

IDEAS TO HELP YOU WRITE!

So you want to write. The question is will it be a short story, poem or novel? You may start with a short story but end up writing a book. It doesn't matter as long as you manage to put words down on paper. Remember your first draft will not necessarily be your last one.

Choose somewhere peaceful to sit and write. Maybe you like to have background music, usually something calming and soothing rather than rock or heavy metal. Be comfortable and relaxed. No stress means your thoughts will flow easier.

So having decided to write what comes next?

1) As with any writing you have to first decide on a plot. This is what your story is about. Make a list of things, people, events etc that you would like in your story. It's best to write things down in a notepad before you start writing your book. You can use your list to refer back to later on or you can keep adding to it as you think of new ideas. Remember you will not use all your ideas in one story but you must always start with the basics.

2) Ask yourself where is your story going to take place? Try researching on the internet for descriptions of places where your story might take place if you don't already know. Check out Google images for ideas on what something or someone might look like. You can also get images of characters whose description you can adapt to suit your own.

3) Decide who is going to be your main character – make a short description of what you want that person to look like; are they male or female, do they work; what other things might they do. What is their part in the story?

4) Who are the other characters – there will probably be different types and levels eg second characters who interact with the main one; other characters who might have a small part to play in the story somewhere but are not constant. Again write a brief description about each character; what they might look like, what they do etc.

5) Having worked out your basic plot and the characters you want in your story split it into 3 sections. You will need a beginning, middle and an end to your story. All stories are made up of these three basic elements.

- a) Where and how do you want to start your story? Are you using the age of the main character and beginning with that person at a certain age. Or does it start at the point of an event.
- b) What happens in the middle? If necessary write a series of short scenes or events and what happens to your characters in those scenes. Once you have these you can tie them together.
- c) Decide how you want the story to end – will it be happy, sad or will it be left open for a sequel book.

Sometimes it helps to build a story backwards eg start with the ending and work out how you got to it. In my novel I started by writing 20 letters which occurred between the two main characters. This gave me the basis of the story. I also re-wrote the plot 3 times before I settled

on the one I published. And I changed the ending to allow, as one of my readers asked, me to write a second book which follows the story line onwards.

One you start writing dedicate allow yourself to your craft for a certain amount of time per day. Also, you don't have to write only in the morning; some famous authors do their best work late at night or even in the middle of the night. If you get writers block (and yes it does exist) then stop, do something else and come back to writing once you are ready to continue. Sometimes you might find your writing flows so keep on writing otherwise stop when you need a rest. Don't struggle enjoy your craft?

Once you get your story to a stage where there is something to read why not send it to us and we will critique it for you. Sometimes it's best to send us the first 3 chapters so we can assess how good your opening is before you proceed any further. Otherwise you can wait until you have written your first, second or third draft before contacting us for a review. Remember a writer can re-write their story many, many times before they are happy with the finished result. And even then you might end up changing it again.

Remember writing is not always easy but whilst it can be a challenge it is also a joy. So Good luck and if you need some help or advice please free to contact us.

Email: penandinkdesigns@hotmail.com

Website: www.penandinkdesigns.co.uk