

Stuck on words:

Finding inspiration for your writing



by **Jana Lynch** 

Writer's block is real. I know. I've been there. And it totally sucks.

There's no worse feeling than wanting to write, needing to write and not being able to find the words. You spend more time with the delete key than your family or pets and it really does a number on your self-confidence, too. All the self-doubt starts to set in:

Am I even a writer?

Why does everything I write suck?

I have nothing original to say.

Everyone else is better than me.

I should quit.

It's fun to live in your head on those days, isn't it?

For what it's worth, I definitely don't think you should quit. Yes, you are a writer. Not everything you write stinks and I'm 100% confident that what you're saying is original simply because it comes from you and no one else. And as far as the comparison to everyone else, well, that's a whole separate discussion but I will tell you that any and every writer has had those same thoughts and thinking that every other writer is sitting at their laptop banging out amazing words every day is not only unproductive but completely untrue.

In fact, writer's block is exactly what makes you a real writer.

Welcome to the club!

But I know that none of that is really helpful. I mean, it probably makes you feel better but it doesn't provide a concrete solution to the problem of being stuck for words. So let this list help you:

10 ways to overcome writer's block

1. **Consume content.** I know, we're supposed to create content. However, sometimes watching a movie or reading a book or blog post will trigger an idea and the words will flow.
2. **Rework something old.** Find something you've written previously and try to rewrite or add to it. Or use it as the first in a series.
3. **Writing prompts.** My favorites are the ones from the San Francisco Writer's Grotto but there are prompts all over the internet. You can also go to Pinterest and search for prompts. Or, here's one: You're stuck in the worst traffic jam of all time. What do you do?
4. **Freewrite.** Even if it's something like "my writing sucks and I'll never get this book finished and I want to take a nap and forget about everything", it'll at least get some creativity flowing. Yes, it might be negative but if it helps to get it out on paper then go for it.
5. **People watch.** Not even kidding, go to your local Starbucks or park with a pen and notebook. Make up stories about the other people there. Eavesdrop (discretely, of course) on their conversations and extrapolate.
6. **Make a list.** Grocery list, travel bucket list, characteristics of your favorite TV show. Any type of list. Oh, and do it by hand. Handwriting on a piece of paper rather than typing at a computer can really get that creativity flowing.
7. **Go outside.** This one is recommended by pretty much every list like this that exists but it's true. The fresh air, change of scenery, pretty colors, noises...all of it rejuvenates you and clears your head. If it's too cold to go outside for too long or even at all, close your computer and look out the window. Shut off the TV, Spotify, podcasts...any and all noise and simply absorb nature.
8. **Do something - anything - else.** Walk the dog, cook a meal, meditate, draw a picture, dance around your living room, take an exercise class, have coffee with a friend, play with your kid, go shopping. Anything that gets you engaged, moving, and doing an activity is not writing.
9. **Feed your needs.** Figure out the source of your block. Is it because you're hungry or tired or preoccupied with something else? Pressed for time

because life is getting in the way? Something else? Attend to those needs first. Then try to write again. And if that fails...

10. Own the block. Occasionally it simply doesn't make sense to fight through writer's block. Take a day or two off. Leave it alone. Staring at a blank screen, frustrated that you can't write, will make it worse. This is not to say that you should wait for inspiration to strike because if we're being honest, that's the worst way to get anything done, but sometimes putting it aside for a little bit is the best tactic. It affords you time away and then the ability to look at your writing with fresh eyes. It's good to have perspective.

Whatever you do to break free from your writer's block, whether it's from this list or something else, remember these two facts:

1. Writer's block is common. It happens to everyone.
2. You will get through it.

Still Struggling?

Great Writing Takes ~~Two~~ Two People.

Copyediting | Proofreading | Blog Editing

Jana Can
help me!

www.JanaLynch.me