

Writer's Toolkit

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Toolkit elements

Toolkit 1: Writer's room basics

Toolkit 2a: Microtips, write, rewrite methods

Toolkit 2b: Microtips Con't

Toolkit 3: Ask yourself questions

Toolkit 4: Discipline & Order

Toolkit 5: Plot

Toolkit 6a: Character

Toolkit 6b: Character Con't

Toolkit 7: Ad hoc tips

Toolkit 2a: Microtips, write and rewrite methods

Cut out all useless “weasel” words

Short sentences.

One idea per sentence

Treat each paragraph like a complete story.

Be more explicit don't let the reader have to guess too much

Create a different version as a professional technique.

Change order of sentences and phrases as a matter of course and professional ‘play around’.

Use two sentences to develop an idea to avoid shocking reader and them hanging.

Toolkit 2a: Microtips, write and rewrite methods

When stuck ask yourself, “What am I trying to say?” Then write it down

Go for a walk and dream up ideas, solutions
problem.

Don't start new ideas in the middle of a
paragraph.

Cut out 'good but long bits' if the content is
getting too complicated. Save for later in a
separate ideas Word document. ie Edit! Be
cruel to yourself

Toolkit 2b: Microtips Con't

Take the last closing idea/theme/conclusion and check if it is set up at the beginning.

Good idea to refer to the first para / theme/ idea /keyword in the closing para.

Change order of sentences and phrases as a matter of course and professional 'play around'.

Use two sentences to develop an idea to avoid shocking reader and leave them hanging.

One idea per sentence.

Use words not exclamation marks to exclaim.

Toolkit 2b: Microtips Con't

Use quoted speech to exclaim instead of she said exclaiming etc.
Numbers under five written - Get yourself a style guide look up

Read out aloud.

Walk about and act out scenes Visit places.

Research - books, talk to people.

Provide link words and hint words (signposts) when jumping from scene to scene.

Remember alliteration- Create new meaning words (MH copyright)
phoneswerve: turning off the road to answer youe mobile in a dangerous manner!

Treat the opening sentence as the Hook to grab the reader.

Toolkit 3: Ask yourself questions

What is his/her name?

Age?

Height?

Body shape?

Hair colour, skin colour?

Job?

Favourite saying?

Typical outfit to wear?

Method of transportation?

Immediate plan?

Long-range goal?

Parents? Siblings? Kids?

Toolkit 3: Ask yourself questions

Kind of education?

What kind of house /home/ apartment?

What city/country/location

Does he/she have a pet? What kind?

Best friend?

Favourite food?

Financial situation?

Hobby?

Skill?

Moral attitude?

Philosophical attitude?

Favourite book? Last-read book?

What is the bedroom like?

Spouse/mate/ steady date/ significant other? Why/why not?

Parents? Siblings? Kids?

Toolkit 4: Discipline & Order

Your writing room

 Meticulousness is essential

Shelving

Notebooks

Basic resource books _ Ask me for a list

Proof reading marks

Writing style

Folder of improved work

Why? - you know the answer

Toolkit 4: Discipline & Order

Title, name, date, page numbers on every page.

1.5 line spacing

Computer Filenames are essential important for all work:

(Rant) I am still getting unassignable filenames from students, which makes it difficult from the filename to work out what or what is being sent.

Filenames are next to Godliness

initials of student_one word title all lower case _
version number #1 no spaces no capitals ie
jw_reminiscences#1.doc

Toolkit 5: Plot

Are there only 7 basic plots?

A one-sentence summary of the character's storyline.

The character's motivation (what does he/she want abstractly?)

The character's goal (what does he/she want concrete)

The character's conflict (what prevents him/her from reaching this goal?)

The character's epiphany (what will he/she learn, how he/she change?)

A one-paragraph summary of the character's storyline.

Toolkit 6a: Character

Add to Ask Yourself Questions (next page)

Motive

State of mind

Enlightment

Give a character a problem

What is the cause

Problems with living

Toolkit 6a: Character: emotion

Make him **hate** what he is, but make him **hungry**. Make him **struggle** - and **overcome** or **fail**, if you like.

Give options for response to events

Day-dream about the people you might want to put in your book.

Keep track of dates of birth and eye colour

Put them in a solid social context

Focus on one main character:

Have a main plot and sub-plots,

i.e. the hero - principal plot, his sidekick or girlfriend has or is the sub-plot.

Toolkit 6b: Character Detail 1

What is he/his name?

- Age?
- Height?
- Body shape?
- Hair colour, skin colour?
- Job?
- Favourite saying?
- Typical outfit to wear?
- Method of transportation?
- Immediate plan?
- Long-range goal?
- Kind of education?
- What kind of house /home /apartment?
- What city/country/location

Toolkit 6b: Character Detail 2

- Does he/she have a pet? What kind?
- Best friend?
- Favourite food?
- Financial situation?
- Hobby?
- Skill?
- Moral attitude?
- Philosophical attitude?
- Favourite book? Last-read book?
- What is the bedroom like?
- Spouse/mate/ steady date/ significant other? Why/why not?
- Parents? Siblings? Kids?

Toolkit 7: Ad hoc tips

Keep a checklist of Things to Do so you can go back to your writing after leaving it for a while.

It is OK to recycle a story and use ideas again. Strip out the complicated story and do a simple version first.

Find a buddy to edit your work (husbands/partners No! No! No! see Amy Winehouse)

Take an author and copy their style exactly.

Make a map of your story. My Santa's Grotto is actually a bird's eye view map of a story-in tradition of Bilbo and Robin.

Put story events into a calendar. ENDS: "enjoy!"