



**THE
YOUNG WRITER'S
ACTIVITY BOOKLET**



Writing can
be lots of fun.

It's a great way
to explore your
imagination,
to think differently
about the world
around you, or
to express yourself.

This activity book
is to help you write,
whether it is a play,
a book, a blog,
a movie, a poem,
a podcast. Think
about why you want
to write and whatever
reason it is – hold
onto it tightly
and start writing!

Warm Up



Try out these exercises to get warmed up and in the mood for writing. Write quickly and don't stop to think too much, once you start, keep going for as long as you can without stopping.

THE SCENE – on one page, describe a place you know well – your house, bedroom, classroom, or your Nana's kitchen. Use these as your starting points:

- What can you see?
- What can you hear?
- Can you smell anything?
- Can you taste anything?
- What do you feel?

THE CHARACTER – to help you see a place or a character, try drawing it. You might find unexpected details about a person or a scene! Maybe there's an angry mouse behind the refrigerator that wasn't there before or a series of hairy warts on someone's nose. Once you've drawn the character into a scene, write a description to go along with it, as if narrating a movie.

PERSONIFICATION – to help you look at things from another point of view, take an object and write a Day in the Life story based on its point of view – how does it think? What does it do all day? What does it notice that nobody around it notices?

MONOLOGUE – a great way to explore how someone is feeling in a scene is to write a quick one-page speech based on something a character is about to do or has just done. Pick one of the descriptors below and use that as the tone of your speech.

- Desplicable
- Terrifying
- Inexplicable
- Boring
- Dangerous
- Heroic
- Stupid
- Life-changing
- Unbelievable
- Sad

AUTOMATIC WRITING – three minutes without stopping.

Set a timer, set your pen to the paper, and write for three minutes without stopping. Pick one of the starters below to begin.

When	Horribly	The last
After	Getting	Why
Never	Because	How
Accidentally	Before	Since
Get	Firstly	Shazam!



Go for it!

CHARACTER:

Think about the main character of your story. Are they tall, short, thin, wide, beautiful, funny looking? Are they a man, woman, boy, girl, or gender neutral? Are they mean, kind, curious, or funny? Just as you come across all sorts of people in your life, there are all sorts of people you can write. They might be:

Cheerful	Robust	Gross
Tiny	Long-limbed	Thin
Gigantic	Ugly	Flatulent
Modest	Evil	Magic
Embarrassed	Atrocious	Gormless
Shameless	Happy	Beautiful
Kind	Clownish	Foolish
Unintelligent	Self-centred	Silly
Meek	Tall	Hilarious
Brave	Wrong	Miniature

Even if YOU are the main character, there are a few ways to get to know the character better:

- Write a short biography
- What do they like?
- How do they look?
- How do they smell?
- What are their favourite foods?
- What do they dislike?
- Describe their parents – what it was like growing up with these parents?
- How do they feel about other people?
- How do they feel about themselves?
- Write a letter from them to the newspaper about something important to them
- Write a diary entry for them about a terrific day
- Write a diary entry for them about a terrible day
- Write a letter from them to someone they love
- Write a letter to one of their enemies

Miniature
Robust Gross Tiny Thin Gigantic
Silly Meek Tall Hilarious Brave Wrong
Ugly Modest Evil Magic Kind Clownish Miniature

SETTING

Does your story begin in a town, city, village, cave, or countryside? Are there lots of people, or very few? What is the weather like? Is it by the beach, in the mountains, in a desert? Wherever you begin, use your fabulous mind to zoom in or out of scenes to get more detail or a better idea of where your story takes place.

Here are some examples:

The story begins in a room in a rickety old house, in the middle of a teeming city, in a country that is mostly a bog, which is a tiny speck on a blue planet made of cheese.

OR:

The story begins on an alien planet made from colliding asteroids, in a large country that is mostly rock, in a quiet village in the countryside, in a room the size of a barn, on a bale of hay.

The more details you have in your mind, the better you'll be able to create the story for your readers.

TIME

The time period your story is set effects the direction of your story. When does your story start? What year? What time of day? Again, you can zoom in or out of your scene to discover more detail:

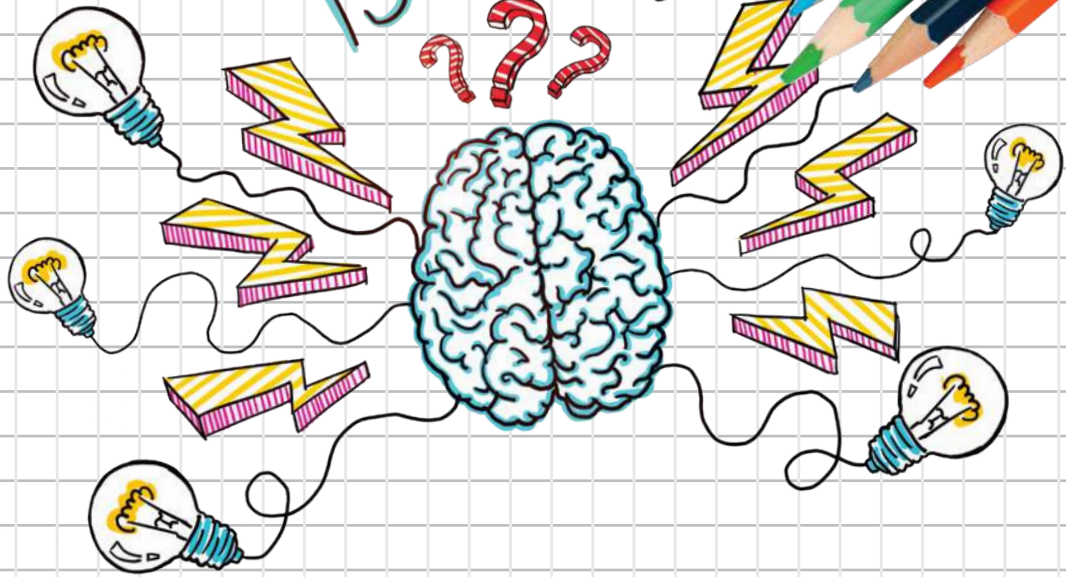
This story begins in the cold heart of winter, on a Tuesday, at 7 o'clock in the morning.

OR:

This story begins at a quarter to midnight on a Saturday night at the beginning of summer.

When you choose to start your story can alter the whole thing completely. For example, an empty barn full of hay during the day would be lots of fun! An empty barn full of hay at night time could be quite scary! A car race in 2018 would be very exciting! A car race in the 1930's would be very slow! A story set in winter has a totally different feel to a summer story. A story set on a Tuesday will be quite different from a story set on Saturday. A story beginning late at night is different to one that begins first thing in the morning.

Brainstorm



WEATHER

Don't forget about the weather! If you put your character in the middle of a field in the torrential rain, it will have a huge effect on what happens!

ACTION

What is your character / characters doing at this time, in this place, when the story begins? What happens to start the story? What happens next?

You can keep asking what happens next forever and ever and you will end up with a story, but keep consequences in mind! Because of this action, that happened.

This will give your story meaning!

For example, Barney ate too much breakfast in too big a hurry this morning because he wanted to be bigger.

That made his stomach hurt when

he was forced to run screaming from the dinosaur, so much so that he ran out of puff, got caught and was then consumed.

REVIEW

What did your character want? What were their Little Wants e.g. a drink of water? To make their hair look cool? To not fall down the stairs?

What are their Big Wants? E.g. to be accepted? To be cool? To not die in a precarious situation involving a volcano, some sharp knives, and a clumsy juggler?

Think about what your characters want at the beginning of the story, what is the problem that is getting in the way of what they want? What are they going to do about it?

STORY FOR RADIO

Onomatopoeia - not a fun word to spell, but a fun word to know!

Onomatopoeia is a word that has been made for the sound it represents, like

Boom! Honk! Whap! Zonk! Zoom.
Fzzzz. Bloop. Splash! Drip.
Drizzle. Squelch!

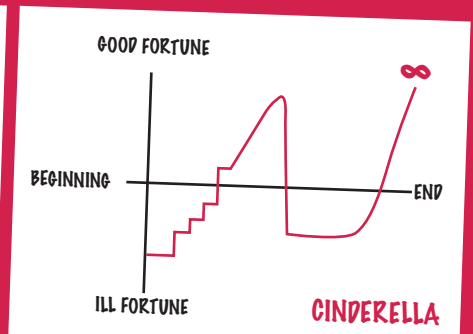
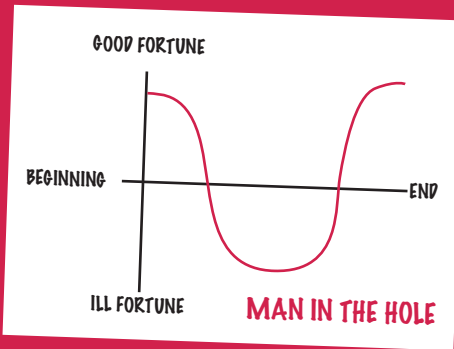
To think about how your story would sound as a radio play, use this chart. Put your story and the action on the left side, and add in the sounds that would be happening on the right side. Feel free to make up a word to get the sound right!

Action!	How that Action sounds!
Barney wakes up in a quiet room in his house in the countryside and immediately falls out of bed.	Yawwwwn! Streeeetcchh Ka-PLOMP!
He walks out of his house and steps waist-deep into a puddle.	Creak Slam Ker-PLASSH!
"Ugh!" he says.	"Ugh!"

STORY ARCS

Looking at where your characters were, how they felt, at the beginning of your story, and compare this to where they are and how they feel at the end of the story. How would that look if you drew that as a line?

<https://digitalinfluence.com.au/kurt-vonnegut-7-universal-narrative-structures/>



Writing great stories is not as easy as it looks, so if it's not perfect don't worry too much about it. Nothing you've ever read got it completely right on the first go – all writers go through a long process of writing and rewriting.

In a year you'll look back at the writing you hated yesterday and find some things in it that you really like. And don't forget, everything you write can be changed! The more writing you do, the better you'll get.

**So here's some advice to keep with you, just in case you feel doubt:
you are good enough, keep going!**

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