

## WRITING TIPS FOR YOUNG WRITERS (1-20)

1. Read, read, read! Reading lots of different books will help you to create your own ideas, and remember, reading is fun!
2. Write a lot, at home and at school. Practice makes perfect. Try to make the next story better than the last.
3. If you don't know where to start, write about your favourite things or anything that interests you.
4. Remember to plan your story. It must have a start (tell your readers about the characters and where the story is happening), a middle section (the plot, the action), and an ending. Try to have a good idea how the story will end before you start writing.
5. It's easy to forget some of your best ideas, so jot them down in a notebook as soon as they pop into your head. If you don't need them now, you might use some of them later.
6. Ask yourself: Who? What? Where? When? How? Why? The answers to these questions will help you to shape the whole story.
7. Imagine yourself as one of the characters when you're reading *and* when you're writing. What can you see, hear, smell, think and feel? Do this often and it will help you to tell your story clearly.
8. Try to make each of your characters a little different from each other. Remember, they don't all have to be good!
9. If you feel stuck, ask yourself "*What if?*" and let your imagination wander. Jot down your ideas and choose the best.
10. Read over your work and check for spelling mistakes, grammar and punctuation. Read it again – are you happy with all of it?
11. Take a look at the adverbs and adjectives you have used. Do you need them all?
12. Avoid using "got", "get", and "gotten" too much. Sometimes, you can replace these words with other verbs. For example, replace "When we got there" with "When we arrived".
13. Check how often you use "that" and "like" – do you really need to use those words that often?

14. Be careful with dialogue. It should be shorter and more concise than normal speech, unless an explanation is needed. If you are unsure, read it out loud. How does it sound?
15. We often make mistakes with our grammar when we speak, but it is even more important not to make those same mistakes in writing. For example, we use the term “There’s” much too often, even when we should be using a plural verb. (Think of an example yourself!)
16. If you have a niggling feeling that something in the plot isn’t quite right, read your story carefully and take a note of what is bothering you. Think about how you might change or improve it.
17. Voice: sometimes it is better to write in the first person, other times the third person will suit better, or perhaps the “narrator” or “storyteller” – it will depend on the type of story you are writing. Make sure you stay with the same style all the way through.
18. Apostrophes: watch out for where an apostrophe should be used or not. For example, “it’s” means “it is”. “Its” has a different meaning.
19. We all have strengths and weaknesses in our writing. Try to understand what you do well and what you need to work on.
20. Make sure your writing is the very best it can be. Read it slowly one more time when you think you have checked everything. You might be surprised what else you might spot that you would like or need to change.

*Enjoy your writing!*

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