

GETTING STARTED IN WRITING

To think about first

- For whom are you writing? Yourself? Others? If others, then who are they? Family? Friends? Adults? Teenagers? Children?
- What do you want to write – fact or fiction?
If **fact**, what do you want to write? Articles for newsletters? True stories for magazines? Devotions? Letters? Reviews? Reports of events? Study guides? Non-fiction book eg how-to, biography, autobiography, memoir? Poetry or drama based on real life?
If **fiction**, what do you want to write? Novels? Short stories? Poetry? Plays? If a novel, what genre? Romance? Fantasy? Historical fiction? General fiction? Children's picture books? Children's novels? Teenage novels?

Getting started

- Write as much as you can for yourself and your family/friends eg journalling, emailing, letter writing, blogging
- Read books on writing eg:
A Novel Idea: Best advice on writing inspirational fiction Various authors
Becoming A Writer Dorothea Brande
Bird by Bird: Some instructions on writing and life Anne Lamott
Revision and Self-Editing James Scott Bell
On Writing Stephen King
Self-Editing for Fiction Writers Rennie Browne and Dave King
The Little Red Writing Book Mark Tredinnick
The Little Green Grammar Book Mark Tredinnick
The Memoir Book Patti Miller
Walking on Water Madeleine L'Engle
Your Story Matters Leslie Leyland Fields
Writing True Stories Patti Miller
- Work your way through the exercises at the end of the chapters in many of the books above. The book *The Artist's Way (A Course in Discovering and Recovering your Creative Self)* by Julia Cameron may also be helpful.
- **Read** as much as you can, noticing how other people write. The book *Reading Like A Writer* Francine Prose is helpful here.
- Try **writing brief articles** for your church bulletin or club newsletter or any magazine you can find that suits your genre
- **Jot ideas down** on your computer or in notebooks whenever you think of them! Soon you could have a whole outline for a novel there!
- **Be prepared to change things**, re-write, edit, re-edit, re-edit again ... and again ...

- Find two or three people who will give you **honest feedback** on your work
- Enrol in a writing course – classroom format, online, correspondence eg:
 - The many different one day workshops, weekend or term-length courses run by Writing NSW at Rozelle (<http://www.nswwc.org.au/>)
 - The Australian Writers' Centre, Milsons' Pt (www.writerscentre.com.au/)
 - The Centre for Continuing Education (Camperdown) Creative Writing courses
 - Writing courses at your local Evening College
 - Creative Writing subjects from Tabor College Adelaide
 - Surf the net for other online writing courses, work through the list in the back of *The Australian Writers' Marketplace*
- **Enter the many competitions around for writers eg**
 - Those listed in the Writing NSW online magazine *Newswrite* or the 'e-news'
 - Those listed in the back of *The Australian Writers' Marketplace*
 - Local Writers' Groups competitions eg Fellowship of Australian Writers
- **Join a writers' group for mutual encouragement and 'critiquing' eg**
 - One of a variety run at Writing NSW, Rozelle (see website)
 - Fellowship of Australian Writers' group, or other local group like New Writers' Group, Parramatta (see websites)
 - Omega Writers, a Christian writers' group (online groups, plus actual groups meeting in each state)—see <http://www.omegawriters.org/>
 - Online writers' blog groups such as Christian Writers Downunder, Australasian Christian Writers etc
 - Start a writers' group of your own!
- **Attend Writers' Conferences eg:**
 - Omega Writers' Conferences held each year in different Australian states—see <http://www.omegawriters.org/>
 - American Christian Fiction Writers' Conference in the USA – see www.acfw.com
 - Various weekend seminars, festivals, special events at NSW Writers' Centre eg Children's writers' festival, 'Getting Published' etc
 - Children's Book Council of Australia National Conference – see <https://cbca.org.au/>
 - Writers' Week events in Sydney at Darling Harbour etc