

Writing Tips with Mark Greenwood



- ◆ Fuel your writing by reading. If you want to be a good writer, read a lot and write a lot.
 - ◆ Become a story detective. Research how your favorite writers capture the voices of their characters. Read with a writer's eye to learn how they invite readers into the emotions of their characters.
 - ◆ Write because it brings you happiness, so find a subject you are about.
 - ◆ Try to find a place where you can write without distractions, where you can disconnect from the world and enter the imaginary world of your story.
 - ◆ Practice. Like learning a musical instrument, to write well takes practice. Creativity is an invisible muscle. When exercised regularly it becomes stronger.
- ◆ Writing a story needs focus and attention. Begin by giving your writing direction:
 - ◇ Where and when does your story take place?
 - ◇ Who are the main characters?
 - ◇ Who is telling your story?
 - ◆ Give your reader a character to care about. Figure out what the main character really wants, more than anything, and everything else will fall into place.
 - ◆ What motivates your characters? Where will the story journey take them? What is their quest? What challenges and obstacles might they meet?
 - ◆ Ideas for stories are like fossils buried in your imagination. As a writer, you are the archaeologist, brushing away the layers, to discover your story - what happens and why it happens.
 - ◆ Most great pieces of writing need a lot of thought. Try to visualize what you want your reader to experience when they read your story and then translate what you see in your mind into words on the page.
 - ◆ To transfer your imaginary ideas into the minds of your readers, your writing should evoke feelings i.e. not that it is raining, but the feeling of being rained on.
 - ◆ Write a first DRAFT. Have a go! A first draft doesn't have to be perfect. It's just a first attempt to introduce the characters, the subject and the story. Try to capture attention right from the beginning with a sizzling start.
 - ◆ The draft is just an attempt, but revision will give your story clarity. Revision means reimagining and rewriting your story to make it better. You may need to let go of unnecessary words and cut out any boring parts. Pick places where your writing could be clearer. Use descriptive language. Read your story aloud. How does it sound? Pay attention to the rhythm of your writing so that it flows with the twists and turns of your story.
 - ◆ Be your own editor. Use a dictionary or spell check. Use periods and commas where *necessary* but do not *overuse*. Read your story with a critical eye checking for incorrect language, capitalization, punctuation and make sure the tense is consistent throughout the story.
 - ◆ FINALLY – check the **Armadale Young Writers' Awards** guidelines to make sure story has the very best chance to impress the judges!



Congratulations - creativity takes courage. Be brave. Share your story!