



Writing Right Newsletter

CALLING ALL POETS!

POETRY SOUGHT

November is Poetry Month for Writing Right and we are pleased to announce a new poetry competition. Poems up to 25 lines, on any subject, may be submitted until the 14th of November. Prize is a 128MG USB Flash Drive kindly donated by Anyware Computer Accessories Pty Ltd. The Winner will be announced at our November meeting, when Tony DeLorger will be the speaker and his subject will be **Writing Poetry**. This meeting will coincide with the launch of his latest poetry book.

Submit to us on dyozy@ozemail.com.au. Copyright remains with the writer and the intention is to promote member's work.

The October Meeting on Friday, October 20th at 6.30 pm in the SA Writers' Centre, Rundle Street, 2nd floor above Café Buongiorno.—and the following month Tony De Lorger will announce the poetry winner and will speak on POETRY

**WRITING RIGHT ANTHOLOGY NOW ONLY \$15
PLUS POSTAGE \$20**

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**Critique Session on
SATURDAY
OCTOBER 7th
at 12 Sandford St,
Kensington Gdns (in
cottage at rear)
Ph: 8332 6085
at 2.00pm**

**Next Meeting on
FRIDAY
OCTOBER 20th
in the SA Writers' Centre
Rundle St,
2nd floor above
Cafe Buongiorno
at 6.30pm**

***** Writing Right Labeled Wine *****

Labeled bottles still available at \$10 each.

The wine was approved by our best taste buds at the Awards Dinner during the conference, perhaps they will become collectors' items and increase in value with age.

EIGHT GREAT WAYS TO JUMP-START YOUR WRITING

It's unwelcome, but inevitable: someday you'll face the dreaded affliction known as "writer's block." This damnable malady may wreak havoc on your creativity for a day, week or month (let's not even consider a full year!), but you don't have to be a willing victim! You can combat and conquer "writer's block" with these eight sure-fire remedies designed to crank up your creative urges and jump-start your writing. Guaranteed!

1. START A DREAM DIARY

Some of the best "scenes" and storylines come are those which spring unbidden from the deepest recesses of your unconscious mind. If you're not inclined to snapping on the nightlight to frantically scribble down the remnants of a fast-fading dream, buy an inexpensive compact tape recorder and record your impressions upon awakening.

If you're unable to recall every last tidbit of your dream, don't fret! Just as snippets of newspaper articles can be used as a catalyst for your next story, dream snippets can provide unique bits and pieces which can be woven together later on to spice up plots, characters or spark ideas for nonfiction articles.

2. KEEP A JOURNAL

Keeping a journal is one of the most effective ways of combating writer's block. Make your journal as nonrestrictive and unthreatening as possible. No one will be sitting behind your shoulder counting off points for grammar, punctuation or paragraph structure! Silence your inner critic and write honestly about what you're sensing or experiencing. Are you angry? Sad? Euphoric? Why? Be as specific and descriptive as possible. Don't set limits on the frequency or length of your entries; instead, concentrate on consistently writing in your journal, whether it be daily, weekly or monthly.

A word of advice: although some writers use computers for journaling, the aesthetic experience of journaling with good, old-fashioned pen and paper appeals more to the writer within me. It's your choice, but regardless of your preference, the basic idea is to give your creative self free rein. You may be hard-pressed to sit down "cold" and produce the first chapter of your book, so allow yourself a "warm up" by journaling.

3. BUY A BOOK OF BABY NAMES

The purchase of a pocket book of baby names can not only be a tool in naming your next character, it can also be used as a way to recharge your imagination. Each week, choose a name or two from the book and develop a character sketch out of the impressions you receive from saying and thinking about the name you've chosen. What would this person look like? What personality traits would they possess? Who are their relatives, and what are their names? Where would a person named Beauregard be born, and under what circumstances? How would they dress, and what foods would they prefer?

Whether you've chosen Maribelle or Myrtle, develop a person from that name using your impressions and personal poetic license. The stable of characters you create can then be used to people your upcoming short stories or novels, and the plot twists will evolve naturally from your characters' flaws and weaknesses.

4. EXPAND YOUR POWERS OF OBSERVATION

If you're not already an avid people watcher, become one. Begin ferreting out expressions and mannerisms of members of the general public engaged in daily activity. Note any habits that could be used as an effective "tag" for your fictional characters. Carry a small notepad and record not only people's characteristics or witticisms, but the surroundings, as well. People tend to behave differently depending on whether they're attending church or attending a football game.

Jot down the flora and fauna of your hometown surroundings, as well as any areas you visit or vacation. Observe the similarities of people living in small towns, mid-sized cities or large, sprawling urban areas. Use these simple notes and observations as a springboard for setting in your next story.

Although your fictional setting may not be a real town, you can easily fool your reader into believing there is a town by adding authentic sights, sounds and smells borrowed from your people/place-watching notes.

5. BRAINSTORM/FREE-ASSOCIATE

Brainstorming and free-association ranks at the top of effective ways to

energize your brain cells into a more inventive mode. Simply allow yourself five minutes to jot down any words that come to mind. Put your pen to paper (or your fingers to keyboard) and write as many as you can within the time allotted. Don't allow your internal critic to censor anything—write every single thing that pops into your mind.

That done, take an additional ten minutes and read each word you wrote down, writing the first words that come to mind when you go back over your initial list. Don't just shoot for associated words, dig deeper into your subconscious and give voice to any impressions you receive. Once your time is up, study the words you've culled from your subconscious. Are there any obvious storylines or characters there?

Play the "what if" game with each of the words. Pair the words together, using different combinations to spark your imagination. Then re-pair them, using the resulting combinations as a beginning for a whole new range of plot/character possibilities.

6. CUT IT OUT!

Cut pictures, photographs and headlines from magazines and newspapers. Anything that strikes your fancy or piques your curiosity should be perfect targets for clipping. Use both people and objects, as well as beautiful scenery that inspires you. Add your collection of clippings to a large basket or box and randomly withdraw five clippings.

Use the clippings to develop a story, asking yourself who, what, why, where, when and how. Who is the little girl in the picture, and where are her parents? What is her hometown like, and how long has she lived there? When is she due home for dinner, and why is she happy/sad in the picture?

7. GIVE YOURSELF A WORKING VACATION

Once a week, spend a single day writing for nothing but pleasure. Forget about deadlines, query letters, synopses, proposals, word processors and spellcheckers. Get back to the basics and immerse yourself in writing for the sheer pleasure and nothing more. Grab a pen and paper (no computers allowed!) and empty your mind, allowing the images to flow freely.

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EIGHT GREAT WAYS TO JUMP-START YOUR WRITING

Continued from Page 2

Stymied by sonnets? Have a hankerin' for Haiku? Mystified by meter? If you've never penned a poem, here is your chance to throw caution to the wind and do it! Ever wondered if you could really write a screenplay in the proper format? This is the day for you to experiment and stretch your writing muscles. Any piece of work you produce on this day is for your eyes only, unless you decide otherwise.

The point is to allay yourself of any pressure to perform, to allow your inner muse to blossom and expand in any writing area (familiar or foreign) you wish. To write for nothing more, nothing less, than the pure pleasure of the act.

8. RELAX, DON'T DO IT

Sometimes one learns to do by not doing. Meditation, creative visualization and guided relaxation may sound like New Age buzzwords to the practical, no nonsense writer, but any or all of the above can actually help your writing performance. Go to the local library or bookstore and check out the latest books on relaxation. Just as an athlete's body needs cooling down after it's been stretched to its physical limits, we as writers need a mental "cool down" as well.

Choose one day per week to relax by taking a walk, meditating or utilizing creative visualization. Allow your mental processes time for recuperation and repair. If you're using creative visualization, actually see yourself as successful and productive; explore the feeling finding a check in the mailbox instead of a rejection letter.

Let your mind conjure up as many positive, reinforcing images of writing as you can. See yourself in your own mind, and notice how confident and optimistic you are, excited to send off that next book proposal or query letter. Envision how relaxed your shoulders and neck feel; in you, there is no tension, no anxiety. You are a writer; you are doing what you truly love.

Though there are as many ways to inspire your creative self as there are to write a book, these are just some of the little things you can do day by day to stretch your imagination and enhance your productivity.

Some may work for you, others may not. But if one single idea benefits you on your quest to become the best writer you can be, then that minuscule amount of effort will reap words upon words of reward.

* NOTICE *

Critique Group

The Critique Group's next meeting will be on October 7th at 12 Sandford Street, Kensington Gardens, in the cottage behind the main house.

The session will begin promptly at 2.00 p.m.

At the next meeting we will talk about **RESEARCHING FOR WRITING** and begin critiquing work at 2.30 p.m.

See you all there!

Barbara Brockhoff

Sony e-Ink Reader Delayed Again (From the Daily Times)

One of Sony's most recent sought out devices, the PRS-500 eBook reader is going to be delayed once again. Sony Electronics brought the PRS-500 with them to CES this past January and had announced a Spring 2006 launch but then pushed it to [the summer of 2006](#). Sony is now saying a [fall launch seems more likely](#).

The eBook reader used to be listed on the Sony Style merchant site, not for purchase but rather for pre-order. Soon after that the options were changed to an "Update Me" status to take interested parties' email addresses down to let them know when this thing actually came out from under the rock it has been jammed under since this past spring season.

Many have been looking forward to the PRS-500 and many others, like the recently launched and now shipping [eFlyBook](#) which is built by iRex and marketed by ARINC. Though the eFlyBook has launched and is already being sent to lucky consumers, it weighs in at about \$900 including a cart load of aviation data which would otherwise cost around the same price. Sony's PRS-500, on the other hand, is still priced at \$350 which is a number that is a bit more practical for the day to day user.

HOW TO WRITE STRONG SHORT STORIES

By Diane Beer

- A short story has a strong theme and a strong plot.
- Know in your own mind everything about the plot and don't deviate.
- Know the difference between and your theme and your plot!
- A short story covers a short time span.
- Every word counts in a short story.
- A short story doesn't have many characters.
- A short story stays on track and never deviates.
- The best short stories are tightly focused.
- The characters are clearly defined.
- The reader generally bonds with the main character and wants a good outcome.
- A Short story has a definite form – a strong hook, an intense body

and a strong, often unusual ending which must tie up all the loose ends and satisfies the readers.

The Story will fail If:

- The first line doesn't capture the reader/publisher
- If the story isn't properly structured
- If the story is old hat and is boringly familiar
- If the story hasn't been plotted well
- If the story takes too long to develop
- If there is too much back-fill about the characters
- If the dialogue isn't realistic or too rambling
- If the reader can't identify which character is which
- If the end (twist in the tale) is signaled early in the story.

AND the story won't be printed if it has bad spelling, poor formatting, bad punctuation and poor spelling.

The Story will be improved if:

- It is revised a week after written.
- It is tightened and refined until every word earns its place.



An English professor wrote the sentence 'a **woman without her man is nothing**' on the chalkboard and asked his students to punctuate it correctly.

All of the males in the class wrote:

"A woman, without her man, is nothing."

All of the females in the class wrote:

"A woman; without her, man is nothing."

**PUNCTUATION
IS
POWERFUL**

PUBLISHING NEWS FROM CYNTHIA STERLING

Spotlight on St. Martin's Press from the Romance Writer's of America Annual Conference in Atlanta.

The Spotlight was presented by Publisher Matthew Shearer, Senior Editor Monique Patterson, Marketing Director Anne Marie Tallberg and President and Publisher Sally Richardson. Executive Editor Jennifer Enderlin was not present, as she was home with her new baby. Editor Rose Hilyard was at conference but not present at the Spotlight.

Matthew Shearer spoke first and acted as moderator for the presentation. He described St. Martin's as "a big company that acts and reacts like a small one." He also said "There's nothing we can't publish and nothing we don't publish." He said St. Martin's is committed to finding new authors as well as more established authors who want to break out of category or move up in their careers.

St. Martin's is publishing "more romance than ever" and is looking for both contemporary and historical romance, comedy, suspense, light and dark paranormal, and erotica. Monique Patterson buys all of the above. She likes 'sexy and funny' paranormal, romantic comedy, erotica and paranormal. She likes "someone who can world-build -- whether it's fantasy or someone who can make the streets of New York come alive." She wants books that are "so sexy I need a cold glass of water nearby when I read...or so scary I have to go over to my mother's house and curl up in bed next to her."

The editors at St. Martin's are also interested in women's fiction and multi-cultural romance, and romantic adventure. In historicals the traditional settings of Regency England, Scotland and Medieval times continue to be strong sellers.

"Anything after 1900 is tougher to market as historical romance though those books may be marketed as something else." Matthew Shearer said

that Jennifer Enderlin is looking for a very sexy western romance.

As with many of the publishers presenting at this conference, St. Martin's has found that sex sells and for them "there's no such thing as too sexy." In closing her part of the presentation, Monique said "I want writers who aren't afraid to go for it all."

Anne Marie Tallberg is a former romance buyer for Waldenbooks. She talked about St. Martin's marketing efforts for their authors. St. Martin's always buys multiple books, even from new authors. They send out many ARCs for review and will work with the author to promote the book.

St. Martin's has begun to publish more YA -- for the 15 and up age group.

The editor for YA submissions is Stefanie Lindskog.

St. Martin's does accept unagented submissions. The house rule is to query first, but Monique Patterson would like to see the first three chapters and a query. Completed manuscripts should be 90,000 -- 125,000 words. Always query by snail mail, not email. Address your query to one of the editors at St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010

Random House has purchased Christian book publisher Multnomah and plans to integrate Multnomah with Random's Waterbrook Press. The division will be known as Waterbrook Multnomah and will be managed out of Waterbrook's Colorado Springs office.

Editorial Assistant Allison Brandau has been added to the list of acquiring editors at Berkley/Jove. Lara Hyde is an assistant editor acquiring for Mira books.

Sulay Hernandez is an assistant editor acquiring for Kensington Books.

NOTES ON STORY WRITING

THE VISION - Decide what kind of story you will tell.

Definition: all stories create some kind of vision of life being lived.

1. *Individual:* the individual's internal battle and how he overcomes his weaknesses and succeeds in life.
2. *Environment:* the individual's struggle to master a hostile environment
3. *Social:* people in community struggling and overcoming in their relations with other people.
4. *Nature:* the hunter versus the prey
5. *Composite:* story contains some or all of these elements.

THE THEME - Decide on the theme.

Definition: the idea that sparks the story.

1. *Implicit:* in a short story, the reader extracts the theme from the story.
2. *Its purpose:* defines the genre, scope, realm and reach of the story.
3. *The fable:* a story that is intended to deceive by positing an alternate and fictitious view of reality.
4. *The parable:* a story that teaches eternal truths that are valid for all eras, all cultures and all nations.
5. *Expressing the theme:* it is expressed in repeated patterns and symbols.
6. *Interweaving:* the author weaves theme, plot and structure together skillfully and carefully.

THE PLOT - Outline the plot.

Definition: the series of interlinked events that the story consists of.

- not always chronologically told (see THE IRONY).
 - in longer stories, each chapter has a plot with these four elements, and the story as a whole has these four elements
1. *Opening hook:* catch the reader's interest, draw them into the story and ensure that they will read it through to the end.
 2. *Complication:* build tension by describing the rising conflicts in your story.
 3. *Climax:* all the conflicts come to a point of crisis: the high point of the story.

4. *Resolution:* ease off the tension and tie all the loose ends together satisfactorily, resolving the main problem that the story described, and ending it happily.

THE NARRATOR - Decide who will tell the story.

Definition: the character who describes the action in the story

1. *First person:* usually the protagonist.
2. *Second person:* usually the antagonist (a participant in the story).
3. *Third person:* objective observer, describes participant's emotions:
 - *limited omniscient:* knows something about the situation and the characters.
 - *omniscient:* narrator knows everything about plot and characters, describes their thought processes.

THE CHARACTERS - Outline the characters and their roles.

1. *major/minor:* a **minor** character plays only a small role in the story and does not have much influence on its outcome. A **major** character is one of the main players who significantly impacts upon the outcome of the story.
2. *static(unchanging)/dynamic(changing):* a **static** character does not change during the story, and is not affected by its outcome (therefore usually a minor character). A **dynamic** character displays significant effort, dialogue and thought during the story, influences the direction of the story and the actions of its participants and is changed by its outcome, either for the better or for the worse (usually a major character).
3. *dominant/ submissive:* a **dominant** character is a leader who controls and directs the actions of the other characters in the story (often but not always the protagonist). A **submissive** character is a follower who allows the dominant character/s to control their actions (sometimes the antagonist, usually a minor character).

THE SETTING - Write the story.

1. Who is involved? Don't have too many characters.
2. What is happening? Make every word count, focus on the theme.
3. *Where is it happening?* Describe the location - lots of research or lots of

imagination makes your location come alive.

4. *Why is it happening?* Describe the causes.
5. *How is it happening?* Describe the story as it unfolds.
6. *Senses:* sight, touch, taste, hearing, smell sights, sounds, odours, colours, textures (like a painter creating images on canvas).
7. *Narrative style:* **Open** - leave it up to the readers to use their imagination and experience in 'connecting and identifying' with the story. **Closed** - describe most or all of these elements.
8. *Time frame:* the story should span a short time period - the shorter the story, the shorter the time period, and vice versa.

9. *Reader participation:* the reader is invited to participate in the story by considering its theme and its meaning, and how it applies to their own life. The narrator can question the reader directly, or one of the characters can question the other, who does not answer the question immediately, or at all (forcing the alert reader to answer the question for themselves).

THE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT - Give them life.

1. *Physical traits:* describe the character's face, body and unique mannerisms.
2. *Dialogue:* describe the character's manner of speech or reveal aspects of their character through their speech.
3. *Actions:* describe what the character does.
4. *Attire:* describe the character's clothing.
5. *Opinions:* articulate the character's viewpoints through their speech and their thought processes (implies omniscient narrator).
6. *Full range of emotions:* major characters must show happiness, sorrow, disappointment, anger, pain, joy, love, hate, indifference, numbness, elation in speech, thought and actions.

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NOTES ON STORY WRITING

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7. *Motivations*: your characters openly discuss their motives.

- your omniscient narrator reveals the thought processes of your characters.

- your reader interprets the character's behavioural pattern and attributes motives to them.

- love, hate, revenge, greed, lust, duty, obedience, loyalty, faithfulness, patriotism, religious zeal.

- usually your protagonist has good motives, and your antagonist evil motives.

THE IRONY - Show how absurd life can be at times, but allow your protagonist to make sense of the situation eventually and win.

Definition: Irony occurs when the reality of the story is at odds with your character's perception of it.

1. *Depth*: gives depth to your story by revealing your character's initial immaturity, ignorance, naivety, illusions, or worse.

2. *Dynamic*: allows your characters to learn, grow, change, mature and develop during the course of your story.

3. *Deception*: reveal to your readers the deception before the character/s become/s aware of it, or vice versa (the mature character is aware of the deception before the reader discovers it).

4. *Dualism*: allows the narrator/s to present more than one view of reality.

5. *Disparate*: irony is enhanced when the story is not told chronologically - the riddle or puzzle is pieced together eventually from the disparate elements.

The Salisbury Writers' Festival

October 2006

Top writers will speak on

Song Writing

Cartooning

Poetry

Children's Writing

Romance Writing

Getting Published

www.salisbury.sa.gov.au

COMPETITIONS

The Examiner Port Stephens Literature Award

Adults - Short Stories to 2,500 words - any theme.

1st Prize - \$500

2nd Prize - \$200

3rd Prize - \$100

Plus \$100 Tanilba House Award and four \$50 Highly Commended entries.

Children's categories for under 6 to 12 years and 13 to 16 years.

Enquiries to Geoff Walker (02) 4982 4095.

Entry forms available from SAWC.

Entries close October 31.

Australasian Short Story Awards

Open theme to 5,000 words.

Entry Fee \$5 or \$15 for 4 stories.

1st Prize - \$300.

Entry forms available from SAWC.

Entries close October 31.

Rhyming Poetry Competition

1st Prize - \$100

Entry forms from rosieq@westnet.com.au or Competition Coordinator c/o 13 Rockford St, Mandurah, WA, 6210

Entries close October 31.

The Best Of Times Short Story Competition

2 Categories - Humour and General.

Stories to 3,000 words.

1st Prize - \$300.

Entry Fee \$5.50 (inc. GST) per story.

No entry form required - email cabbook-2@yahoo.com.au for further information.

Entries close October 31.

WRITING TIP: POINT OF VIEW BY SHIRLEY MARTIN

Point of View, or POV, refers to the viewpoint of the person within a scene who sees, hears, feels, thinks, in other words, experiences, all the emotions and feelings within the scene.

An author must put her/himself within that person's mind to see, hear, feel, etc., whatever that person is experiencing.

Switching POV within a scene—head hopping—is not a good idea for the beginning writer, and even more experienced writers usually keep POV of one person within a scene.

But there may be good reasons for switching POV within a scene, and if you can do it skillfully enough, so that you are getting your point across, go with it.

What if you have more than one person within a scene—which, most likely, you will?

What if you have three or more characters within a scene?

Whose POV should you use?

Whoever has the most to gain or lose. One example of what not to do is a scene I encountered in a critique group I belonged to.

The heroine of the story was giving birth in a hospital, and whose POV did the author use? That of a very good friend in the waiting room. The scene loses its punch and impact in a

situation like this. Don't make the same mistake.

If you like to do exercises, read over the following scene and see what's wrong with it.

Then rewrite the scene, using just one POV, not necessarily any of them shown here.

Karen entered the grand living room on the arm of her boyfriend, Jason. Happy to be invited to the vice president's party at his waterfront mansion, she looked over all the other guests gathered here in this vast room, their talk and laughter a sure sign that the party was a success. Most of the people she knew; some, she did not. Her gaze covered the buffet at the far end of the room, its mounds of salads and piles of fruit, its rich scents, teasing her nose. Her stomach rumbled, a reminder that she hadn't eaten since breakfast. She smiled and greeted those she knew as she and Jason began mingling with the other guests, but she could hardly wait to reach the buffet. Jason's gaze slid down Karen's black, slinky gown with its low cleavage. He breathed in deeply of the exotic fragrance she wore, wanting to draw her closer into his embrace and kiss her until they were both breathless. He'd be glad when the party was over. He had other ideas for this night. The hostess approached her two new guests, supremely satisfied that the party was such a success, and that so many people had at-

tended. So many influential people! This event should definitely help her husband in his drive to gain the presidency of the company. She tried to mask her hateful thoughts toward Millie Burch, just a few feet away. What a conniving bitch! The woman thought her husband deserved the presidency, but who'd want that idiot at the head of the company?

Now, there may be many things wrong with this not-so well-written scene, but all we are concerned with is POV. So see what you can do with it.

Following the Mylor Workshop Weekend Chris Ostermann (aka Christina Carlisle) received this lovely letter from Alison Lubow who bought her book 'Husband For Hire'.

What a great review!

Dear Christina,

I started reading 'Husband For Hire' an hour after getting home from Mylor. I went on the journey with Cassie experiencing every minute of that journey. I felt the highs, the lows and the humour, I felt the passion, the hesitation and the frailty of Cassie. I put it down four hours later feeling thoroughly satisfied she had overcome the past and was now on her way to the future.

Lee wasn't half bad either.

One of the things that impressed me was I could see the characters, their clothes their homes, the mountains and the village.

I just loved it. 5/5

Alison Lubow

E-BOOKS? BET YOU ALREADY READ THEM!

By Brenna Lyons

What's that? You don't think so? Well, if you use a computer, it's likely that you do, at least for business, if not for pleasure.

Have you gone to the IRS site...or the DMV/RMV site? What about a medical or legal site? All of those publications and articles you download/read from the site are e-books.

Have you gone to the local public transportation site and looked at route maps and bus/train schedules? Have you been given schematics of a tool by the company rep to aid in your repairs? e-Books!

Have you gone to a site and read a short story or poem? e-Book, posted on the web.

Have you opened the help file in software like WORD or Adobe to learn how to do something? You've read an e-book.

If you've done any of those things, you know how easy downloading and reading an e-book is.

You say you don't know anything about the formats e-books come in? I bet you know that, too! Even if you don't own equipment that reads Mobi or Hie... Even if you don't know a thing about LIT, a format read by the free download MSReader, you certainly know other formats.

The three most popular e-book formats at the moment are PDF, LIT and HTML. I'll bet PDF, read by Adobe Acrobat, and HTML/HTM, read on WORD or any browser software in existence, sound awfully familiar to you.

You say you don't own any hardware that will read e-books? Or that you don't want to sit at the desk to read?

Not a problem. Despite some ill-informed articles in several major newspapers in the past few months, there is a huge selection of machines that can display e-books. There are:

Dedicated handheld readers. These readers do nothing but read e-books. They don't play music or games, hold your address book or any of the other functions a PDA does. These are good for children and adults who just want

a reader and have no interest in the bells and whistles of an entire system. The ebookwise, the most popular of these currently sold, sells for \$120. PDAs (Personal Data Assistants).

These handheld units will allow the reader to do much more than read e-books. It usually holds your address book and schedule, e-books, pictures, music, games, database and word processing programs, calculator and many other programs of use.

Authors often use the PDA to do edits on while they run errands or ride the train to a day job. The more basic units sell for as little as \$100, and the more expensive ones for as much as \$350. One of the most popular at the moment is the Palm Tungsten E2, which sells for \$199, but the truth is that just about every major computer company has a PDA available for sale now.

Smart Phones. Smart Phones are, simply put, cell phones capable of performing most of the functions of a PDA, including reading e-books. They have a large color screen in the handset that facilitates this. Some of the best-known makers of Smart Phones are Windows Mobile and Palm. The average Smart Phone costs about \$300-\$350.

Tablet PCs and mini-Tablets. These are two of the hottest new pieces of portable computer equipment, and like the PDA, everyone seems to be making them. With a screen much larger than any PDA on the market, the only downside is the price tag to match. Many tablet PCs run \$1500 to \$2000.

Laptop computers. That's right. A computer is a computer is a computer. If you have a tablet PC or laptop for work, you can use it to read e-books as well. Why not? Chances are, you have all of the software you need already loaded on it. Consider for a moment the reduction in luggage you'd see if you carried e-books on a business trip instead of paper books.

Desktop PC. Well, if you're going to be there anyway, you can certainly read books on it!

Cable PC. That's right...not cable TV but PC on your television screen. While you have to be selective in what companies you buy from to enjoy reading direct on the TV, it is possible to do so.

Still think you've never read an e-book? It's highly unlikely that you haven't. In fact, you probably do it all the time and don't realize it.

In fact, you've been training yourself how easy reading an e-book really is. If you've ever bought from an online store, e-bay or Amazon, you know how easy searching for what you want and buying it online is.

If you've ever read a transit or zoo map online or found the instructions for an IRS form online, you know how easy it is to open and read on the computer.

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Brenna Lyons, president of EPIC, is a multi-published, best-selling and award-winning author. For more information on her, please visit her site at www.brennalions.com.

A CLIPPING FROM STEVE DAVENPORT

Never judge a book by its movie.

Good communication is as stimulating as black coffee, and just as hard to sleep after.

Education: the average professor earns more money in a year than a professional athlete earns in a whole week.

The first half of our lives is ruined by our parents, and the second half by our children.

If you're never scared or embarrassed or hurt, it means you never take any chances.

Everyone is a prisoner of his own experiences. No one can eliminate prejudices --- just recognize them.

Don't be afraid to take a big step if one is indicated. You can't cross a chasm in two small jumps.

I'll be more enthusiastic about encouraging thinking outside the box when there's evidence of any thinking going on inside it.

Think like a man of action and act like a man of thought.

When I was your age, television was called books.

I never cease being dumbfounded by the unbelievable things people believe.

Gravitation cannot be held responsible for people falling in love.

Why not go out on a limb? Isn't that where the fruit is?

POETS MAKE GREAT WRITERS

By Diane Beer

Poetry teaches writers to write with an economy of language, rhythm and cadence and they learn to write the evocative metaphors that are the language of poetry.

When hearing the rhythm of words, writers are able to create a colourful phrase that evokes even more than the mere words on the page.

They can create words. Society is constantly creating words and generally they come from advertising writers or people involved in trying to emphasise a message.

Examples of new terms include fairly crude headline traffic terminology such as Gridlock, Motor Madness and Road Rage – the last two use alliterations to create rhythm and memorable phrases.

Mental exercises to develop word skills include word games, writing every day, explore words and meanings to add to your mental vocabulary and being audacious and brave with language.

Avoid clichés which make boring reading and look for words that convey moods, add to the imagery.

Have an adventure with words!

CONFLICT

BY DIANE BEER

Without conflict there is no story.

The stronger the conflict the stronger the story.

The more unique the conflict the more likely you are to get published.

The most unique conflicts become movies.

The conflict should be in the opening paragraph if possible

The strength of the conflict the more likely it is to change the lives of the characters in the story – infact the conflict should be life-changing

Murder mysteries are easy...they start with conflict...who killed the victim, why, how and will they be caught...and how does the murder affect other lives.

Detective mysteries all start with a conflict/puzzle...so they are easier than for example a love story.

The conflict MUST make the reader want to know how it is solved.

The conflict could make the hero/heroine go on a quest to find truth or treasure. Or it could be a dreadful hatred or desire for revenge that sends the character on an adventure. The hero/heroine could face a terrible loss of property, loved ones on reputation if the conflict is not solved.

Whatever the conflict:- medical, scientific, lost love, murder, terminal illness or a death threat, the conflict must be plausible within the characterization and plotting.

Every newspaper you read, every magazine you open and every television news service you watch contains a story of conflict.

The writer's skills is to take those conflicts and reset them with new characters into a new plot.

There are few new conflicts, mostly they are the same conflict repeating themselves in different settings.

For example in-vitro fertilization is still a couple or person trying to have a child. DNA breakthroughs are just mysteries being solved in a different way. Cloning is another scientific conflict until we become used to it. What these scientific and medical changes do, is to put a new twist on the old conflicts.

Don't be satisfied with mundane conflicts that happen in ordinary lives. Nobody wants to read about ordinary lives...they want extraordinary conflicts about extraordinary characters.

Keep a diary of good conflicts... it will make it easier for future plotting...conflicts ARE plots sometimes.

EXERCISE - suggest a good conflict.

MYLOR WEEKEND

We want to do it all again!

Another weekend of workshops; with the right people, the exchange of ideas and the party dinner – *especially the party dinner.*

Highlight of the dinner was **Owen Carmichael's** singing backed by the bewitching silence of Mylor Conservation Park. His singing was only equaled by the memorable workshop he presented on the following day when he taught writers new ways to trigger ideas. If anyone gets a chance to attend one of Owen Carmichael's workshops they will be knocked over in the rush by those who experienced his session at Mylor.

Sir Anthony Bran was 'best dressed' as the swashbuckling hero from his almost-finished novel.

Elaine Souter, as Richard The Lion Heart, laughed so much she was unable to speak at one stage.

John Willanski's Time Travel Portal machine was the best prop of the night. The most cultured gentleman of the weekend was **Nick Fourakis**.

Everyone added energy and great cooperation to make the weekend stimulating and satisfying.

Chris Ostermann wrapped up the weekend with an informative workshop on writing a Synopsis and Query Letter and this was despite a power blackout.

A full report of the Mylor weekend will be in the next newsletter.

WRITING TIPS FROM SHIRLEY MARTIN

ADD ZEST TO YOUR WRITING

Let's begin with a concept Dwight Swain emphasizes in his excellent book, *TECHNIQUES OF THE SELLING WRITER*.

This is the idea of specificity.

Look at the following sentences and see how dull they are. How would you "jazz" them up?

1. The bird flew into a tree.
2. The man walked quickly down the street.
3. The house stood on the hill.
4. A lot of people went to the ballgame.
5. It got dark in the woods.
6. She wore a new dress.
7. He sent her some flowers.
8. The dog slept on the porch.
9. I like to read.
10. It started to rain.

As much as possible, use active voice instead of passive.

Active voice means the subject is doing the acting.

Passive voice means the subject is being acted upon. Passive voice does not refer to dull, wishy-washy sentences.

Nor does it refer to the progressive form of the verb. (He was walking. She was reading.)

Here are examples of the passive voice:

1. The letter was typed.
 2. The letter was mailed.
 3. The flowers were delivered.
 4. Mistakes were made.
- Avoid sentences such as this:

A large stone fireplace was built into the wall.

Instead say:

A large stone fireplace dominated the west wall.

Don't say:

The lectern was set up on the stage.

Instead say:

The lectern occupied the center of the stage.

Sometimes the passive voice works better than the active, but usually the active voice has more punch and is preferable.

Whenever possible, use human characteristics to illustrate ideas.

For example, instead of saying:

The streets of Chicago were dangerous then.

Say:

Danger stalked the streets of Chicago.

Instead of saying:

The people of the city were hungry and miserable.

Say:

Starvation and misery prowled the streets of the city.

(I actually have this sentence in

my fantasy romance (*NIGHT SECRETS*).

Any other ideas here?

Again, whenever possible, avoid "to be" words. (is, am, was, were.)

How would you change these sentences?

1. There was an oak tree in the yard.
2. She was tired and her feet hurt.
3. There were a lot of people at the circus.
4. He was a tall man with a beard and straggly hair.
5. There is a hurricane in the Caribbean.
6. There is a fire in the Everglades.

Those four-letter words. Many other languages contribute to English: Latin, French, even Arabic.

But for words with a punch, nothing beats Anglo-Saxon verbs such as: grab, slam, grip, dunk, bang, slap, etc.

EXERCISE: How would you use these words – or similar words – to improve these sentences?

1. She quickly set the receiver down.
2. She hurried down the hill.
3. He reached for her arm and held on firmly.
4. The cannon went off with a loud noise.

HOW TO WRITE A NOVEL - DIALOGUE

The tough part is to make it sound real. Tape a conversation. Most people speak in short bursts...not long paragraphs. Although the written word is never completely real – we abbreviate or add color words...we must make it read smoothly, yet sound in our head as though we know the characters.

Three common dialogue mistakes:

1. all characters sound the same.
2. the protagonist sounds the same under all circumstances.
3. clumsy changeover between subject matters or leading into a subject.

Six purposes for dialogue:

1. reveal character
2. show emotions
3. move the story forward
4. provide information
5. establish setting
6. break up long passage of prose

Tags, or "Shut Up," he explained:

One of the big problems in writing dialogue is whether to use "said" or some other word. It's all right to write dialogue without any kind of speaker tag so long as the reader can tell who is speaking. A simple "Chrissy Pooh said" will help keep the reader on track as to who is speaking.

Using "he said" or "she said" every time a character speaks becomes boring and irritating. The tags should do this for the reader without the author inserting themselves between the reader and the character.

You will see some writers trying to keep the characters identified straight by making the other character use their name. It doesn't usually work. It doesn't seem realistic.

'Chris did you go to the baptism?'

'Yes Diane I went to the wedding.'

'Well Chris did the baby cry?'

Dialects:

Try to avoid too much dialect in the dialogue. You can show by their speech patterns and habits but it becomes tiresome if the entire book is written in dialect.

If a Scot says, 'ye are a bonny sweet lass,' the reader will get the

message and you can toss in the 'lass' again occasionally without being totally tedious.

Indirect Dialogue:

Indirect dialogue should not be over used, but it does have its place to summarise a conversation that has already taken place or to compress trivial dialogue or break a long sequence.

Example:

Karen called me last night and I told her what Eldon was saying about her. She couldn't believe that he'd be so rotten. She swears they never even kissed, never mind having an affair and here he is, telling people about the birthmark next to her navel.

Writing Dialogue

- Give each speaker a new paragraph.
- Use double quotation marks with punctuation inside the quotation marks.

According to Crawford Kilian in [Kilian's Online Writing Course](#):

"Action as well as speech is a part of dialogue. We expect to know when the speakers pause, where they're looking, what they're doing with their hands, how they respond to one another. The characters' speech becomes just one aspect of their interactions; sometimes their words are all we need, but sometimes we definitely need more. This is especially true when you're trying to convey a conflict between what your characters say and what they feel: their nonverbal messages are going to be far more reliable than their spoken words."

Dialogue – Exercises to Use at home:

1. Tape and transcribe two or three minutes of an actual conversation from real life.
2. Tape and transcribe two or three minutes of a conversation from a television show.
3. Compare the transcriptions from 1 and 2 with each other and with your own writing.
4. Tape your reading of dialogue from your own writing.

Dialogue Exercise - Write a quick page of conversation between two people who have just met in a shopping centre and haven't much time. The conversation should include some transfer of information that is exciting/dramatic or funny.

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Anyware™

Poetry Competition - Closes November 14th.
Under 25 lines – any subject, any type. Prize
is a 128MB USB Flash Drive. Winner to be
announced at November Meeting.



**IF ANYONE HAS
ANY NEWS ABOUT
THEIR WRITING
PROGRESS...LET US
KNOW – WE WANT
TO SHARE YOUR
NEWS WITH OTHER
MEMBERS.**

**** STOP PRESS ****

- ◆ **Monika Hein will launch her book, *Saved By an Angel*, at the German Club, 223 Flinders St, Adelaide at 3pm. RSVP to Monika by the 5th of October on 8382 2630**
- ◆ **Helen Chilcott has just signed a contract with Mardigras Publishing for her latest book, *Waiting For Misty*. This is Helen's 3rd book for this year.**
- ◆ **Romona Hilliger has now published her 4th book for this year.**
- ◆ **Chris Ostermann has had 6 books published so far this year.**

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