



Drafting

Writing Project Series



Writing Prompt:

Write a poem or short fiction piece inspired by **trees and nature!**

Submit to [Arboreal Literary Magazine](#) by **March 31st.**

03/31/2024

Arbor Day Special Issue 2024

[art](#) [environmental](#) [fiction](#) [nonfiction](#) [poetry](#)

General Information

Arboreal Literary Magazine is thrilled to announce an open call for submissions for our special, online-only issue commemorating Arbor Day 2024. In celebration of trees, forests, and the vital role they play in our environment and imagination, we invite poets, writers, and artists to delve deep into the verdant realms of nature and share their creative interpretations with us.

Introducing Drafting

You have an amazing, original, ground-breaking idea for a small collection of poetry or short stories and you're itching to get started—but where do you start?

Drafting is one of the most important stages of the writing process and will build the bones of your final project.



Agenda



Know Your Goal (What's a chapbook?)



Brainstorming



Mood Boards



Music



Evaluating Your Ideas



Art of the Elevator Pitch



Writing Tips

Focus on a Theme

"A story theme is a broad conceptual philosophy that an author wishes to convey through their literary work. "

What are you writing about?

- Love
- Secrets
- Death
- Morality
- Hope
- Power

Some projects, like novels, will need more than one theme to keep readers engaged.



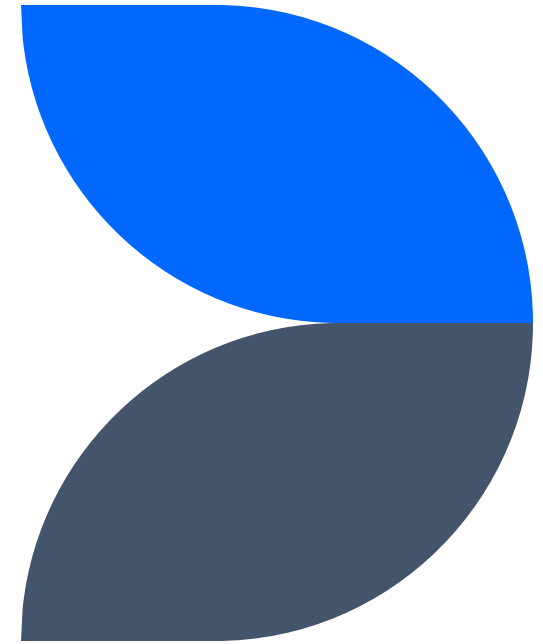
"I want to unfold. / Let no place in me
hold itself closed..."
- Rainer Maria Rilke, Book of Hours [l. 14]

Speak

megan reich

Brainstorming

Once you've figured out the gist of what you want to write, you'll want to create a brainstorm; this is the process of physically writing down your thoughts and ideas to better organize them (and free up space in your head!).





How to Make a Brainstorm

1. Add your central topic to the middle of your page
2. Beneath the central topic, describe your project in 1-2 sentences
3. Add as many related ideas as you can, including:
 - Themes
 - Characters
 - Locations
 - Dialogue
 - Plot points
 - Poem/chapter titles
 - Images (poetic images or drawn images)
4. When your page is full, organize your ideas

TOOTHACHE
(poetry chapbook)

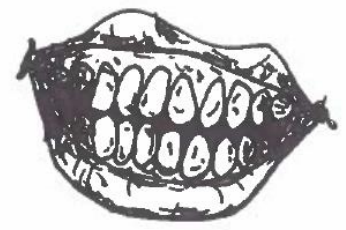
TOOTHACHE

(poetry chapbook)

Exploring adolescence
through the eyes of the
mouth.

* Body Horror

- Licking your lips
- Biting your tongue



- Things you do with your mouth
- ↳ swallow
 - ↳ spit
 - ↳ eat
 - ↳ lick
 - ↳ drink
 - ↳ bite
 - ↳ breathe
 - ↳ smile

* Relationships



- Drinking vinegar

* emotions



- uncomfortable
- weird

- Noah & the Arc

• Knife fork Book

TOOTHACHE

(poetry chapbook)
Exploring adolescence through the eyes of the mouth.

- Block Party

- Lips

- * Afraid of growing up

- * self-discovery

Toothfairy



- ↳ coins
- ↳ candy
- * ↳ creepy

* Puberty

- SUCKER

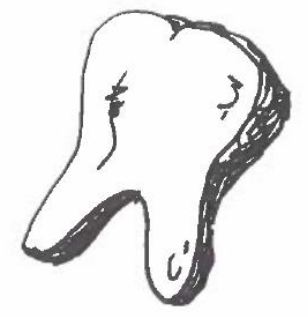
spit
sunflower seeds
in the
dugout

says the girl
who birthed
a watermelon



- Anstruther • oral storytelling

- ↳ X-RAY
- ask dentist

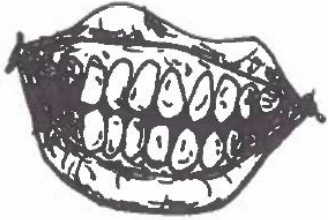


- ave

* **Body Horror**

Images?

- ↳ swallow
- ↳ eat
- ↳ drink
- ↳ breathe
- ↳ spit
- ↳ lick
- ↳ bite
- ↳ smile



* **Puberty**

• SUCKER

#1 **START**

Tooth Fairy

- ↳ coins
- ↳ candy
- ↳ creepy



Spit

Sunflower seeds
in the
dugout
says the girl
who birthed
a watermelon



• Anstruther • oral storytelling

• **Knife Fork Book**

TOOTHACHE
(poetry chapbook)
Exploring adolescence
through the eyes of the
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* **Relationships**



• Drinking vinegar

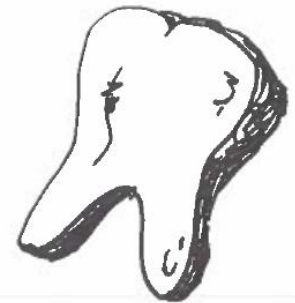
• Lips

↳ X-RAY
- ask dentist
Centrefold

• **Block Party**

* **Afraid of growing up**

* **Self-discovery**



#1
• are
• **above/ground Press**

• **Gap Riot**

• Licking your lips
• Biting your tongue

* **emotions**

• Dentist

• uncomfortable
• weird

• ~~Noah & the Arc~~
• **Johan & the Whale**

- submit here
- themes
- Images

The background consists of several white paper cutouts of human heads in profile, arranged in a circular pattern. Each head contains a large black question mark. In the center, one head features a blue line drawing of a lit lightbulb. The cutouts are layered, creating a sense of depth, and the background is a solid teal color.

Activity

Complete a brainstorm using provided paper and writing tools.

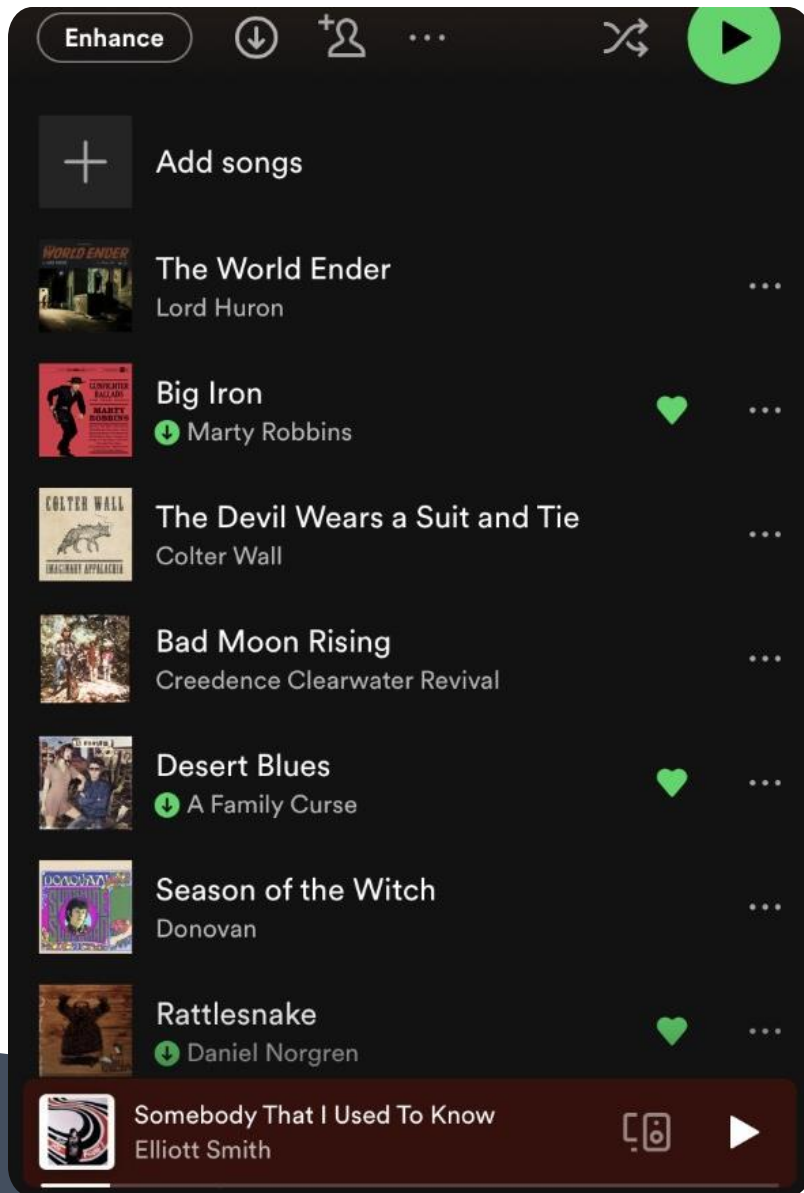
WHAT TO INCLUDE ON YOUR MOOD BOARD



Mood Boards

Sometimes it's easier to communicate ideas with images. Mood boards are collections of images (and videos) that express the mood or aesthetic of your project.

You can create a mood board in many ways, by printing and pasting images to a Bristol board, finding images online and dragging them into a Word document, or by using free software like Pinterest.



Music



Create a soundtrack for your project using music you feel encapsulates its plot, themes, and most importantly, **atmosphere**. Create playlists on apps like Spotify or Apple Music, or simply jot down the names of songs on your brainstorm page.

Listening to this playlist might place you in the world of your project and give you some new ideas.

Evaluate Your Ideas

Compare your ideas to your original concept.
Some questions to ask yourself:

- Does this idea add anything new or interesting to my project?
- Does this idea make me excited to work on my project?
- Does this idea need further research or development?
- Does this idea feel cliché or overdone?
- **Does this idea fit within the context of this project, or can it be recycled for another?**





Elevator Pitch

An 'elevator pitch' is a brief presentation of an idea or product that gets across all necessary information. The name comes from the length of time your pitch should last: a regular elevator ride.

Step One

What's your project about?

Capture the pulse of your book in no more than 50 words. What is it, at its core?

Ex. It's a story of how I searched for my mother's murderer after law enforcement gave up.



Step Two

What's the context?

Is there a specific time or place relevant to your project? Are there cultural contexts readers should be aware of? Give readers a sense of the world they should expect from your book.

Ex. It's the story of how an Orange County housewife spent four years searching for her mother's murderer when law enforcement officials in both Mexico and the US gave up.



Step Three

Why should readers care?

How might a reader feel after finishing your book? What are they getting out of it?

Ex. It's the story of how an Orange County housewife spent four years searching for her mother's murderer when law enforcement officials in both Mexico and the US gave up. Many people dream of solving an unsolvable case and cracking a code no one else could touch; few people actually pull it off.



Step Four

Make it snappy.

Polish your pitch by adjusting the rhythm, adding detail, and allowing your unique voice to shine through so that readers get a sense of your style. Read your pitch out loud and hear how it sounds. Revise until perfect.

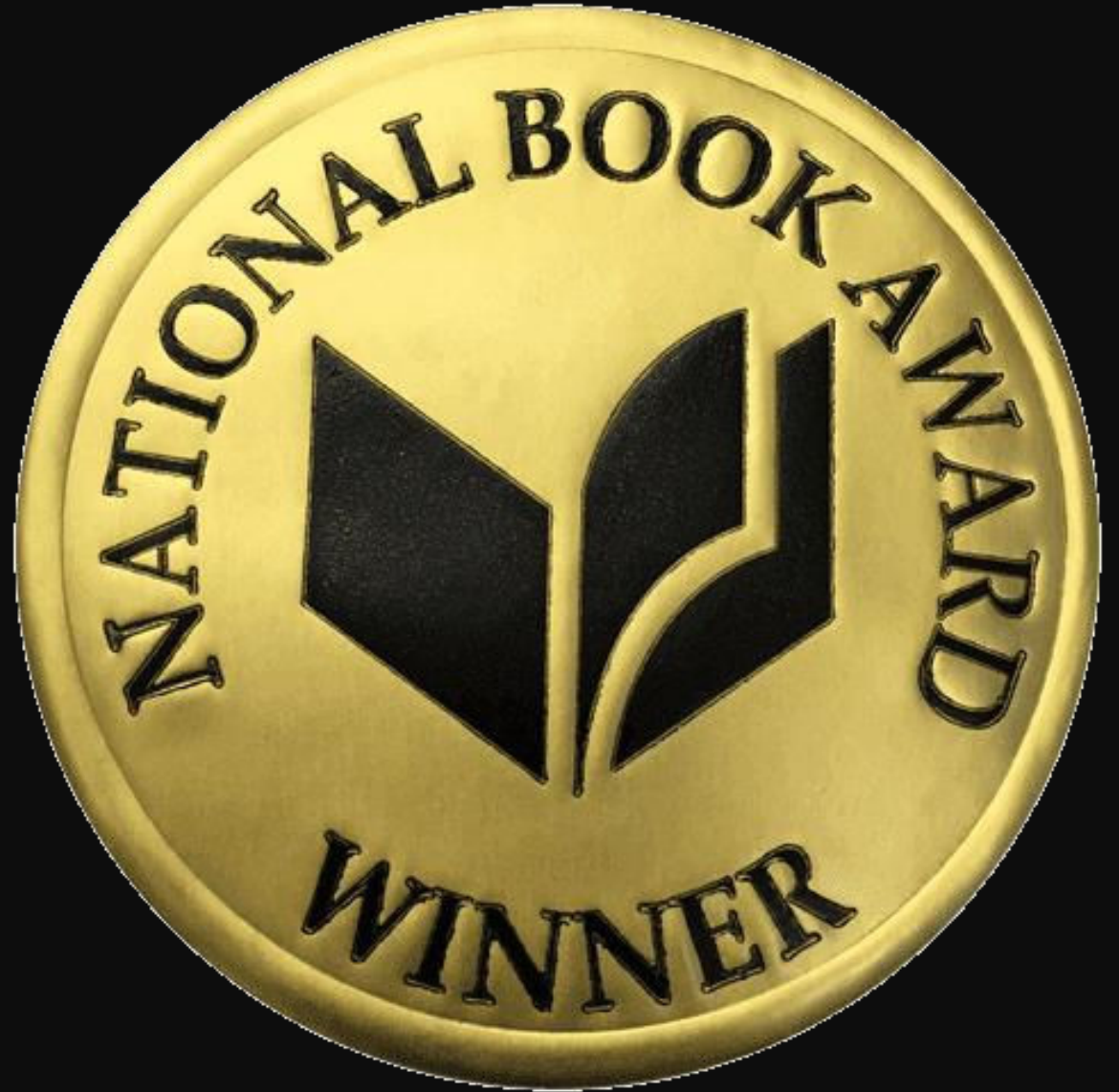
Ex. When law enforcement officials in both Mexico and the US failed to solve the brutal murder of her mother, Lauri Taylor, an Orange County housewife, vowed to do whatever it took to solve the crime. She spent four years in a relentless quest for the truth, and against all odds, cracked the code of her mother's case. Many people dream of solving a high-profile crime, but few people have the guts, stamina, and skills to actually pull it off. This story combines a true crime page-turner with a poignant mother-daughter saga.



Step Five

Add relevant accolades.

Are you an award-winning writer? A best-selling author? Was your book reviewed by someone famous? Work in these details!



An open elevator shaft with a dark grey frame and ceiling lights. The shaft is set into a light-colored, textured wall. A control panel with a green up arrow and a white down arrow is visible above the shaft. A red emergency stop button is on the wall to the right of the shaft.

Activity

Write your own elevator pitch.



How to Write an Elevator Pitch



- 1 • What's your project about?
- 2 • What's the context?
- 3 • Why should readers care?
- 4 • Make it snappy.
- 5 • Add relevant accolades.



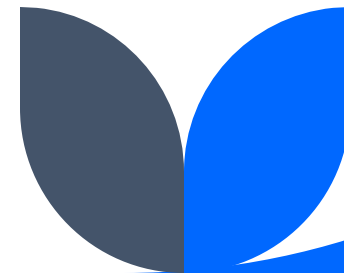
Know Your Audience



You may want **everyone** to read your work, but focusing on a particular demographic helps focus your work and play to your own strengths.

- **Young Adult:** Teens 13-18
- **Middle-grade:** Kids 8-12
- **Adult Contemporary:** 18+

Also consider genre, form, content, language,





Chapbooks

‘Chapbook’ is the term used for a small collection of poetry, short stories, flash fiction, creative nonfiction, lyrics, fairy tales, even illustrations. They are about 16 – 40 pages in length and are commonly organized around a single theme.

Advantages

- Quicker to produce
- Focused
- Opportunities for new experiences
- Submitting is cheap and easy
- Great beginner publication

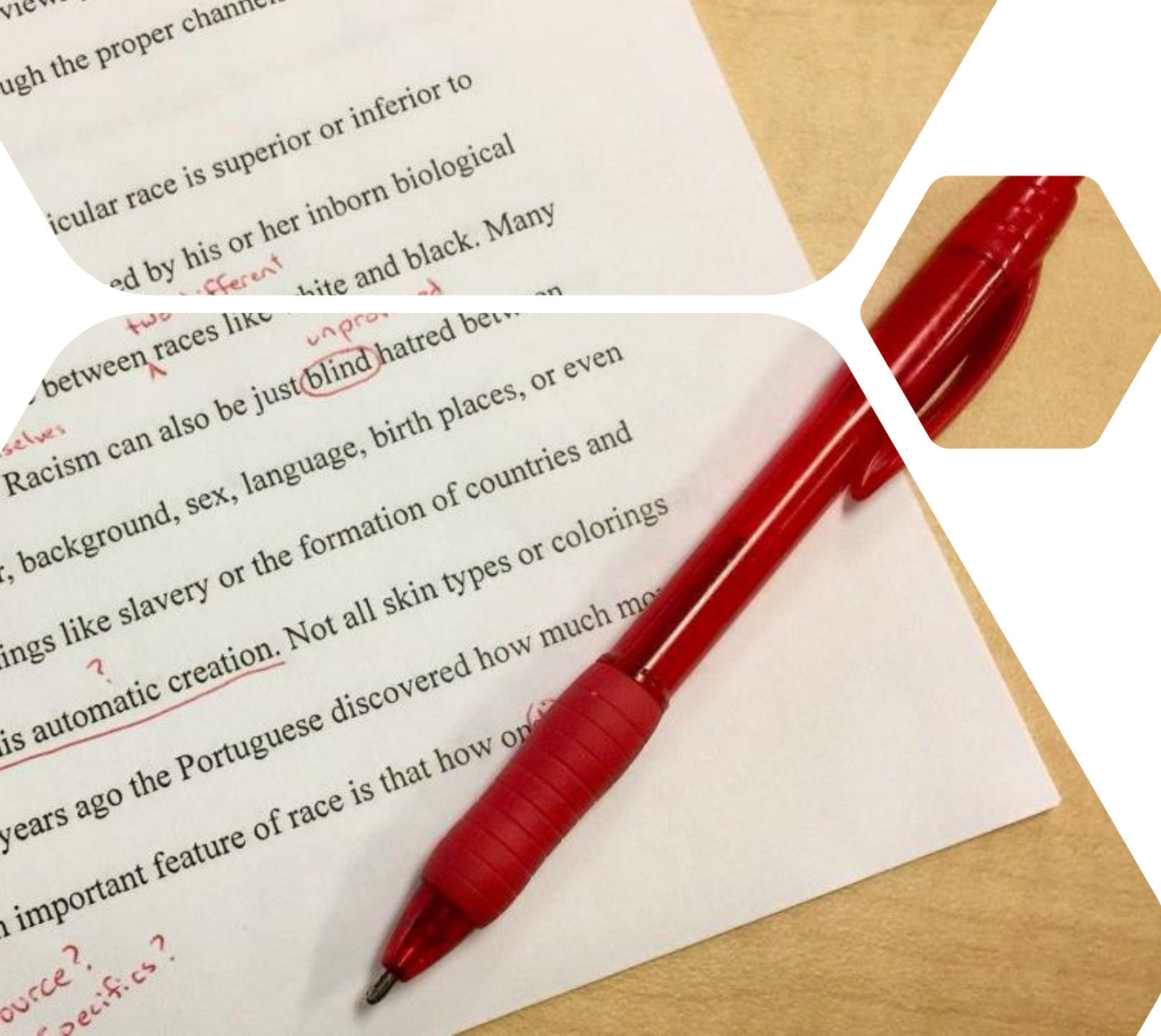
Disadvantages

- Won't make you rich
- Won't make you famous



Tip #1

Prewriting: Practice getting into a writing headspace with writing prompts, timed writing, journalling, etc. Freewriting, for example, is the practice of writing down every thought in your head as they come.



Tip #2

Avoid editing: Your rough draft is meant to be rough! Don't get bogged down by revising as you go, focus on getting the story or the poems out. You can go back and edit it later.



Tip #3

Start where you want: You don't have to write the poems or scenes in order; start with what's most exciting to you.



Tip #4

Find routine: This might be tricky depending on your schedule but try to find a consistent time to write. You'll hardwire your brain to want to write whenever this time rolls around.



Tip #5

Take breaks: Don't blow a creative fuse—take breaks and do something fun!

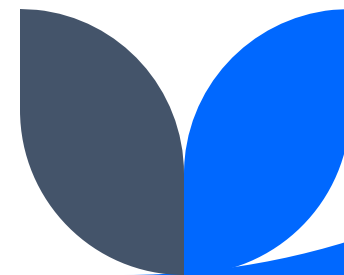
Summary

Being a writer is at times like being your own boss. This has its advantages, but it also means you are responsible for producing a product. **Happy writing!**

Writing Project Series

The **Writing Project Series** is intended for writers who want to produce a collection of poetry or short stories but don't know where to begin.

Each month from March to September, we'll unpack a different stage of the writing process from drafting to publication, all while you work on your manuscript. The series culminates in your work being featured in a **published anthology that will be added to the library's collection!**



<p>Tues, March 19th 7 pm - 8:30 pm Central Library Auditorium</p>	<p>Writing Project Series: Drafting Starting a writing project and overwhelmed with ideas? Learn how to build the skeleton of your project and what to consider in the earliest stages of your work.</p>
<p>Tues, April 16th 7 pm - 8:30 pm Central Library Auditorium</p>	<p>Writing Project Series: Poetry Learn about the characteristics of a poem, different kinds of poetry, and just how powerful poetry can be.</p>
<p>Tues, May 21st 7 pm - 8:30 pm Central Library Auditorium</p>	<p>Writing Project Series: Fiction Who doesn't love a story that can be told in ten pages or less? Come learn the art of the short story!</p>
<p>Tues, June 18th 7 pm - 8:30 pm Central Library Auditorium</p>	<p>Writing Project Series: Editing I've written a bestseller – now what? Learn to tackle the editing process. *Submit your anthology selection by July 1st!</p>
<p>Tues, July 16th 7 pm - 8:30 pm Central Library Auditorium</p>	<p>Writing Project Series: Publishing Pt. 1 Let's explore the traditional publishing process! Learn about querying agents, working with publishers, and participating in literary events.</p>
<p>Tues, August 20th 7 pm - 8:30 pm Central Library Auditorium</p>	<p>Writing Project Series: Publishing Pt. 2 Let's explore the self-publishing process! Learn about formatting, printing, binding, and promoting your work.</p>
<p>Mon, September 2nd 7 pm - 8:30 pm Central Library Auditorium</p>	<p>Writing Project Series: Launch Party! Join us for readings, refreshments, and fun at the launch of PPL's second Writers' Anthology featuring work by participants of the Writing Project Series!</p>

Next
Program

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Thank you