



Work at Home Grandma Presents

*Your Perfect Resource
Guide to Better
Writing*

Great Ideas on how to get started on anything you
want to write

What You'll Find in Your Resource Guide

Sandra Joy Eastman

1. *Now is the time to begin*

2. *How to Begin Story*

3. *Don't Dream Your Life Away - Set a Goal*

4. *Remember the Little Things*

Now is the time to begin

There are many tricks of the trade in determining how to begin writing no matter what forum you are in. Below are some the things I follow.

Sandra Joy Eastman - Your Work at Home Grandma

Explore your surroundings

Just being in a certain place or recalling the many places you've been in your life can help in determine the location of your story.

Consider your audience

This is one of the most important aspects of your creation. Who will read your work or who do you want to be interested in your work?

Pick a central theme of what you wish to achieve

What point at you attempting to make in your essay or story. Without a point of interest there is no story.

Use a good point of reference

I often begin by selecting one word or phrase and finding meaning to that word thus spinning my story into a web of metaphors using the basic concept of my origina

How to Begin Story

An Easy Lesson in Storytelling

By Sandra Joy Eastman

Have you ever sat down at a blank computer screen and not only was the screen blank but so was your mind? We've all been there and asked ourselves the question: how shall I begin my story?

When thinking about this common scenario, I can recall one of my first writing instructors and a very worthwhile exercise he gave us on how to begin a story. He very quietly ushered the entire class outside and had us stare into our surroundings for at least 15 minutes, instructing us to absorb every sound and sight within our viewing distance. After the time was over, those of us who weren't sleeping on the job, could easily recite within our mind every detail we absorbed during the exercise. What we did not know was that the real exercise was not to memorize all the details but to pick out the one detail that reminded us of something in our past.

Then our professor told us to scan the view again with an entirely new perspective. Things began to pop out at us as if they were never there before. For myself, I noticed a small trailer court in the parameter and immediately thoughts of my own childhood experience surfaced.

My sister and I had the dreary task of walking to school daily so we used a shortcut via a small trailer court. In the court there was a trailer that housed two

mammoth bull dogs who upon the sight of us flung their bodes against the window panes as we scurried through the park. My sister always taunted them and laughed as she pulled my mummified body down the pathway toward the exit. I always secretly wished a tornado would come out of nowhere and swiftly destroy the gruesome park and all its inhabitants, especially the bulldogs. Thus this little memory conjured up the story below. I hope you'll enjoy it.

Don't Run From the Bulldogs

Annie's silver white hair glistened as the morning sun streamed through her small trailer window. Struggling to lift the moisture warped window, she wrinkled her nose as the smell of rotting wood filled her nostrils.



The bulldozers had finally arrived, this time to complete their task. Annie puckered her lips and shook her head from side to side. "Darn ol' twisters," she grumbled. "I tol ol' George we shouldn'ta moved ta this here tornada alley, but then he never did much listen ta me."

Annie was startled by the rapping on the door and opened it to peer into the face of a young construction worker.

"Mrs. Morgan, I wonder if I could trouble you for a glass of water? It must be a hundred degrees out here today."

Annie nodded; a smile revealing her stained yellow teeth. "Come on in, sonny and sit down a spell."

His shirt drenched in sweat, the bearded construction worker sat down on the

faded green sofa and slowly removed his hard-hat.

He wiped his brow with the back of one hand, reaching for the glass of water with the other. “Sure do appreciate

this, ma’am. Looks like that old orange trailer next door took the worst of the storm. It’s barely holding together.”



“Aw, that ol’ thing’s been fallin apart since George an me come ta this here park some twenty years ago.”

Annie glanced out the window at the peeling burnt orange trailer sitting alongside hers and the memories came flooding back as she told her story.

“How does ya like it, Annie?” Mr. Johnson he done hollered over ta me.

“Looks like a big ol pumpkin,” I says to him.

“But Mr. Johnson didn’t pay me no mind. He was so pleased with hisself, he went out and bought two ugly bulldogs ta sit in the winda. Named ’em Bud & Wisser, he did. I figure that’s cause he spent all his spare time drinkin beer with my ol’ George.

“Mr. Johnson, he trained ’em right though. Worked with ’em everyday ’bout half past nine in the mornin. He’d bring ’em outside an they’d jus sit right quiet, skin hangen down from their mouths, but even so they’s lookin like they’s could bite your head right off.”



"They is pure bred, Anne," Mr. Johnson bragged.

"Yup, maybe so," I says, "but still the ugliest darn things I ever did see."

The construction worker's eyes narrowed with curiosity and he leaned back on the sofa as if waiting for Annie to continue her story.

Annie joined the construction worker on the sofa, her eyes lighting with a smile.

"Yup, I'll never forget thens two little girls who come walkin across the trailer park every mornin on their way ta school. Bud & Wiser they'd always be in the winda of Mr. Johnson's trailer jus itchin ta get out and chew thens little girls ta pieces. The older girl she'd go right up and stick out her tongue or throw a stone at the winda. Then she'd giggle and skip away. She jus loved ta tease thens ol' dogs.

"One mornin, Mr. Johnson he brung ol' Bud & Wiser out early for trainin, then set 'em right down by the winda and went back inside. When thens little girls come walkin through the park, they got a big ol' surprise.

"I run ta the winda when I heard 'em screamin but wasn't nothin I could do. Thens little girls run like fire was all over 'em, and thens ol' dogs, well theys took out right after 'em, barkin an snarlin, like they's on a hunt. Chased thens little girls near close ta the gate, near had their jaws on 'em too.

"By this time, the little one, she was sobbin real hard, but the older one she was jus yankin on her arm like theys was in a tug-o-war. Jus when things was gettin pretty

fearsome, Mr. Johnson, he come outside and clapped his big ol' hands, 'bout two times I'd guess. Thens ol' dogs stopped up short, turned and run back home.



“For years Mr. Johnson swore them ol’ dogs would’da jus set right still if them little girls hadn’t run like theys did. But I think Mr. Johnson was fixin to teach them little girls a lesson, because theys never come through here again.”

The young construction worker grinned and stood up. “Life seems to turn around on us just when we least expect it, ma’am,” he said, walking towards the door. “Guess we just need to face it head on sometimes instead of letting it get us down.”

Annie nodded in silence, leaning down to pick up her old gray cat purring at her feet.

The young man stroked his beard. “Looks like your cat had a run in with those bulldogs. She’s missing the end of her tail.

Annie’s eyes misted as she ran her fingers down the back of the cat and onto its stubby tail.

“No, sonny,” she answered, shaking her head. “My ol’ George come home so drunk one night, he slammed her tail in the door. Musta bled for days after I cut off the pieces that was hangin.

Thought for sure she’d die on me but she jus didn’t give up.”

“George is your husband?” replied the construction worker.

Annie stood up and gave a quick nod of her head.

“Yup, that’s right, sonny, but ol’ George didn’t do as good as kitty. I was sure he woulda stopped drinkin when we moved here, but nothin seemed ta do any good. Been ten years ago since he

drunk hisself ta death.”

“I’m sorry, ma’am,” the young man said, groping for words as he replaced his hard hat. “I—I guess it’s time for me to finish my work.”

Annie watched the young man leave the trailer and climb back into his bulldozer. She rubbed her hand across the paper thin leather of the old brown rocker and closed her eyes. Yup. She could almost see ol’ George sittin there and smokin his pipe.

“Guess this ol’ place ain’t worth much ta anybody,” she muttered, covering her ears to block out the noise of the bulldozer as it neared the side of the trailer.

Soon the young construction worker appeared again at the door. “Mrs. Morgan, I’m sorry ma’am, but yours is the last to go. I’m afraid you’ll have to leave now.”

Annie nodded. “Let me gather me things and I’ll be right along.”

She glanced around the decaying trailer, with its one small room and bath.

“Guess it was fittin that ol’ tornada ripped down half the park seein as it was condemned already.” Her tear-filled eyes circled the room. “Suppose my Cassie’s waitin down by the gate. Poor

thing,” Annie whispered, choking back a sob. “She’s jus like her daddy. Darn ol’ bottle’s got a hold on her too. Might catch up ta her someday jus when she ain’t expectin it.”

Annie reached for her old tattered sweater hanging on the doorknob and gently touching it to her cheek, she placed it across the sofa-bed. She blew out a long sigh and placed her wrist through the

remaining strap on her dingy brown purse.



She lifted the old gray cat into her arms and carefully stepped out onto the cracked cement porch and down to the path below. As she walked towards the gate, she heard the roar of the bulldozer and the cracking of the wood. She kept her head held high and looked straight ahead.

“Don’t worry, kitty. Me and you ain’t done livin yet.”

End

I hope you’ve had a little fun reading this old story.

Happy Writing and do something nice for yourself this next week.

Don't Dream Your Life Away - Set a Goal

By Sandra Joy Eastman

Those of us who are consistently striving to better our business and ourselves know exactly what we will be doing every day of our lives. We will continue to work at achieving our goals and our dreams.

Can you achieve your goals just by dreaming? Of course not. Setting a goal is just the beginning of fulfilling our dreams. But we must set goals if we are to progress towards meeting the challenge of making our dreams come true.

You have probably heard the adage: if wishes were horses; then beggars would ride. This old English proverb suggests that if wishing could make things happen, then even the most destitute of people would have everything they want in life.



Of course, we all know if we want something to happen we must act to make it happen. This is often a difficult task for many, especially when we have other things on our mind such as summer vacation or an upcoming social event.

Have you ever wondered why they call a catalog a “wish book”? It’s because people look through the pages, stimulated by the pictures of all the things they want but because these things are not attainable within their budget, they become only wishes.

As goal centered individuals, those wishes would become attainable; we could fulfill our dreams by using a little elbow grease which is concisely – hard work. It is not easy to become successful; it is only easy to page through a book of wishes and hope they will come true.

This is part of the reason I encourage writers in my classes to write every day. Even a short paragraph; one simple page can move you forward towards fulfillment of your goal. It’s one foot in front of the other and so on and so on. If you put one foot in front of the other and keep up that pace, you will have nowhere else to go but forward. It’s not the speed of the pace but the consistency of the movement. Eventually you will arrive at your destination.

If you’re struggling with finding that perfect niche for your website or perhaps that perfect start for your first book, then begin to move forward one step at a time.

Don't waste your time dreaming about a successful tomorrow; set a goal to make tomorrow the beginning of your new success.



Remember the Little Things

Finding your Motivation to Write something every day

This one is really tough, at least for me. Frankly, some days I wake up in the morning and just plain don't feel like writing. My creative juices feel like they're all dried up.

I bet you know the feeling because you've been there too. It's the toughest part of being a writer. Sometimes we have to remember the old adage: when things get tough, the tough get going.

Now that's just what you wanted to hear didn't you?

Seriously, I think my greatest motivation in the morning is looking at picture of my three granddaughters and recalling all the things I want to be able to give to them and share with them.

Being a writer enables me to do just that.

Ways to Stimulate Those Creative Juices

Look through a magazine at the pictures; then envision a story or an event that I could relate to. Listen to music and recall how the lyrics made me feel. Get up and

make a trip to the gym or my exercise room. That's a great way to get the body moving. When the body moves, the mind will often follow.

It completely stops the creative juices and things simply dry up. Your mind is so absorbed with editing every line, every verb, every adjective, etc etc, you become numb to the creativity that began with your very first word.

Get those creative thoughts down before you forget them:

Often I find myself lying in bed when suddenly the perfect sentence for my protagonist pops into my head.

I keep a tablet by my bedside and believe me I write it down quickly. I don't edit it or think about where in the book I will use it. I just know if I don't write it down it will leave my mind as quickly as it arrived.

When to edit?

I prefer to cease writing when I feel the creative juices have slowed and I need to breathe. Then when I've had some time to walk away from the piece, I will return and begin to edit. This may be after one chapter, one section or one event. It may even happen after several chapters.

Some writers will never edit until the book is finished and then they begin. This to me is a daunting task but if it works for you then I applaud it. Every writer is different and you will soon learn the process that works best for you.

Get an expert's help and opinion:

How many of you have written a delightful piece of prose and edited it carefully and sent it along to your publisher filled with typos and gaffs that have embarrassed you to death.

There is copy-editing for word placement, sentence structure and style.

There is general editing for story design and flow. All of these come together to turn a book into a best seller.

No matter how many times you read a sentence as a writer you will always see the sentence as it was meant to be or meant to say.

You will never see it as it actually is. Because you know in your mind what the sentence should say your brain sees it that way even though it does not read that way. Another pair of eyes is necessary to see those errors.

Never give up on your dream:

As the Work at Home Grandma I know that fact is stranger than fiction.

I help writers turn real life happenings into fictional stories and enable businesses to promote their marketing ideas with Intriguing website copy.

I help people put their ideas on paper and turn their work into publishable product.

Any publisher will provide an author with an editor whose job is to make the book a best seller but you need to get your book in front of a publisher and that is where I come in.

I will work with you one on one to formulate your book and make it presentable for marketing. If you are self publishing I can help you proofread, copy-edit or content edit as necessary.



*Don't Put Off
Tomorrow What
You Should Do
Today*

Get FREE Book Consultation