

Writer's Block Workshop Series

RED
BICYCLE
BOOKS
PUBLISHING

Helping first-time authors succeed
in their writing ventures

EXPLORING THE MYTHS OF FIRST-TIME AUTHORS

Victoria A. Witkewitz

When I first started my writing career many years ago, I was plagued by the barriers to entry and some misrepresentations generated in the world of copywriting and creative writing. Many years later after speaking with several other authors, I realized we shared similar experiences. This Writer's Block Workshop Series explores some of the myths I encountered and pushed through in order to watch my creative works come to fruition.

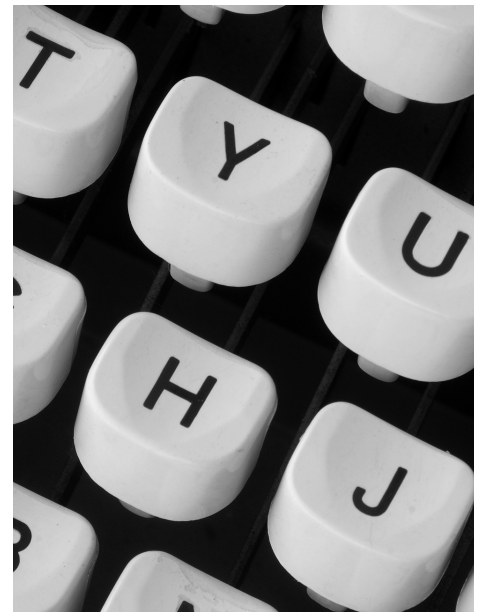
FIVE MYTHS OF WHAT IT TAKES TO BECOME A FIRST-TIME AUTHOR

MYTH #1 A LARGE VOCABULARY IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY

While an expansive list of fanciful words with multiple syllables may sound appetizing to your readers, the key message conveyed in your writing objective is paramount. Whether you are expressing a creative work or applying a journalistic approach, writing that is clean, focused and engaging is what keeps readers interested in turning the pages.

In the beginning of my career, I struggled utilizing a treasure trove of words simply because my vocabulary was underdeveloped. Over time, it began to build by a few factors- one I began to play more word games and dabble in apps on a daily basis. In addition, I began to use a thesaurus on a regular basis to craft my writing style.

Exercising daily word puzzles and word of the day applications will help you stretch those vocabulary muscles. Once you learn a new word, utilize it in a sentence both orally and written. Before long, your writing will take on a unique flavor of its own.



MYTH #2 MY CREATIVE WRITING ENDEAVOR HAS TO BE A SET NUMBER OF PAGES

KEY TIPS TO EFFECTIVE WRITING:



DELIVER A CLEAR & CONSISTENT PLOT



ARTICULATE YOUR IDEAS FULLY



ENSURE SMOOTH & ENGAGING CHAPTER TRANSITIONS



LEAVE THE READER ENTICED BY CREATING A CAPTIVATING HOOK



AVOID UNNECESSARY CONTENT THAT MAY DISTRACT THE READER

When I first began creative writing particularly developing a novel structure, I anxiously felt the need to target a certain number of pages.

No matter what your writing endeavor is, your main objective is to formulate and articulate your ideas fully, concisely and clearly giving the reader a deeper understanding of what you are trying to convey. Rather than getting hung up on page count, deliver a message that flows smoothly.

In addition, creating "fluff" or unnecessary content to simply fill page counts may distract the reader which could potentially result in boredom or loss of interest.

MYTH #3 MY WRITING MUST FOLLOW AN OUTLINE

An outline is a great place to start to jot ideas into action; however it is not a requirement in every author's repertoire.

In my experience, I create a few sentences of my idea for the story, article, white paper etc. within my document as the main idea I want to communicate. I then add subheadings of thoughts that support the main idea objective.

As I start to write, I may shift ideas, characters or even write multiple scenarios and decide later on after careful reading which sounds better. I also take a break after long periods of heavy writing to come back to my work as the time away gives me the ability to decompress and view from a different perspective which may alter my original intent.

There are many different types of outlines to assist authors in organizing their ideas. We will explore multiple outline options in another article.



MYTH #4 CREATIVE WRITING EFFORTS MUST HAVE A TIMELINE

In a creative works setting timelines can be a double-edged sword. For one, timelines are good to help keep focus as you probably don't want to see years and years go by before your creation is finished.

However, if you are not meeting your deadlines, this can create unnecessary anxiety, the daunting version of "writer's block" that plagues authors from time to time. A rushed process of timeline may alter your overall end product which may or may not result in what you define as success.



Instead of watching the clock, set a goal system in place to help monitor your progress. See the example below as a model to springboard your own creative writing goal system. Feel free to adjust the timeframe of tasks achieved based on your schedule.

WRITING TIMELINE EXAMPLE:

WEEK ONE:

Begin an outline identifying the main theme or plot of the book.

WEEK TWO:

Identify all the characters of the book including their unique attributes (physical and/or other relevant factors i.e. student going back to school to become a lawyer).

WEEK THREE:

Brainstorm plot twists and hooks that support the main theme of the book.
Write the first chapter introduction with staggering outline thoughts.

WEEK FOUR:

Formally write chapter one based on your outline.

MYTH #5 TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING IS THE PREFERRED ROUTE

As the internet age continues to blossom, the ability to produce creative works is easier than the barriers to entry many authors faced prior years. While I do recommend doing your research to see if a traditional publishing house makes sense for your project, there are alternative solutions such as self-publishing and hybrid publishing.

FINAL PUNCTUATION

The process of writing can be a fun and interesting challenge and can best be achieved through a careful process of planning and organization.

Check out the [Writer's Block Writing Workshop Series](#) as well as [Authors' Notes](#) for additional writing workshops and resources dedicated exclusively for first-time authors.

Author on.

Writer's Block Workshop Series



Authors' Notes

To learn more about the Writer's Block Workshop Series as well as access additional author resources, please visit the Red Bicycle Books Resource Center www.redbicyclebooks.com/resource-center



The story continues on...



WWW.REDBICYCLEBOOKS.COM