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**HOW TO WRITE A NOVEL**

**By Craig Lock**

**HOW TO WRITE A NOVEL by Craig Lock**

Writing is like sex in that it can be very nice when you are thinking about it, terrific when you are doing it, very satisfying afterwards...and you write because you have to.

They say that if enough chimpanzees were put in front of enough word processors for enough time, eventually one of them would write Hamlet.

Me write a novel – Impossible!

Don't worry, I had the same thoughts six years ago!

People just don't think of writing seriously. If I had been going off to teach all day, it would have been different. They wouldn't interrupt your work if you were employed at a grocery store. That's considered serious business. It's because you work at home. People think they can interrupt writing."

—Jessamyn West

"I write because something inside myself, inner and unconscious forces me to." That is the first compulsion. The second is one of ethical and moral duty. I feel responsible to tell stories that inspire readers to consider more deeply who they are."

**THE NOVEL**

Firstly ask yourself: Why do you want to write a novel? Do you have a story to tell, a message to convey, or do you perhaps hope to inspire/challenge, entertain, be famous, reach out to others, reach into your own mind. Do you perhaps want a new identity, to reach your potential as a writer? I think that a person's motives often change as your writing proceeds.

## HOW TO WRITE A NOVEL

It takes a great deal of effort to write, so PLAN ahead. Organize a few hours a day, when you won't be disturbed. WHOOA – hardly likely! The average length of a novel is 60000–100000 words. I've never counted mine. I keep my books short for two main reasons:

number one, and most importantly,  
to tell a story as simply as possible with a message..and

2. for purely financial considerations. I've lived without a cent of income from my books for two years now. So I hurry to get them out to speed things up, so I can earn some royalties...and save my family from starvation. Or the embarrassment of the soup kitchen, perhaps!

\*

So be prepared to make the sacrifices. BIG ones! Are you prepared to work away on your novel every day (and evening, instead of going out and having fun?).

I've had a lot of fun writing, even though I may have become a "hermit and social misfit" in the process! Oh well, we'll see if writing success changes that!

How do you eat an elephant, or write a novel? In small chunks. So set daily goals for yourself. If you write, say 500 words a day, a first draft of your manuscript will take 120 days or 4 months. If you write 1000 words a day, you will halve the time: it will then take only 60 days. So set daily goals – at least two hours writing. Then STICK TO IT.

PLAN THE NOVEL: Jot down plenty of notes. What characters do you want in it. Draw up a flow chart to help you develop a plot. Then draw up a chronology (big word) of the plot: eg. when were the characters born, where did they go to school, marry and other major events in their lives, etc? It's difficult to remember everything, when your mind is racing ahead. A chronology helps you to keep on track, like ensuring that the ages of the characters correspond with the events. Remember: It doesn't matter WHAT you write – just as long as you START WRITING.

But first there are some decisions to be made: Whether to write in the first, second or third person? Also from whose perspective? What tense? What is the structure to be? There must be a strong foundation, so that your novel does not 'fall down'. What is the climax? Stretch significant events central to the story and shrink unimportant ones. Describe events significant to the main theme in detail. Don't have too much description of a character, who appears only once in the story. Sort out the plot as you go along. I go for walks along the deserted beautiful beaches here and I daydream. Ensure that your novel has a RHYTHM of it's own and events move forward steadily in a logical sequence.

Find a comfortable place to write, although I think that an inspired writer can write anywhere. Tolstoi apparently wrote in the village square; because the expressions on the faces of the passing parade inspired him to write.

Finally, I believe that nearly everyone can write their own book. If that's your dream, what's stopping you? Just go for it.

YOU CAN DO IT

## HAPPY WRITING THAT NOVEL

"Whatever, you want to do or dream you can do,  
the hardest part is making a beginning.  
Once you take that first step in following your passion,  
the rest will follow naturally...  
and lead to who know's where."

Craig Lock is an author of numerous books and the creator of the ORIGINAL online creative writing course. He started the "ORIGINAL" (and still highly successful) online creative writing course. <http://www.nzenterprise.com/writer/creative.html> Craig's various books are available from: <http://www.novelty-gift.com/ebooks.html> rse.

## 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?
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.

## HOW TO WRITE A NOVEL

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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 =>

7 Writing Muse Kickers to Fill Up That Blank Page

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You Don't Need Inspiration!

It's Your Life – Take Control

10 Quick Tips To Writing Profitable Articles

How To Find A Topic For Your Ebook

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