

Writing Inspiration



by Rebekah Morris and Kate Willis

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Introduction

As writers, we know that sometimes it can be difficult to get your story started. We've struggled with discovering our styles, finding inspiration, and getting going. We've been stuck more than once in our stories with a proverbial blank sheet before us. We've longed to just sit down and write yet wondered at the same moment if our writing style was interesting.

Writing is hard. It can be a challenge, but it's a challenge you shouldn't give up on. As you struggle, know that we go through the same things every day. But you should also know this, if you keep practicing, keep writing, keep striving for excellence every day; it will get easier.

To give you a boost up the mountain called "Writing" we have put this book together for you. You may look at it and think, "But my story is nothing like these Story Prompts," or "I have never written in that style before," or "What kind of story could anyone make out of those Story Starters!" But, before you toss this little book aside, give it a try. It just might break you through that Writer's Block you are facing. You might get a brand new plot idea, or a style that you were sure you would never use might just become rather fun.

Most of all, we want you to have fun! Enjoy writing. Throw out those ideas that you must write a certain way, about what is popular or you will never become a writer. Instead, let God give you the story, write because you love to, and let Him guide the plot for His glory.

~Kate and Rebekah
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Story Starters

Have you ever wished that someone else would start a story for you because you had no idea what to write? Well your wish has been granted. Write any length of story you want from these Story Starters. Practice your favorite style of writing, or try something new. Combine two to make a brand new story. But most of all, write and have fun!

#1

The harsh blare of a car horn interrupted the quiet peaceful morning. Startled, Jasmine rose from her desk and crossed the room to peer out her lace curtains. It was hard to see the road because of all the green leaves the changing season had brought, but she thought she caught a glimpse of a red vehicle of some sort out there. Hmm, red. Did she know anyone who drove a red car or truck? She couldn't think of anyone and, just as she was about to return to her desk, the horn sounded again.

"Who is out there at six-thirty honking their horn?" she muttered. "It's not like we live in a busy city. This is practically in the country."

#2

Mint chocolate chip ice cream. Ashley pressed her face closer to the glass separating her from the large cartons and fairly drooled as the server scooped the minty green treat into a cold ball before pressing it onto the top of a cone. Yumm. It had been two days since Ashley had gotten to enjoy her favorite dessert and she could hardly wait for the server to finish. Just one more scoop.

"It looks like you're getting the very last bit of our mint chocolate chip ice cream," the server remarked, scraping the bottom as he tried to collect enough for the last scoop.

#3

Stubbornly refusing all help, Philip willed his tired legs to keep peddling. Only two more miles. Just two and he would be home. It had been the longest day of his life. Joining five other friends for a bike ride to the ocean and back home had seemed like a fun day. Only he hadn't stopped to ask how long of a ride it was. But he had made it. At least this far. Couldn't he make the last two miles? His friends were all up ahead and when one shouted something back, he nodded and waved.

"I wonder what he said," he mused ten seconds later as the last friend disappeared around a bend in the road. "I hope it wasn't something important.

#4

Suddenly the dark night was split by a blinding flash of light followed split seconds later with a ground shaking clap of thunder. Gasping, I jerked to a sitting position inside the tent, my heart pounding like a racehorse. That was close! Maybe camping tonight hadn't been such a good idea. But what was I to do now? I had hiked into the camp and didn't have my car. There were trees all around. Not the best sort of place to be in a thunderstorm.

#5

"Dis my chair?" The little one climbed up in the seat at the table, her red curls bouncing all about her round face.

"No," Missy laughed, "that's my chair."

"Dis my foke?" queried the tot next, placing chubby fingers on the utensil.

Another laugh came from Missy as she turned away from the counter. "No, that's my fork."

"Dis my racamoni?" Little curly head giggled.

Scooping the child up in her arms, Missy tickled the squirming figure as she replied, "No, that's my macaroni. Your's is at your seat."

#6

The air was hot and heavy. Maybe stifling would be a better description. Not a breath of air stirred the tiniest leaf or blade of grass. Everything, everywhere, was dropping.

"If we just had rain or a breeze it would be bearable," Stanley muttered, giving a half-hearted attempt at pushing his hair off his forehead.

"Yeah," his companion agreed listlessly. Her blond hair had been pulled into a high ponytail and she sat on the stone steps limp and motionless trying to find every little bit of coolness in the shade that she could.

#7

"Cut! That was terrible! Run those last lines again." The director scowled at the actors on stage, paying particular attention to one young man. "Jet," he called, "wipe that grin off your face and keep it off. You are not some slap-stick comedian. You are an officer in the police force and you have a job to do."

Jet gave a curt nod as the actors retraced their steps to try the last lines for the third time. "After this play is over," Jet muttered to the boy beside him, "I'd like to dunk Uncle Clyde in the pond."

Fighting back a smile, the other boy risked a wink and whispered, "The rest of us will join you."

#8

"Liberty, I have the most terrible problem!" Mercy wailed over the phone. Lying on her stomach across her bed, she held the phone to her ear and wished her sister was in the same room instead of half way across the country.

"What's that?" Liberty's voice sounded slightly amused.

Kicking off her shoes, Mercy waved her legs in the air. "I don't know what to read! There are too many books!"

#9

It was a warm, sunny afternoon in the Thomas kitchen where two girls were busy with one of their favorite activities. Baking. Best friends for many years, Susan and Christa loved baking and often, when they were together, they would beg for something to make. This afternoon was no exception and, having received permission to make banana muffins, the girls eagerly set to work. Their cheerful chatter filled the kitchen as they got out the ingredients, put on aprons, and set to work. Susan stirred while Christa measured and dumped.

"I wish we could bake together all the time," Christa remarked. "It's so much fun!"

"I know. Maybe we can try some new recipes soon." Susan paused to take a new grip on the spoon before resuming her stirring as Christa measured the next ingredient and dumped it in.

Suddenly an exclamation erupted from Christa. "Oh, no!"

#10

"It can't be that, sir. It was checked very carefully."

"You're positive about that?"

"Yes, sir."

"Any other ideas of what it might be?" The older man folded his arms and stared hard at the younger man before him, his bushy eyebrows almost meeting together in the center of his forehead.

"One, sir."

"Then out with it, Man! We don't have all day!"

Story Prompts

Experiencing a chronic case of writer's block? Not sure where your work-in-progress should go next? Need a shiny new idea to brainstorm? These story prompts are just the thing for you! In this section you'll find setting ideas, character descriptions, and snippets of dialogue and description. Pick one and let your imagination go!

#1

“Maybe it *was* real.”

#2

Children of the clan are given a dog for protection.

#3

The bundled letters smelled of love and the faded corsage buried gently among them. The military postcard's stark pronouncement was circled meaningfully by a tarnished engagement ring. Three letters--MIA.

#4

“I'm so sorry, but you have to believe me that I didn't know!”

#5

Describe an eight-year-old girl's dream birthday cake.

#6

Stephanie has been cast in a movie as the villain. What does her conscience think?

#7

His gray eyes narrowed as he scanned the smoky horizon. He tugged at his beard and lifted the binoculars to his eyes one last time. His suspicions were confirmed.

#8

A package that holds dangerous information is misdelivered. What should your MC do with it?

#9

Janice Roder is a pet shop owner, grandmother, and former beauty queen.

#10

The earth was laughing so hard the ground shook and tears rolled from the sky. It was a cruel joke, but a good one.

#11

Her favorite song had always been “A Necklace of Stars”.

#12

Invent a new creature. Must be good at jumping and camouflage.

#13

What if Arthur Pendragon hadn't pulled the sword from the stone?

#14

“I thought yesterday was the best day of my life. If only I had known.”

#15

A dystopian world values fleetness of foot and silence. Why?

#16

Plan a wedding. Now give everyone the measles!

#17

Camelot in space.

#18

“My brother says peanut butter is the perfect food.”

#19

My father was named for the mountains; my mother was named for the sky.
My sisters were named for the flowers, but I was named for hope.

#20

Sometimes I ask my hair.

#21

People age according to birthdays. If your MC was born on Leap Day, will they only age $\frac{1}{4}$ as fast?

#22

A teenage girl finds an adorable, dessert-eating baby alien in her shed.

#23

Explain what happened at Roanoke, Virginia

#24

A slightly vain girl is cursed to have her mood and looks change with the weather.

#25

She sat down on the edge of the bank and hugged her knees to herself. The air was calmingly quiet, and the lake stayed respectfully still. She twisted her fingers through her hair and hummed.

#26

Your MC breaks the family pattern of loyalty to the king. Traitor or hero?

#27

A scarred satchel

#29

A scrap of paper with one Bible verse is discovered in your MC's shoe. What is it and how does it affect their decisions?

#30

An old man stops at your house and asks for a glass of water. He insists on paying you with a sealed envelope.

Style Prompts

All writers know they can't rely just on one style of writing for every story. And sometimes certain ways of writing need practice because they don't come naturally. This is where the Style Practice comes in. Each one comes with instructions of how many characters to have, word count and special style instructions for each story. The rest is up to you!

These are meant to be used with calendar pictures, images from Pinterest or your own photo albums. Or they can be used along with the Story Prompts.

#1

Characters: 3-6

Word Count: 4k words

Style Practice: Show emotions with dialogue, do not describe them

#2

Characters: a family

Word Count: 2k words

Style Practice: Use creative metaphors/similes

#3

Characters: children

Word Count: 1,500-2,500 words

Style Practice: Child's journal spanning at least two weeks.

#4

Characters: 4

Word Count: 3k words

Style Practice: Use only the word "said" but show a range of emotions through actions

#5

Characters: 5-6

Word Count: 2k+ words

Style Practice: Never use the word "said"

#6

Characters: 1 main, up to 3 minor

Word Count: 4k words

Style Practice: Follow only the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of main character

#7

Characters: 3

Word Count: 2k - 2,500 words

Style Practice: 1st person narrative– Portray fear without saying, "I'm afraid."

#8

Characters: No more than 6 characters

Word Count: 3k - 3,500 words

Style Practice: Feature an old hymn in the story

#9

Characters: 4 girls

Word Count: 4k words

Style Practice: Letters between them planning some event

#10

Characters: 7 girls

Word Count: 2k words

Style Practice: Show trust of youngest girl without saying it

#11

Characters: 2 adults

Word Count: 2k words

Style Practice: Show, don't tell what is happening.

#12

Characters: 1 child, 1 adult

Word Count: 1,500 - 2,500 words

Style Practice: Omniscient narrator—knows and shares all characters feelings and thoughts, not just words, action and setting

#13

Characters: 1

Word Count: 1k words

Style Practice: Reflective first person narrative

#14

Characters: 2-3 main, up to 4 minor

Word Count: 4k words

Style Practice: Use color to set the tone of the story

#15

Characters: 1 main character, up to 3 minor

Word Count: 5k+ words

Style Practice: Focus on creating a rounded character (one who changes from one thing to another in the story)

#16

Characters: Up to 7

Word Count: 5k words

Style Practice: Set the story in the past but never say when it was, try to create setting and dialogue to depict the era

#17

Characters: 2 main and up to 5 minor

Word Count: 3k words

Style Practice: Must take place in one afternoon

#18

Characters: 3

Word Count: 2k words

Style Practice: Do not use "said" or any other form of showing someone talking, but have a lot of conversation

#19

Characters: 1 main and 3 minor

Word Count: 6k words

Style Practice: Main character only listens and observes but never speaks to other characters (is not mute, just ignored)

#20

Characters: Up to 5 characters

Word Count: 4k words

Style Practice: Move story along with intense dialogue