adopt the baby and change his ways to become the perfect dad (not plausible); he couldn't abandon it (no dramatic possibility). So what *does* he do?
2. Annie is a childless sixty-year old kindly teacher who enjoys the quiet life. One day, a man she's never seen before arrive at pick-up time and bundles one of the children quickly out of the gate. The child is crying, the man looks like a thug. What does she do?
 - She wouldn't crash tackle him (not plausible); she couldn't just phone the police and wait (no dramatic possibility). So what *does* she do?



3. Rachel is an uptight religious woman, secretly still in love with her ex-husband. One night when he comes for dinner with the children, he brings a new girlfriend whom Rachel hates immediately. What does she do?
 - She wouldn't poison the girlfriend (not plausible); she couldn't suffer silently through the whole dinner (no dramatic possibility). So what *does* she do?

4. Godfrey is a hen-pecked husband who has never made a decision without his wife's interference. Now she's mortally sick, comatose, and in need of a heart transplant or she will die. She's next on the donor list, but no hearts are available. What does he do?
 - He wouldn't go straight out and murder a donor (not plausible); he couldn't wait and hope passively (no dramatic possibility). So what *does* he do?

EXERCISE: EXPANDING YOUR STORY

Let's liven the middle of your story. Do you need to flesh it out more? Can you generate new scene ideas?

WHAT TO DO:

1. Think about the middle of your own story.
 - Do you need to flesh it out some more?
 - Can you use the interplay between plausibility and possibility to generate new scene ideas?
2. Discuss your thoughts on the **Expanding Your Story Forum**. Provide some support and ideas for at least two other class members.