

the writer's guide



a step by step guide to
creating a piece of writing

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The Writer's Guide

(work ebook)

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Welcome

This guide will assist you in writing a creative piece. You can complete these activities by yourself or with the guidance of your teacher.

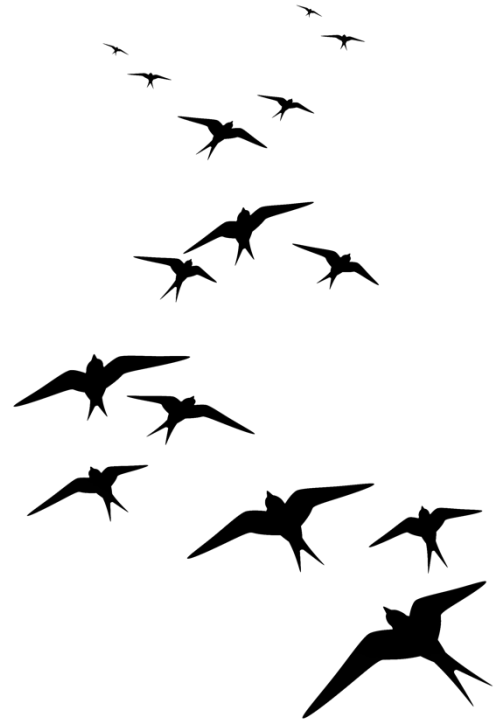
The writing you compose using the diverse activities in this guide will form the basis of your creative writing piece.

Using this guide

Each activity can be completed in 5 - 20 minutes. From there you can edit your pieces by expanding on the ideas that appeal to you. A modelled response is provided to assist you. You can follow the modelled response or interpret the activity in your own way. It's up to you.

Free writing

Free writing is an effective strategy to get your mind thinking creatively. Write continuously for the allocated minutes in each activity without stopping. Don't worry about spelling, punctuation or grammar. Just get your ideas down on paper. Read over what you have written, selecting and developing the words, images and stylistic choices you think have potential.



1. Developing ideas for writing

Writers use memories and recollections constantly in their writing but you cannot tell what is fiction and what is fact. This allows the writer to maintain privacy while exploring their life in an entertaining way. Because you are writing fiction, you can add to your story whatever aspects of the narrative you want to develop - setting, characters, plot, description, etc. It's up to you.

The following modelled response is a memory from my childhood. Playing games with my family was one way I felt a sense of belonging and connection to others. There are elements of this story that are true and elements that I have added for effect. One of the reasons why I found this easy to write was because I could imagine this scene as parts of it actually happened.

You will notice that this form of writing is very visual. Creating clear visual images in your reader's mind is one way to engage your audience and recreate a sense of time and place for them.

This extract comes from a larger piece of writing. The extract was written to develop my character, who had just lost his father. Through the memory extract I was aiming to explore the sense of loss the character would be feeling at that particular time. Read the modelled response, take note of the effective writing skills and complete the writing activity below.



Modelled response

We are in the garden, and I am digging a hole with a stick which has fallen from the fig tree that shelters our entire front yard. My Dad is with me, lying in the dirt. He wipes his face with his hand, leaving a smudge of brown on his cheek. He is my war hero and we are about to go into battle. He tells me to shift the dirt into a mound. I follow his commands like a drill sergeant. We can use it for the hills he says. Bonus points if you go over the top of them. First one to hit all their marbles in the ditch wins. We both nod.

My mum calls us in for dinner. I hold my breath as my Dad hollers to her that we need another half an hour. He looks at me and I try my best to conceal my smile. This is man's business, he tells me.

He pulls out a bag of marbles from his pocket and spills them onto the dirt. They look like chocolate jaffa lollies decorated like Easter eggs. He brushes the dirt from the tops of the marbles. I have something special for you, he says. He pulls out from his other pocket a larger marble. We call it a boulder. I squirm inside, ecstatic. It's shiny red and has two black lightning bolts crossing each other. He holds it in between his thumb and pointer finger and twists it back and forth in front of my eyes. I let out a deep sigh. Where did you get that from? I have connections, he says. Let's play ball.

My mum is calling now, louder and more forceful. I shrug off the interruption, jerking my shoulder up toward my ear like I'm warding off a fly. Still the noise. It's piercing my ears, drilling a hole through my head. I look to my father, but he is gone.

Effective writing skills

- Clear visual imagery is created through description and figurative language.
- Clear feelings of characters are shown.
- Easily identifiable relationship between a son and father is explored.
- Combinations of sentence lengths are used to describe the incident and show a variety of character thoughts, feelings and desires.
- Self-contained scene means that it could stand alone.

Activity 1: Developing ideas for writing



Time: 10 minutes

1. Write a description of a scene from your childhood where you felt a strong sense of connection to other people, animals and or a place.
2. Write in the first person using the present tense. Add aspects to your description that may not have happened, like the setting or people involved. Slowly develop the scene through creating clear visual images, which demonstrate your characters' thoughts, actions, desires, attitudes and beliefs.