

SYN synergy newsletter No. 6

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Quote Of The email

There are three rules for writing the novel. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are.' - W. Somerset Maugham

[http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/W. Somerset Maugham](http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/W._Somerset_Maugham)

Editorial

Welcome to another edition of Share Your Novel synergy newsletter.

I have started blogging. Well, I started last year actually, but gave up after a few entries. I was using Yahoo 360, posted onto my own website at

<http://www.lesbillgates.com/blog.html>

This service provided by Yahoo is very limited and the presentation is poor. So I decided to post my blog to two more popular sites. You can view the blog at:

<http://lesbillgates.livejournal.com> and <http://lesbillgates.blogspot.com>

I'm now trying to blog regularly – at least three times a week!

Today I'd like to say something about some of the excellent writer-related websites and e-zines I've come across.

From North America:

Writer Gazette, <http://www.writergazette.com>, maintained by Krista Barrett has been voted 'Best Site' in Writer's Digest magazine for 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006 & 2007

Absolute Write, <http://www.absolutewrite.com/>, maintained by MacAllister Stone is full of useful information and links.

Writesparks, <http://writesparks.com/>, maintained by Shery Ma Belle Arrieta-Russ always has lots of helpful ideas.

Filbert Publishing, <http://filbertpublishing.com> and the e-zine Writing Etc, maintained by Beth Erickson has helpful ideas for freelance writers.

Moira Allen's Writing World, <http://www.writing-world.com/>, has a wealth of information about all aspects of writing.

There are many others. However, as a Brit living in New Zealand, what has struck me as surprising is the number of excellent sites and newsletters that come from 'across the ditch' in Australia. These include:

Rob Parnell's The Easy Way to Write, <http://easywaytowrite.com> , full of helpful ideas and lots of free stuff, as well as a range of valuable courses.

Ruth Barringham's Writeaholics, <http://www.writeaholics.net/> with lots of links, freebies and a publishing service.

Marg McAlister's Writing4Success, <http://www.writing4success.com> , which probably has the best weekly articles available anywhere (that I know of).

Angela Booth maintains an e-zine for freelancers 'Freelance Writing Success Tips and Skills' as well as several websites, including <http://writinghacker.com/> Helpful advice for freelancers, and lots of courses also.

Cheryl Wright's <http://www.writer2writer.com> She has lots of helpful ideas and free gifts.

Considering the population of Australia, isn't it amazing that it has so many talented writers and freelancers?

Les Gates

Administrator – Share Your Novel

This month's article –

Becoming a Better Writer - A 10 Step Guide

Rob Parnell

The urge to write fiction seems God given for some, a learned skill for others.

One thing is certain – it requires practice and a particular mindset. But, if you're a beginner, where do you start?

The following 10 tips will help kick-start your writing habit, whether you're a complete novice, or perhaps a pro who has lost their way!

1. Step Away From the Car, Sir.

Slightly detach yourself from your surroundings. Stop participating and begin observing. In social situations, watch people, see how they act and – more importantly - interact.

Don't pass judgment. Take it all in – and draw on it later when you write.

2. Look Harder, Homer

Stop and look around you. Consciously notice the buildings, what's underfoot, overhead, and what's right in front of you.

At home, look at something you take for granted. An iron, for instance. Find yours and study it.

3. Write Thinking Will Be Rewarded.

A simple technique. Your mother is making tea and you are chatting to her. Take a mental step back and describe the scene.

Similarly, when you're outside, describe your environment as though you were writing it down.

4. What Reasons Do You Need?

Don't wait for inspiration – just write!

Force yourself to write anything at all. A shopping list. An overheard conversation. Describe your bedroom.

It doesn't matter how personal it is, or how trivial, just get it down!

5. Wakey Wakey!

Set your alarm clock for an hour earlier than normal.

When the alarm goes off, get up. Don't dress, bathe or eat. Don't even make coffee. Just stagger to your writing space and write the first thing that comes into your head for five minutes.

6. Oh God – Not That!

Think of the most awful and embarrassing thing you've ever done - the more cringe-worthy the better. Now write about it. All of it, in all its gory, horrible detail.

Then hide it away for a year or so before you read it again!

7. Like Your Style, Baby.

Don't limit yourself. Write poems, songs, dialogue, fact, fiction, even practice writing advertising copy or horoscopes.

Your expertise improves in all areas – an improvement in one area can reap benefits in another.

8. The Sincerest Flattery

Take out a classic book from your bookcase. Copy out a paragraph. Think about the words as you write them. Don't get intimidated!

9. Wanna See My Invention?

When you're not writing, string together stories in your mind. Think of plots, characters, settings, dénouements.

Ask yourself what you should do next to improve your writing.

Develop this technique into a habit.

10. It's A Goal!

When you start writing regularly, set yourself small goals. Anything from 200 words a day, or just a commitment to writing in your diary.

Later extend to finishing a short story, or an article or a poem. Perhaps one in a week.

The trick is to set goals you can achieve easily.

That way you'll get the writing habit - and you won't forget to enjoy it!

Best regards and keep writing!

Rob Parnell

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Creating Successful Writers

[The Easy Way to Write](http://www.easywaytowrite.com) www.easywaytowrite.com