

CREATIVE WRITING IS A MEDIUM TO DISCOVER ONESELF

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Abstract

Creative writing is an expressive form of oneself – one's thoughts, emotions, ideas, experiences, and perception reflecting both the outer and inner worlds in a free manner. Imagination forms the basis upon which creativity blossoms which lends a voice to the voiceless and gives a form to the formless. Creative writing is an art to tap out one's dormant ability to create words and stories from the depths of one's own perception. It goes beyond any set parameters or restrictive demands adding one's own flair to writing that may entertain, comfort, soothe, motivate, inspire and make us feel something new. We become the voice of our stream of consciousness to self-reflect and discover the spiritual aspect of one's own self.

Keywords: *creative writing, imagination, perception, stream of consciousness, self-expression, self-discovery, spiritual self.*

Introduction

We all have a deep urge to express ourselves in some form. Creative writing is one of the most accessible ways to express ourselves to the best through the language of heart and self. It is a soul driven occupation navigated by the wings of passion and imagination. Our inner voice keeps speaking to us and when we try to listen, it leads us to a deeper understanding of our own self. We learn to connect with ourselves, our dreams, our memories, our experiences, our ambitions, our goals, our suppressed desires and our

shadow. We may feel our emotions running high, ideas flying, opinion in full supply, but we don't feel relieved unless we express them. Buchalter calls this 'brain dumping': "It's best to let your mind tell you when you are done. The point is to get all your thoughts out on paper so they don't eat away at your mind" (2015, p.106).

Creative writing is a free way of writing that involves a state of natural flow and pen moves quickly through our fingers. The sinking thoughts and feelings are what drive us to write without overthinking, judging, reading, editing and interrupting our pen and

mind off the paper. We consciously write anything whatever comes to our mind that particular moment, but we try to produce something. It's an artistic technique to free our mind from stress weeding out the destructive thoughts and feelings without any anxiety or stress. Sometimes even just leafing through our own writing aloud brings in new feelings and thoughts or conversation which stimulates our self-reflection process. According to Robinson, "This unpressured form of creating content is highly useful when you are blocked by low self-esteem or negative emotions in your expression or creation process" (1967, p.58-60).

Creative writing is a way to express ourselves what we are feeling and experiencing. Penning down our thoughts can serve to transform the intangibility of our feelings and experiences in something more making them tangible and real. The very act of writing becomes spontaneous, natural and can be transformative. It's a powerful medium for artistic expression that add tone and color to our words. It also serves a higher purpose to create new meanings and frame them with words that most suit their demeanor. According to

Buchalter, "This is a good way to gain a new perspective of your situation with a deeper level of understanding about how you feel" (2015, p.106).

Everything begins with words and each word has its own vibration. These vibrations in turn create reality that surrounds us. Words create more than just stories; they inform our universe, our lives and our reality, illumine our experience of inner exploration and insight. In this self-reflection process of writing, we discover the spiritual awareness that guides and reconditions our thinking to be able to handle difficult situations and emotions in life. The words that flow freely and naturally can be extremely healing and enlightening to oneself and others. According to Cole, "Free writing is all about loosening and limbering the thought process, not about a product or a performance for a student or a writer."

Characteristic Features of Creative Writing

Creative writing expresses our thoughts and feelings in an imaginative, unique and poetic way. As a writer, we care deeply about words and their power and fall in love with

the language. There are some elements which are requisite to any piece of writing, be it fictional or non-fictional. Moreover, we need to remove the misconception from our minds that one is less or more creative than the other. Whatever genre we may chose, it can be produced creatively with constant focus, practice and effort. To make our writing strong and authentic the following elements become imperative which are regarded as characteristic features:

Topic: We need to be aware of what we are writing about.

Tone: We need to be consistent throughout the process of writing how it sounds.

Purpose: Its essential to know why we want to write and to who we want to covey.

Voice: It's one's unique style of saying things that should be heard and recognized. In creative writing, one's goal is to develop written voice which should be clear, natural, consistent as unique as a fingerprint. Word choice, ideas, invention, imagery and rhythm that flows naturally is the voice of a writer. Our voice has to make the readers think.

Sensory details: The sensory details make the readers experience what a writer is trying to describe, reminding them of their own experiences giving the piece of writing a universal feel.

Language: We need to identify the language we have used to know how appropriate it is for the form we have chosen and in what way it supports our purpose.

Imagination: We need to rely heavily on our own interpretations pushing our imagination beyond the limits to see what the end result could be. Our imagination should be thought-provoking or make us question the world around us – where could our story take us.

Character Development: The process of creating realistic characters with depth, personality, clear goals or motivation keep the readers more engaged.

Point of View: To know the perspective from which a narrative is told indicates who is narrating the story and how it is conveyed to the audience.

Dialogue: The speech characters choose can be pivotal in helping define their personality which creates a long-

lasting impact on the part of the audience. Dialogue should sound realistic and also carry a purpose so that the story can progress in a natural way.

Literary Devices: The devices such as metaphors, similes, alliteration makes a piece of writing more creative, vivid, interesting and engaging evoking appropriate emotions. The figures of speech can add intense depth to a piece of writing making it more concise, and universal.

Anecdotes: These are the small stories within the big story. These can be used in the right context to evoke empathy, to entertain, to teach morality or simply to reveal other dimension of character.

Message: The message a piece of composition conveys should stimulate the readers to self-reflect on their repressed emotions that brings in clarity leaving them feel calmer.

Creative writing can be considered any writing of contemporary, original composition – it's bound by no standard conventions and uses these whole range of elements in its craft. Each one of us has the unique power in our pen, we have the potential to

create original characters with enduring appeal.

Tips to Practice Creative Writing

Creative writing is self-expressive form of literature; one which demands us to use our own creativity, imagination and story to portray a particular message, emotion or plot. It is completely subjective to our own preferences and experiences. To get started with creative writing, it's important to immerse oneself in the world of literature evolving to immerse wholly within one's self. Every story has to start somewhere and it matters not how we start. Later, the start of our story will matter much, because it's the first thing audience try to focus more. The only thing that matters is our story hooks its readers and make them want to read on. Whether we have an end product in mind or simply looking to start our writing journey, the following tips will help to get started.

1. Creative writers are usually good readers. Reading helps to learn about the nuances of written language, story-telling and character development. Spending time to read wide range of genres

helps and guides to become a better writer.

2. Making writing a part of daily routine improves writing skills. Stop not writing even if it is not of high quality, just keep the words flowing and soon a quality piece of writing springs forth. Writing is a creative process and practicing it daily gets creativity flowing.
3. Putting pen to paper and moving it freely and naturally makes the creativity flow; sorrowness elevates into delight, guilt finds redemption, heart break discovers a remedy. Free writing is a powerful technique to connect with self and receive messages needed for that moment.
4. Trying to embrace genuine criticism makes us grow to gain an insight into how writing can be polished and how a story can be crafted in a better way. Inviting more critics allows one's writing to elevate in the best possible way so that one is proud to call one's own.
5. At first, when writing any piece of work, do not focus on perfection and judgement. The first draft is the place to get the story going. After completion of main ideas, look for editing to make it more powerful, fix shortcomings and try to perfect it. Striving for perfection with the first draft is sure to create writer's block. Move past understanding to perfect it later.
6. Take time to brainstorm to receive creative ideas. Jot down the ideas in a journal as soon as they start flowing in the mind. These ideas form the basis to explore storylines. It gives a unique twist to write one's story from a new perspective that hasn't been done before.
7. If getting started with creative writing is felt hard, consider some basic writing exercises. Creative writing prompts to get ideas flowing can be the start of compelling writing in creating one's own writing style.
8. Never restrict oneself to a specific subject. Creativity is to ponder each and everything that comes into mind. It is in mind creativity is cooked. Allow it to wander to places where it has never been before. Instead of staring at the walls lying in bed hopeless, get up to write and then write some more.
9. Make a writing schedule and stick to it. For smooth writing process deal with the distractions first. Instead of waiting for them to bother, get rid of them before writing. Setup the writing environment by decluttering one's writing space.

10. Many ideas may be bubbling in the mind, but working on one idea at a time produces a beautiful story. Do not focus on too many ideas.
11. Instead of delving right into book writing, plan it months ahead and start working on developing the writing habit. Book writing is a commitment and it won't be possible without having a strong writing habit.
12. Invoke inner creativity and inventiveness through constant practice. Even when writing on a common topic, its unique side need to be discussed which has not been enlightened before.
13. If the tone is not appropriate and according to the form of writing, it's considered bad writing. Tone, choice of words and invention of sentences should be interesting, compelling and appealing.
14. Adding emotional appeal into the writeup not only makes it appealing but also helps in engaging readers' emotions. Instead of narrating the events, explain with visual details.
15. Create suspense and pose dramatic questions to engage and entice the readers. A story without suspense and a dynamic character is like presenting hard facts that have no appeal.
16. Take a closer look at the blue sky pillowed with clouds, what shapes the mind will unfold. Create a story from the scene unfolding above. Look outside the window to see people peppering the street, observe how people dress and the expressions they wear on their faces. Try to imagine what has happened in their lives in the moments before you saw them or what might happen to them later that day.
17. The chirping of birds, the sun beating on the back, a woman walking on the road, a mosquito buzzing in the ear and more – all these things connect us with the surrounding world which add to bank of creativity. Observing the surroundings helps the brain make connections it certainly leans on later.
18. Finding the magic in the quiet is one of the most effective ways to find and tap out one's inner voice. Learning to block the world outside, one can better hear the hum of inner voice to unlock one's creativity.
19. The best stories come from real life that happens all around. Observe often and reconstruct almost as much. This act boosts up to open

channels to our creativity and improve our ability as a writer.

20. Open ears to melodious songs as they are the well-told stories with music and language in collision. Simply by listening, one can increase one's creativity and slowly grow as a writer.

These are the effective tips that great creative writers have used and still use. Creative writing is learned and mastered with hard work, dedication and practice. It may sound easy, but when practiced it's not only difficult, but also impossible if one lacks good writing skills and brilliance.

Creative Writing is an Art of Contemplation

Sometimes when writing, we would feel as though we are disappearing and some larger force has taken over. We become less a self and more a channel for some information or story that our tiny self couldn't access on its own. Everything goes on the page too – the mortifying moments, that are embarrassing to speak out, the hurt and betrayal, our strange behaviour, transformative life changes, the most mundane and quotidian moments and more. We begin to feel something happening between ourselves and the

higher self, we feel connected to something more. It requires faith to show up every day to a blank page and believe we will make something meaningful. Even if what we produce may not be a masterpiece, it takes love to see that there is still purpose in the act of writing.

Listening to silent whispers and waiting in readiness for words and thoughts to gently appear is an important aspect of writing. When we ground in creating writing, time passes by in freer ways rather than constraints, we are taken to a point of peace and calm where time no longer seems to matter. A special space where a sense of letting go naturally surfaces within and we lose our sense of self wholly allowing the possibility of the new to enter and this is where the most inspired writing blossoms. When writing engages our full being, when it moves us forward into feelings of wholeness and oneness, when it dissolves all our mental preoccupations leaving just a relaxed, spacious awareness, then ceases to be simply 'writing' and becomes a contemplation.

The beauty of creative writing is that it's an inherent humble practice. When

we write something as a spiritual exercise, we try to become better in writing for ourselves than the people around us. Moving forward into the depths, we feel that writing becomes therapeutic and adventurous, mind becomes naked and only a state of calmness emanates within. When the mind becomes wholly relaxed, thoughts pop up and these thoughts are the ones that provides us the answer to our questions. Creative writing changes into a form of self-awareness delving us into the subconscious mind as a means of self-exploration. Writing becomes a tool of enlightenment of the subconscious mind leading us to the destination unknown and sometimes sweeps us along to the very core of an escaping experience. An inspirational energy pushes our writing to new levels of personal expression leading us

forward to reconsideration, fresh appraisal, new beginnings and an awakening into a new and better existence.

Conclusion

It is only through the process of sustained commitment to self-exploration and discovery that discrimination and refinement slowly surfaces to aid our learning and take us forward into new territories of language development and expression which never touched upon before – an adventure into the heart of our existence. It is here that creative writing blossoms into spiritual practice. When writing becomes an art of contemplation, we start descending from all traces of normal functioning, ego driven self to reveal an underlying spiritual presence.

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