

Force your muse to work! It's easy.

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By Jeff Heisler

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I find I don't need a prompt when I sit down as much as I need a structured writing regimen.

Why?

I think the creative mind hates structure. Even so, it scrambles to find solutions to problems it faces. If I tell myself that I'm going to write scene X at 8:00 Monday morning, my creative brain panics and hurries to pull something together to meet this challenge.

By the time I sit down to write it's really just about dictation.

This only works if you force yourself to write at the time you said you would. You may write junk the first couple of days, but that's ok. Your brain is learning the consequences of not preparing. It will be ready next time.

Other tips to help this work:

- 1) Quit writing while you still know what's next.
- 2) Once you have a set time and word count- don't change it- ever!
- 3) If you plot on paper you're way ahead. All you need to do is review that paper once or twice a day

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outside your usual writing time. Just let it sink in and your brain will do the rest.

Creativity is a human trait for a reason. It is intended to help us find solutions for the challenges we face. If you give your brain a challenge and stick to it, creativity will come smoother and easier than you ever thought possible.

–Jeff Heisler

Jeff Heisler is a freelance writer and editor of Write Away.

Read more of Jeff's writing articles at <http://www.heislerink.com/writeaway.asp>.
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7 Writing Muse Kickers to Fill Up That Blank Page

By Shery Ma Belle Arrieta–Russ

Nothing is more daunting for any writer than having to stare at a blank sheet of paper.

When we stare at a blank sheet of paper, we often think, "What am I going to write?" A few minutes later, it becomes, "Oh my goodness, I can't think of anything to write!" And several minutes later, it turns into something like, "Write, dangnabit! Write! Write! WRITE!"

Some writers call this writer's block. But I call it the "Writing–Muse–Needs–A–Kick" syndrome.

And that's exactly what we're going to do with your writing muse gone truant. We're going to kick her back into gear so you can fill up that blank page.

Here are 7 writing muse kickers for you to try right now:

1. First Line: Begin a story with "There was once a chance I didn't take..."
2. Cliche Starter: Weave a story or poem around the cliché, "keep your powder dry."
3. Power of Metaphor: What does "a string of laughter" make you think of?

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4. Proverb Mix: "Beauty breaks the camel's back."
5. Story Words: Use the words "pianist, pencil, high-rise building, running shoes" in a story.
6. What If? Story: What if you're going to write a story about betrayal, with a young man as the main character and a locket as the key object? Set your story on a ranch.
7. Quick Prompt: Write about what you'd say to an uninvited guest.

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For more similar kickers to help start off your writing or even fill up that page you've been staring at since yesterday, pick up a copy of Shery's software for writers, WriteSparks! Lite for free =>

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Three ways journaling can boost your creativity and your business
The Superultramodern Scientific Explanation of the Fundamental Forces
Electromagnetism, the Universe, and You

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