

Welcome! Today we'll decide if you'll want to use serials to supplement your income while writing traditionally or self-published novels. We'll discuss pros and cons of two platforms. I'll also share my tips and tricks for successful serials, and you can work on these activities below both during and after our session.

First of all, what IS Vella?

Vella is a serial platform managed by Amazon. It's similar to Wattpad, but episodes are paid for through purchased tokens rather than subscriptions. The Vella info page can be found in your KDP author dashboard; [this link will take you there directly](#).

- A. Vella requires you to write episodes of between 600-5,000 words, and I have some pros and cons about it near the end of this worksheet. You can update episodes, but not change the order easily, and what is attractive to most writers is that you can then still self-publish it if you wait a bit—make sure to read the most current policies, though.
- B. You get paid out by episodes and through bonuses which may or may not last.
- C. It's easy to upload your work and you can also publish elsewhere later, according to current TOS, but all work must be previously unpublished.

Tips for getting more faves, likes and crowns on Vella.

- 1. Include your name as one of your tags so that you link to other stories.
- 2. Use all your tags. Make some genre related and some content related.
- 3. Keep author notes short and meaningful, but not so meaningful they slow the reader down. Skip them entirely until ep 4 or 5.
- 4. Same with polls; use them sparingly and don't let them get in the way.
- 5. Keep episodes short. Why? You'll get more thumbs, and other readers will be more willing to trade with you.
- 6. Don't change your pic. Change an element, sure.
- 7. End each episode with at least some suspense or story questions.
- 8. Promote one story at a time to maximize effect; you want to move up in that rank and let Amazon do the work of promoting for you.

Is Vella right for you?

Deciding to publish on Vella boils down to a few key questions; some have yes/no answers for which you can and should consult Vella (regarding copyrights). If you know your work is eligible, and/or if you haven't started your serial yet, then here are some considerations! (These questions don't have to be all "yesses," but they should get you thinking!) We'll discuss soon. Please jot down some notes to yourself!

Do you work well with schedules and writing deadlines? Do they motivate you?

Do you enjoy getting immediate feedback on your work?

Do you have a completed work to release?

If not, and you wish to release as you write, is most of your editing at the micro level rather than story arc level?

Do you have a strong marketing presence? Do you enjoy being on social media?

Have you used Canva/do you feel comfortable with Canva or Adobe?

Does your novel typically rely on short chapters, and or are you familiar with chapter-end "hooks?"

If writing non-fiction or considering short stories, does your compilation have a clear theme or thread?

Pros to Vella versus Kindle Unlimited/KENP

Monthly bonuses that average about 300 a month if you add episodes regularly

The ability to quickly edit and re-release episode by episode

The ability to change even author names or keywords quickly

A very easy user interface

Shorter episodes and series can bring in strong bonuses

You can republish later and retain rights and thus build a base before release

Cons

Low overall income per read as compared to KENP

Series are hard to link or access for readers

Larger revisions that change episode work counts are very tricky

Amazon hasn't developed enough support for authors (yet)

Serials cannot be linked to your Amazon author page (yet)

Feel free to take notes here on my tips for getting more likes, faves, and crowns:

Using author notes to your advantage

After seeing some of my sample author notes, let's brainstorm a few ideas for what makes your series unique, and or what makes YOU unique and personable. The goal here is to engage your audience so they feel like a part of the writing process, while also propelling them to the next episode without being *too* distracted. This is a tricky balance. To get you started:

What aspect of your life/personality/writing process are you interested in sharing publicly in author notes to engage a reader?

What tone or voice would you like to strike, and why? How does this relate to your current public persona and/or social media presence?

What kind of quirk might you bring to keep readers hooked? I.e. a “fun fact,” an “Easter egg,” a hint at upcoming drama or events? Either brainstorm an overall approach, or freewrite on how you think you might use author notes for that first episode!

Great! Make sure to surf around and look at several stories on Vella yourself to see how the blurbs work! Here is my science fantasy, [a People’s History of Magic](#), and here is my nonfiction series on writing a series for Vella, [Seriously Good Serials](#).