

# Get your First 1,000 Readers

Stan C. Smith

## Step 5: Writing your Book's *Tagline* and *Description*

Remember, the goal is for everyone to end up having a finished product, published on Amazon, with edited content, a high-quality cover, and a growing collection of reviews. Then we will go through the process of putting your reader magnet to work for you as an author!

We've already talked extensively about *what* a Reader Magnet is and why it's a good idea to have one, how to *plan* your Reader Magnet, how to get it *written*, how to *edit* it, and then how to choose a high-quality *cover*! (see the previous handouts for Steps 1-4—they are available on the WoW website Resources page: <https://writersofwsbg.weebly.com/resources.html>).

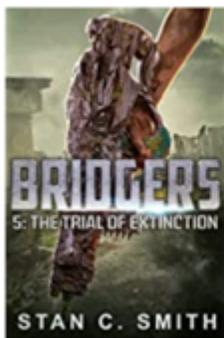
Now it's time to write your book's *tagline* (also called the *hook*) and *description* (also called the *blurb*).

NOTE: Some of the following ideas are borrowed from Dave Chesson's Book Description Formula (<https://kindlepreneur.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Book-Description-Formula.pdf>)

### What is a Tagline?

The tagline is the *hook* that gets potential readers to look more closely at your book. Usually one sentence, but sometimes several short sentences. It shows up *before* your description.

**Example:**



#### Bridgers 5: The Trial of Extinction (Bridgers Series)

Jul 28, 2019

by Stan C. Smith

★★★★★ (53)

\$3.99

**Annihilation has a way of following some people.**

Infinity and Desmond are bridgers, sworn to protect travelers to alternate versions of Earth. But now their own Earth has been

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**Tagline**

**Description**

### Your Book's Tagline is Important!

Why? Because people will not read the description if the tagline doesn't appeal to them.

1. *Your Reader Magnet book will probably be available on **Amazon**.*  
Generally, people look at the book's cover first. If the cover interests them, they will read your tagline. If the tagline interests them, they will read the description. If the tagline doesn't interest them, they will move on to something else.
2. *Your Reader Magnet book will probably be offered in **multi-author book promotions**.*  
Your book will be offered among a few dozen other books. If people like your book's cover, they will click it to find out more. Then they will read the tagline. If the tagline interests

them, they will read the description. If the tagline doesn't interest them, they will move on to something else.

3. *Your book will probably be available on your **website**.*

See both comments above. Readers will not bother to grab your book if they don't find the tagline to be appealing. They won't read the description if they aren't intrigued by your tagline!

### ***More Tagline Examples:***

Bridgers 1: **Some worlds are better left alone.**

Bridgers 2: **How far would you go to save the human species?**

Savage: **If you have found this book, the end of the world has already begun.**

Obsolete Theorem: **A time jump. A fight for survival. A bond between species.**

Infinity: **Infinite worlds. Extreme danger. One fearless woman.**

Diffusion Box Set: **INCLUDES THE ENTIRE SERIES. Over 1,200 pages to feed your sense of wonder.**

The Atlantis Gene by A.G. Riddle: **The greatest mystery of all time...  
the history of human origins...  
will be revealed.**

A Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood: **Now a Hulu Original Series**

Stateline: A Crime Thriller by Dave Stanton: **Cancel the wedding—the groom is dead**

### ***Tips for writing a good tagline***

- Above all... write a tagline that would make *you* want to read the book.
- Keep it short and punchy.
- Go to Amazon and look at other examples in your genre
- Write your tagline *after* you write your description (I find it easier that way)

### ***What is a book description?***

Several paragraphs (usually 100 to 200 words) that *sell* the book. It shows up after the tagline. Notice that I said the description *sells* the book—it is *not* a summary of the story!

### ***Your Book's Description is Important!***

Why? If people like your tagline, next they will read your description. If they like your description, they will either buy (or download) your book, or they will look at the reviews before buying.

## Example of a Book Description:

(from *Obsolete Theorem*)

**A time jump. A fight for survival. A bond between species.** ← **Tagline**

*It wasn't possible, but then it happened...* ← **Bonus Tagline**

A Neanderthal's 47,000-year-old remains are found in Spain. That's not unusual, but positioned beside the woman's skeleton is something that shouldn't be there—a robotic drone. Lincoln Woodhouse has some explaining to do. ← **Establish story's setting**

When confronted with the evidence, Lincoln cannot deny that the drone is one of his own models. After all, he routinely jumps his drones into the past to collect environmental data. The problem is, this drone shouldn't even exist in Lincoln's universe. Everyone knows sending a drone into the past creates an alternate timeline.

The implications of the discovery are staggering, and Lincoln is ordered to jump back in time to investigate, even though no human has ever done so before. Upon jumping, he and his team find themselves in a world of deadly creatures and savage beings.

Amidst the primeval chaos, Lincoln encounters Skyra, a woman unlike anyone he has ever known. She is a skilled hunter and vicious fighter. She is not human, but she just might hold the key to humanity's future. ← **Several brief paragraphs that introduce the main character(s) and shows the emotional impact of events on that character.**

**Obsolete Theorem, the first book in the new Across Horizons series, is perfect for readers who love time travel, deadly creatures, wilderness survival, and unforgettable characters.** ← **The last of these paragraphs should be the "mic drop" moment**

**Scroll up and grab your copy today!** ← **Tells what kind of book this is and who would like it.**

**CTA (call to action)**  
**Encourages readers to grab the book now!**

## Tips for writing a good book description

- Avoid the temptation to summarize the plot. This is not a book report. It is an advertisement to sell the book. You are *selling* the book, not *describing* it!
- Book descriptions are written in **present tense**, even if your story is written in past tense.
- Writing a description is *hard* for authors. Be sure to get help. Ask others who have *not* read your book to read your description. Does it make them want to read the book?
- Do not reveal any of the plot twists!
- Focus on the emotional, personal aspects of the story. Pull at the reader's heartstrings. What does the conflict really mean to your protagonist? How difficult is it for him/her?
- Emphasize how high the stakes are for your protagonist (and possibly for the whole world).
- Keep the paragraphs as short as possible.
- Keep the whole description under 200 words.

## ***Let's break it down:***

### **First paragraph – establishing the story's setting**

A Neanderthal's 47,000-year-old remains are found in Spain. That's not unusual, but positioned beside the woman's skeleton is something that shouldn't be there—a robotic drone. Lincoln Woodhouse has some explaining to do.

Briefly describe the overall premise that sets the story in motion. Do it in a way that intrigues the reader. You do not have to introduce the main character(s), but I thought the last sentence above was intriguing (and slightly humorous). Keep the paragraph short.

### ***Another example (from *Pandemic* by A.G. Riddle):***

A hundred miles north of Alaska, a US Coast Guard vessel discovers a sunken submarine at the bottom of the Arctic Ocean. It has no national identification and doesn't match the records of any known vessel. Deep within, researchers find evidence of a scientific experiment that will rewrite our basic understanding of the human race.

### **Second and third paragraphs – introduce protagonist(s) and conflict**

When confronted with the evidence, Lincoln cannot deny that the drone is one of his own models. After all, he routinely jumps his drones into the past to collect environmental data. The problem is, this drone shouldn't even exist in Lincoln's universe. Everyone knows sending a drone into the past creates an alternate timeline.

The implications of the discovery are staggering, and Lincoln is ordered to jump back in time to investigate, even though no human has ever done so before. Upon jumping, he and his team find themselves in a world of deadly creatures and savage beings.

Describe your protagonist and the role he/she plays in the overall conflict. Remember... emphasize the emotional impact of the conflict on your character. Make the reader care about the character. Make the reader want to know what is going to happen to the character. Keep the paragraphs short! Be sure to look on Amazon at plenty of examples in your specific genre.

### **Fourth paragraph – the “mic drop” moment**

Amidst the primeval chaos, Lincoln encounters Skyra, a woman unlike anyone he has ever known. She is a skilled hunter and vicious fighter. She is not human, but she just might hold the key to humanity's future.

This is where you show the most dramatic, high-stakes concept of the story, but without giving any spoilers. The reader should think, *Oohhh cool! I have to read this!*

***Another example (from *When We Believed in Mermaids* by Barbara O'Neal):***

Now, if two sisters are to reunite, it can only be by unearthing long-buried secrets and facing a devastating truth that has kept them apart far too long. To regain their relationship, they may have to lose everything.

**Fifth paragraph – what kind of book is this, and who will like it?**

**Obsolete Theorem, the first book in the new Across Horizons series, is perfect for readers who love time travel, deadly creatures, wilderness survival, and unforgettable characters.**

This helps potential readers decide if the book is their cup of tea. Some authors like to compare their book to other books, to the work of other authors, or to popular movies. Keep it brief and punchy. Look at other examples on Amazon.

***Another example (from *When We Believed in Mermaids* by Barbara O'Neal):***

**From the author of *The Art of Inheriting Secrets* comes an emotional new tale of two sisters, an ocean of lies, and a search for the truth.**

***Another example (from *Harley Merlin and Secret Coven* by Bella Forrest):***

**Potter fans, welcome to an exciting new world.**

**Sixth paragraph – CTA (Call to Action)**

**Scroll up and grab your copy today!**

Research has shown that more people buy (or download) books if the description ends with a quick statement about grabbing the book. It helps to include the word *now* or *today*.

***Another example (from *BBQ and a Side of No Apologies* by Michael Anderle):***

Go up and click **Read Now** or **Buy Now** to find out what happens when James reminds everyone why they should fear the Granite Ghost.

***Based on these guidelines,  
I wrote my Tagline and Description for my Reader Magnet.***

Title:

**Fused: Training Day**

Possible Tagline:

**Having a body made of alien nanoparticles has its advantages. Figuring out how to use it is the problem.**

First Draft of Blurb:

A year ago, the world was almost destroyed by an alien artifact. Then the artifact went missing. It lies hidden somewhere, a ticking bomb of potential destruction. Bobby Truex knows exactly where it is.

Bobby is only sixteen, but he has seen more tragedy than most people will ever see. Now he just wants to be Bobby Truex. He wants to read books, explore the forest and river near his new home, maybe have a girlfriend. Most of all, he doesn't want to hurt anyone.

But how can you live a normal life if your body is the most dangerous thing on Earth? Bobby realizes he needs to learn what he's capable of and what he should never try to do. For this, he enlists the help of Ashley, the only girl who knows he is no longer human.

Bobby is a fast learner, but learning requires trial and error. If he succeeds, maybe he can make the world a better place. If he fails... well, anything could happen.

**FUSED: TRAINING DAY is a *novella* for readers who love alien contact, mind-bending concepts, and coming-of-age stories.**

**Scroll up and grab your copy today to find out why having unlimited power isn't all it's cracked up to be.**