

## Telling A Story

*....maybe this will help.*

Everyone has something to say. It feels good to put your thoughts down on paper and it's often beneficial just to get them out. What's a story? Well, the word doesn't have to necessarily mean a tale or a narrative report. When I ask, "Do you have a story?," I mean, "Do you have something you want to say?" We all like to talk, It's easy, just open your mouth it will come out naturally, thanks to one kind of evolution or another. Writing isn't always easy for everyone, but it's more fun because you get to see it just like you thought it.....if no one is editing your stuff. Also, writing is a bit more permanent. Maybe it's why it sometimes feels like an important task we're doing when we write ..... in my case, even drivel.

So how does one begin? The only thing I know about writing is what I've read. I'm a voracious reader, always have been since my mother took me at age 9 to the Utica Public library in the deep

summer of 1952 to get me out of her hair after we had just moved to a new neighborhood and I hadn't made any friends yet. See? I just told a story.

And while I was doing the telling, I could look up and almost see the church-like interior of the library's ornate lobby and smell all the books and feel the coolness of the air as we came inside from the hot day. Sorry, I can't help it. Where were we?

OK, for those of you who may be a bit anal, here are:

### 3 Writing Tips



1. Choose a topic. From where? You can do this by writing down the first 100 words to come into you mind. You now have 100 perfectly suitable topics.

2. Just start writing. Start anywhere. I never know where I'm going. Can you tell? Well, sometimes I have an inkling. Type it right out of your head .... grammar be damned. Send the part of your brain that is your Editor out for coffee and don't worry about those things until puberty, the writer's kind.

3. Want to be creative? Follow Rule 2. Just get into it, because creativity never happens in advance; you can't plan it. It happens as you are doing it. Years ago I read this advice in a small book written by an advertising executive. A successful one.

It probably does help to type directly from your mind to the keyboard. Many people now do it as a result of using the

Internet and computers. It's a good thing, although I'm not sure I can say why. Maybe it's because after a while we can type almost as fast as we can think and catch more of our thoughts. I think most writers do it this way.

There was a columnist years ago named Jim Bishop who said he purposely *did not* write this way. Instead, he would think of a sentence and form it completely in his mind.... choosing the tense and verbs and arranging the clauses... before typing it. When I tried it, I found it indeed made for a very economic style where each word and phrase hit the mark. But it was so tedious my head hurt. I figured the only way I could write this way was if I was getting paid as much as Mr. Bishop to write. Anyway.....I'm not being paid to do this. I'm doing it for fun.

Well, OK ... but only if you insist ... I can think of some other suggestions.



### *3 More Rules*

1. Write it down and leave it alone. Write down more than one story...or pieces of stories....and leave them all alone. Come back later. This is supposed to be fun, after all. Don't make it work.
2. Carry pen and paper with you. Be like Hemmingway. Write

down everything. Someone told me E.B. White would ask a fellow diner to repeat a phrase while he wrote it down on his napkin. It won't make you a better writer, but everyone will think you're cool. Or forgetful.

3. Use a Thesaurus. You know what it's for. There's one contained in Word. This helps you to avoid writing a sentence like, "I told her she should raise the shade so when she raised it, the shade would be raised."

So, that's what I think! Do you have any other ideas? If so, I got ya! Write them down and you will have told "a story." Be sure to send it to me.

*David Griffin*

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**The Windswept Press  
Saugerties, NY**

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