

Writing Tips for Young Writers

So you want to be a writer?
Here's what to do!

1. Read lots – especially the kind of stuff you want to write. Get a reader's card from the library and start exploring what's on the bookshelves.
2. Write something every day. Keeping a diary or a journal is a good idea. The writing is private & for your eyes only. Grab paper & pen & let rip!
3. Make friends with your dictionary & with GSP (Grammar, Spelling & Punctuation.) Words are the basis of all communication. Good writing is best words in best order.
4. Try out your stories & poems on friends & family & listen carefully to what they say. But trust your own opinion, too. And remember friends & family aren't always the BEST critics. Listen to teachers and read what writers say about writing.
5. Experiment with different kinds of writing & learn what makes writing work. The Internet has some cool sites for kids who want to write – you could start with library.thinkquest.org. Two important questions to ask before you start: What am I writing about? Who am I writing it for?
6. Be simple & straightforward in your presentation. Fancy fonts are fun – but the main focus is on what you say and how you say it. In the real world of writing, editors & publishers like plain text on white paper with wide margins.
7. In all your writing, make your meaning clear & stick to the point. If what's written is not understandable, it's always the writer's fault, not the reader's.
8. Take any opportunity you get to 'write on demand' – for a school magazine, a poem for Mothers Day, go in for competitions, etc. Professional writers don't wait for inspiration. They create their own opportunities, and learn to write a set number of words on any subject and hand it in on time.
9. Create a writing space that encourages you to get started, get on with it, and get the work finished. Take time to set your workspace up somewhere quiet with all you need to hand. When you go there, you know you're going there to write.
10. Stephen King said all writers need a large tube of Bum Glue to keep you on your seat and help you get stuck in.