

Society of Women Writers (Vic) APRIL newsletter.

‘Pandemic’ No Time or Too Much?

During the Pandemic Lockdown, writers are in such a privileged position as they can continue to work and be employed, by themselves. They are also familiar with ‘working from home’ and spasmodic income.

The financial reality is that the international publishing/literary world including booksellers, libraries, festivals, theatres and schools has been decimated. And the author-speaker circuit which provided income for many has vanished. Contracts have been broken. New books have no launches and little publicity. Bookshops are closing, so distribution is a problem, unless books ordered online.

In isolation, people are keen to read but the format choices are changing to e-books and audio, for ease of access. Libraries and schools are seeking recordings of authors reading their picture books etc. But not all authors are technologically skilled enough to create high quality recording studios in their own homes. Many earlier Youtube recording are being recycled. (Check the hair length and hair colour of female authors for a clue).

Relevance for You?

Use the ‘Lockdown’ time purposefully. Learn new formats for your work. Zoom online workshops, but remember ASA (Australian Society of Authors) has a suggested minimum of \$300 per one-off session for author-presenters.

BUT, try to share your skills with others, especially families in lockdown with students being schooled online. CHOOSE to share, not have it ASSUMED you will provide all your IP for free.

<https://hazeledwards.com/aspiring-writers-backup.html>

‘Lockdown Writing During the Pandemic’ has free, downloadable writing activities for varied ages, updated daily.

Wise for a writer to prepare work now, which can be shared by new ways, in the future. If you don’t write it now, it won’t be ready, when opportunities occur Post-Pandemic.

No Time or Too Much?

Time and energy management matters for a writer. Any completed book or script is the accumulation of small jottings or ‘Bits’ of ideas. Just keep adding. Analyze when you work best. Early or late? Or when stimulated by sharing ideas in workshops? Never? Just write for a set time even if rubbish. Ten minutes? Give yourself permission to write less than perfection, consider it draft only. You’ll be coming back to fix it later.

Try either a set time or a number of words. Even if you write nothing in the first half hour, try again the next day. Eventually, producing within a time limit becomes a habit. Having all the time in the world is actually a handicap.

Some writers stick to their synopsis or original outline. Others realize midway, the order needs to change or that a major revamp is necessary. This is when a concentrated weekend away to write in isolation may be necessary.

How many drafts? Up to you. But it’s wise to leave time between drafts so you can return to look with ‘ Fresh eyes’. Useful to learn ‘ tracking’ which can give a sense of progress as you can accept or reject changes.

CORONA VIRUS QUARANTINE

Ironically, having lots of unexpected time at home, with no structure, is harder for an author than carefully gathered half hours of concentrated writing. There’s NO EXCUSE left why you can’t write.

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