



How to Write a Story

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In memory of our dearly beloved Snoop, who was
taken from us by lung cancer on 7th April 2017.

He was the sun in our lives, the bringer of joy and
the healer of sorrows.



Introduction

I decided to write this book to try and solve a major problem. People seem to be scared to write stories.

Over the years I have become increasingly frustrated with the many misconceptions about what it takes to write a story, especially write a book. These can be concerns about money and qualifications, but mostly people just seem to think they can't do it. **WRONG!** If you want to write, you can. Who's going to stop you?

I also decided to make this little book available for free, because I didn't think it required a novel-sized book to tell someone that it's okay to do things their own way, and because writing shouldn't be expensive. Publishing might be though, so I didn't want to take anyone's money for encouraging them to do what they love.

Misconceptions

You should write what you know.

You don't have to write what you know. If you decide you want to write a book about Celts or Tudors or Victorians or vampires, you can do the research later. I've learnt more from documentaries and books than I did at secondary school. To be fair, the grades I got at secondary school helped me to do my A Levels which really did teach me things, but that knowledge can still be learned by other means.

You should take a creative writing course.

You don't need to pay out for a qualification in creative writing. The best and cheapest way to learn how to write is to read books, then write, then read, then write and so on. Practice makes you better (anyone who's written a book or short story or article knows that there is no such thing as perfection).

You should ask someone how to write.

You don't really need to be told how to write a story. You will find endless templates online for writing stories and the one I was given in school is probably one of the worst. It was a piece of paper with three boxes on it labelled 'beginning', 'middle' and 'end'. It was the reason I couldn't write

anything longer than a page and why everything I wrote was rubbish. It wasn't until I was 14 that I had a break-through. I was asked to write a story and given the template to "help me". After realising that following their rules hadn't got me anywhere, I decided to throw out everything I was ever told about writing stories and do it my way. I ended up with the highest mark in the class. There is no one way to write a story. Do it your way. But if you feel you need advice, see the next part of this free book.

You could be rich.

Maybe, but don't waste your time thinking you're going to end up like J. K. Rowling. You'll likely always have to do something else alongside. Write for the love of it and then everything else is a bonus.

You need to find an agent.

An agent will be extremely helpful, but they'll also take a cut of the profit for every book sold and there are other ways to go. They're also one more person that might turn you down, and after you've got their approval you still might get turned down by publishers. Having said that, a lot of publishers will only publish things which they receive through agents. There is no right way to go about getting your story published, there is only your way.

How to Write a Story

As I have already mentioned, teachers from primary school to secondary school tried to teach my class how to write a story using the same method. They gave us a piece of paper with three boxes on it labelled ‘beginning’, ‘middle’ and ‘end’. For years this left me unable to write a good story because not only was I overwhelmed by trying to think of the whole story at once, but I could never exceed a single page, because that page of three boxes just confined my thought processes. When I was 14, once again in a Literacy lesson, I was told to write a story and we were given the page of three boxes to “help us along”. Then and there I decided that the traditional method had got me nowhere, so I stuffed the page into the back of my exercise book and rejected everything I’d ever been taught about writing stories. The result is still one of the best short stories I’ve ever written, and I currently have 101 books planned, a number which is likely to continue growing.

When reading a story you start at the beginning, go to the middle and finally to the end, but you don’t have to write a story that way. It is possible to know the end of a story without knowing the beginning, the beginning without the end and the middle without a beginning or an end.

Below is a step by step guide for what I believe is the easiest way to write a story.

1. Imagine something that you want to do but can’t, because you’re nervous or just because it’s ridiculous (it could be anything from flying to arguing with

someone you're frightened of) – don't waste time thinking something is stupid – just write down what it is you want to do

2. Imagine you can really do it - write down what you're doing, what you can see, what you're wearing, anything that comes into your head – don't worry about it sounding silly – nobody has to see it until or unless you want them to - paper and pens don't judge!
3. Think of a name – any name
4. Now you have part of a story and a character – imagine how you might tell it to someone as though recounting a true story and write it down exactly as you'd say it
5. Read it through again and again, changing things each time until you like how it sounds
6. Keep imagining how that character would react to different situations and what each situation might lead to
7. Keep writing things down as though you are telling someone else a true account of the situations and reading and changing it until you are satisfied
8. If you get stuck, just write down dialog - a conversation is the easiest thing to imagine
9. Enjoy the character and see where it takes you – if you like the story it'll pull itself together, but don't panic about how long it takes – it's your story, so tell it how you like and when you like

Or do it your own way. There are no
rules in creativity.

Enjoy

