

Writing a Portfolio

Just as artists put together a folder of work to show commissioning editors or potential customers, so too should beginning and published writers put together samples of their writing as a 'writer's portfolio' to show magazine editors and publishers.

You need bylines to demonstrate what you can do. Your byline is your name on an article, poem or story published in a magazine, newspaper or anthology. This is one reason we encourage beginners to write without payment, though that's not a good practice to continue.

Don't stay with the free stuff too long – writing is work. But use it to keep your hand in when you're not getting published elsewhere; as a tool to advertise speakers; to be 'literary' - To write about what stirs you, whether passion or a protest.

Keep a record of whatever you write, wherever it's published, whether paid for or not. Make sure a selection is photocopied for your writer's portfolio. (A photocopy because it shows you were published and in what format.) Your portfolio can be a scrapbook, cellophane files in a folder, or a plastic wallet – whatever you prefer.

Something neat and impressive; or maybe two or three put together for different markets.

Make the front page a brief 'writer's CV' – yes, we have a handout on that, too! - and ensure you always have an up to date minibio for those publications, like Bravado, that want 'Notes on Contributors'.

Make the last page a list of your writing credits.

You can bring along your writer's portfolio to share with other members of Tauranga Writers, and get constructive feedback on how it presents you to the world of editors and publishers.

And, in the meantime, why not read more about putting your portfolio together online? Go to: <http://writeanything.wordpress.com/2010/07/21/building-a-writers-portfolio/>