

Writing Tips

Writing is an art. It should create pictures. Develop your OWN VOICE. Put into words what you see in your mind. Share what you are experiencing in your daydream, your imagination, so another can see it. The “daydream state” is where writers go for their stories. Sometimes the best ideas come when you first wake. When the dream state mixes with reality often great stories emerge.

The most important word is the noun, the “thing.” Use words which pop off the page and create pictures in your reader’s mind. Try this exercise. For instance, if I were trying to describe a pig, without using the noun word pig, I might use words like: cute, loveable, loving, faithful, affectionate, sweet, intelligent, mud-moving, good, colorful, likeable, friendly, mischievous, and comical. These fourteen adjectives describe a noun. However, it’s still not clear what the noun is. If the word animal is inserted it helps. The word mammal and the word pet narrows down the description more. The more distinct and specific the nouns are, the better you can share what is in your mind.

- Use precise nouns.
- Use revealing adjectives.
- The more specific the noun becomes, the less adjectives you will need.
- For instance, when the noun “pet” is used, only mud-loving and intelligent are needed to know it’s a pig.

An adjective is a word which describes a noun. They can be overused. Look into your mind and see your scene, then describe it. Adjectives are easiest – and you can start with them, but go beyond. For instance, adjectives for water might include: deep, icy, shallow, and warm. After you have identified the scene with an adjective try to switch it up. Use sensory moments, your five senses (+ intuition), to describe things and tell your story.

- Sight
- Touch
- Smell
- Taste
- Hearing
- Intuition

Show don’t Tell.

“In summer, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt.”

This is an excellent example of what it means to Show not Tell.



Writing Tips (cont.)

Go outside. When describing a sunset, be outside looking at one. Flowing words and synonyms will not have the same impact. It must be described through your eyes and senses.

Don't edit while writing. Get everything down on paper and let it breathe. Return to look at it later. Read it out loud. Hearing the words often indicates what needs to be changed. If you stumble while reading it; it needs to be reworked. If it doesn't make sense to your ears; go back. If you get lost or blocked, go back to where it last makes sense. Simply begin there and take a different road, change the person, change the tense, or change the opening page. Choose your words carefully, only after they are written.

George Orwell (a famous novelist) makes a list of rules for writing.

1. Never use a *metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which is seen in print often.
2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.
3. If it is possible to cut a word out, do so.
4. Never use the passive where you can use the active.
5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English substitute.

George Orwell didn't always take his advice; however, these are good rules to follow. Another rule which is helpful is to limit the word "that." It's seldom needed.

The only way to write, is to do it.

If you don't start, you can't end. Once you begin, don't stop.

It doesn't matter if you have the ideal environment.

The more you write, the better you become.

Practice is essential.

Be brave.

Be courageous.

Have fun.

Write!

*Notes: Example of a metaphor - raining cats and dogs. A metaphor is when you use a description totally ridiculous of the situation. I.e. dinosaurs live in my hair. She is an angel.

Example of a simile - crazy as a fox, brave as a lion. It's a comparison between two unlikely things. A simile uses the word "like" or "as." A metaphor does not. She is as innocent as an angel.

