

A photograph of a book with a green textured cover and a purple ribbon bookmark. A beaded necklace with gold and blue beads and wooden letter beads spelling 'JOURNAL' is draped over the book. The background is a light green surface.

365 Days
of Creative
Writing

Rosemary Augustine

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Book Excerpt

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my parents, Ernest and Rose Augustine. Each taught me skills that I have used throughout my life both as an entrepreneur and a woman. My father was a musician and successful entrepreneur who followed his passion until the day he died. My mother was very creative at various times in her life. They each taught me valuable lessons of perseverance and independence - each from their own perspective. I am most grateful to each of them for their love and lessons throughout my life even today.

INTRODUCTION

What Is Creative Writing?

For me, creative writing is just about any kind of writing - fiction or non-fiction; poetry or prose, sci-fi, mysteries, bio's and more. Even letters and business correspondence can sometimes come from a creative spark using writing as the base. Simply stated, creative writing gives you the inspiration your need to write in these genres and more.

When writing outside the bounds of journalistic or academic literature, you write “outside the box” with no right or wrong way of writing - loose, free and with a “stream of consciousness,” letting the writing flow from you freely and easily. This gives you a foundation for building your writing projects.

How Does Creative Writing Work?

As a writer, creative writing stretches my imagination with thoughts, ideas, prompts and free writing exercises that then may develop into an article, blog, newsletter, chapter or even a book. With creative writing, I've created my own writing style, and I'm never at a loss for words - whether writing at 6 AM or midnight. I am writing and that's what is important.

Creative writing offers a chance to write when blocked, write when troubled, write when happy and write for no reason at all. Writing tells a story, helps identify patterns, resolve issues, provide personal and professional growth and more - all through using creative writing as part of the process.

How Do I Use The Prompts In This Book?

The prompts in this book are designed to spark ideas, thoughts and inspiration. Pick a prompt, write about the thoughts or inspiration the prompt creates for you. Let the writing flow and don't be concerned if your writing takes you off task of the prompt you selected. It's OK. Remember, there is no right or wrong way to the creative writing process. Your daily prompt writings should last about 5-15 minutes. If you are concerned for time, set a timer for 15 minutes and start writing.

Some of the prompts may be interpreted as metaphors. Words like garden, road trip, trucks, etc. can be interesting prompts when used as metaphors. Weeding your garden may include weeding out the things (and maybe even relationships) that no longer serve you in your life. You may also find ongoing themes - word prompts that are repeated several times yet offering different suggested inspiration. What's most important is you don't analyze the prompt. Read it, re-read it and listen to your inner voice. Begin to write what your inner voice is saying.

Writing your response to these prompts may take anywhere from 5-15 minutes. My recommended timeframe includes setting a timer as mentioned above. Part of the creative writing process is getting lost as you write, while still enjoying yourself. If you spend too much time on one prompt - writing for an hour let's say - you may become discouraged, angry, and feel that writing is taking too much time.

If you are using any of these prompts to work on characters, plots, background, outlines, etc., write as described and also use a highlighter indicating certain key words or subject matter to refer back to later. Always put your subject at the top of the page. If you are keeping your pages electronically, have different "subject" folders for your writing files.

I Have Writers Block, So Can These Prompts Help Me?

The list of reasons why we don't write is endless. Here are some writing blocks that I have heard over time with recommended information following this list. I only included a few excuses:

- I'd rather do this: on the computer... on the train... before I go to bed... Or (finish this statement).
- I can't decide if I should write or draw.
- Mornings are not my best time... do I have to write only in the morning?
- I can't suddenly "be creative" or "turn on" my writing, so I'll just wait until I am creative.
- It takes a lot for me to sit and write.
- I can only write when I travel or when I'm away from home.
- I don't have time today, maybe later, and later never comes.
- I can't decide whether to use plain, lined or graph paper... or my computer.
- I can't decide the size of the journal or notebook.

Don't get caught up in these traps that block your writing. It doesn't matter what you write on, when or where you write or whether it's a bound or spiral notebook or created electronically. What matters is that you write. Set a timer and get the pen moving.

For more involved writing projects that you need continued inspiration (such as a book, its chapters and/or character development), find your peak creative time of day, and again set a timer. This time set it for at least 55 - 95 minutes and when that timer signals your time is up, finish your thoughts and wrap up.

You ask, "When is my peak creative time of day?" You will have to experiment with this. But do experiment, and once you find it, use that time to your writing advantage.

Throughout the day, be aware that additional inspiration will surface. As it does, you will need to capture the words, phrases or stream of consciousness in order to remember it. So keep a small notebook with you (and always carry a pen). Keep a small notebook and pen by your bed as well. If you find you don't capture these thoughts when they surface, they will be lost deep in your sub-conscious and impossible to retrieve at a later time.

Can I Do These Prompts As Part of My Daily Journal?

Journaling is about writing as well. Though, your daily journaling practice should be written only on paper, using a pen or favorite writing instrument. It doesn't matter if the paper is lined, plain or graph - just write! The healing properties of journaling go well beyond the written word and provide a catharsis of areas in your life needing repair, change or growth. Journaling is not thinking the words nor is it about writing your thoughts using a computer keyboard. By actually putting pen to paper, you create a stream of consciousness that directs you to answers (and more), deep inside you. You would never attain such answers just by verbalizing them or by keyboarding your thoughts. You can also paint, sketch or create an art journal or life journal that has similar results as with writing long hand. Daily journaling is best when done early in the morning before any distractions of the day filter into your life. If you are at a loss for words at 6:15 AM, then this book is perfect, as it provides you ongoing prompts any day of the year. You can also jot thoughts, words, or observations on a sticky note throughout the day and later paste into your journal for writing ideas or thoughts to journal on another day.

What Will I Gain If I Use These Prompts For Daily Journaling?

Use the prompts for ideas, inspiration, provoking thought, memories and healing areas of your life. Here are just a few things you will gain from a daily journaling practice:

- You begin to get in touch with who you truly are – your true self;
- You also start to tap into your inner voice – whether supportive or critical;
- With journaling, you can learn to create support and silence your inner critic;
- Journaling generates self-introspection, addressing fears, issues and ongoing patterns;

- A daily journal becomes a form of personal self – expression by using writing and/or sketching;
- Journaling creates a conscious awareness of values, life, blocks, patterns, choices, consequences, etc.
- Writing in a journal will help you uncover positive and negative self-talk – including yours and others, directed toward you or others.
- Regular journaling helps you discover the things that you may need to change in your life and gives you the strength to make those changes;
- Journaling will also provide you a process to work through any changes before you physically make those changes;
- Journaling will give you a clearer picture of where you want to go and how to get there.

These are only a few things you can gain with daily journaling. Those who journal regularly and consistently find it a very valuable friend. Have a favorite pen and a special place that you go to when journaling... maybe a favorite chair or a special room. Find what inspires you. If you are distracted, then listen to that message and write about your distraction. When you write, listen to your inner voice since it has important messages for you when using creative writing as part of your daily journaling.

I Am Worried That Someone Will Find My Journal Writings and Read It.

Let me first say, if you are not writing out of fear of someone else finding your most private thoughts, then all the more reason to write. There is a hidden message here; please heed it. There is tremendous emotional healing and personal growth that comes with creative writing - whether writing a blog, book or having a daily journaling practice. Your emotions need to surface and be addressed. The longer you wait to heal those emotions, the deeper they are buried and ultimately creating physical illness for you. Write, please, for your own health - mental, spiritual, physical, emotional and more.

So I leave you to enjoy this book. Please let *365 Days of Creative Writing* be a companion for you regardless of your level of writing. I created this work to inspire you, to give you ideas when you've run out of them, and to provoke thought for those times when you may over-think a process. Feel free to use the blank space on each page for notes, writing ideas, memories or even an opportunity to sketch.

Please enjoy! Creating this book gave me great joy knowing you would be inspired.

Rosemary Augustine, Author and Journal Aficionado

Here is a sampling of Prompts found in 365 Days of Creative Writing:

PATIENCE

Write a letter to yourself from a friend's point of view, describing your patience.

HAPPY

Today I will make someone else happy by ... (finish this statement).

LAUGHTER

Journal on the important role laughter has played in your life.

BELIEVE

Today I believe strongly in who I am, and ground myself in faith and belief in spirit.

LIFE

Never confuse having a job with having a life! Do you have a life?

STILLNESS

Write about stillness, quiet, and whispers today.

SILENCE

If everything has a shape and every shape has a sound, what shape is silence?