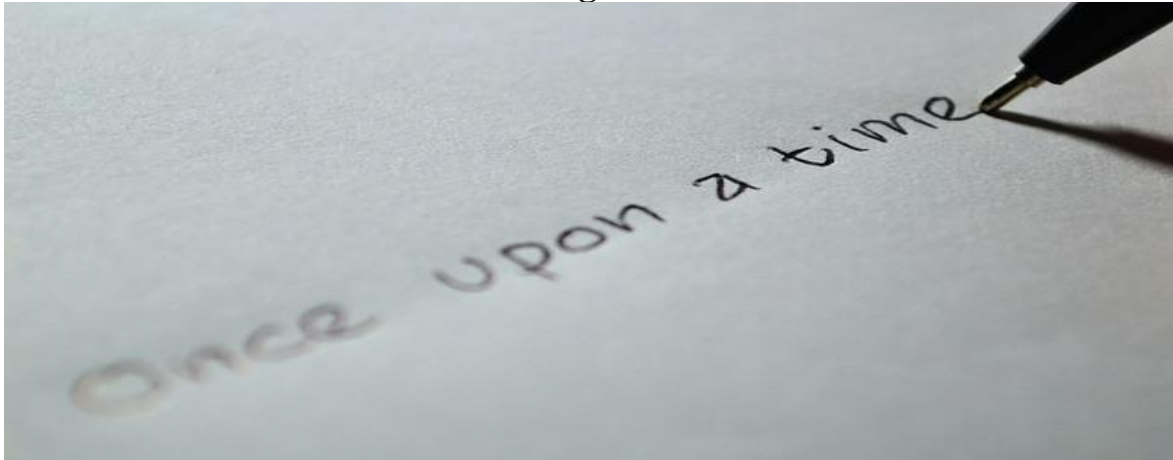


Got an Itch to Write? Get Scratching!



We are the music makers, and we are the dreamers of dreams.

- Taken from Arthur O'Shaughnessy's "Ode" (and from *Willy Wonka*)

You have an itch to write. Get scratching! Use this workbook as a scratching post or a drawing board. Get those ideas out on paper. Copy the pages and use them again and again. You love to read, you get lost in novels and stories or history books and magazines, you swim in the waves of well-placed words and phrases, and you revel in the images that spring from the written word.

You love to make up stories and share ideas. You just know you can write a novel. Do it!

Offered here is some inspirational information designed to get you started. The most important thing is to believe in yourself. Doubting yourself never gets you to the computer or typewriter (yes, some of us use typewriters!) Put aside the conventional world and jump into the rich world of dreams, imagination, and storytelling. Get into your head and start pulling out your ideas.

Whether you are on a plane, a train, in your car, walking to the store, taking a shower, getting a haircut, or pulling weeds in the garden, ideas bubble up at the oddest times, so always be ready to let these ideas flow; give your thoughts and ideas room! With imagination, you can take an ordinary day, an ordinary occurrence, and turn it into something exciting. Ask yourself some questions that will help you get your ideas flowing:

GETTING STARTED

Where do ideas for stories come from?

Topics are found everywhere...

1. A spiritual, political, or philosophical belief you find inspiring
2. Technological or social changes in your world
3. A conversation you had with friends
4. A personal experience with a place or a person
5. A topic you heard about on the Internet or a radio show

Whatever your inspiration, if it touches your emotions and engages you, chances are you can write a book about it. Even if your book is fact-based, you are writing a novel, which means you can elaborate on the truth and expound on a true or real occurrence.

Many good ideas start with this question: What if?

What if a young boy was cast off into the middle of the ocean with a tiger, a zebra, and a hyena?

What if there was some kind of immense, country-wide chemical explosion that brought the dead back to life? And the dead were very hungry...

What if vampires roamed the streets of New Orleans?

What if you could go back in history? What was it like to be a woman in Ancient Rome?

Ask yourself questions that arouse your sense of wonder. Whether or not they are based on truth, open your mind and let the ideas flow. Write them down, no matter how insignificant they seem at the time.