



Peter Sawyer

Creative Writing – Planning and Playing

I've been writing ever since I was a teenager, scribbling bad sci-fi and contemporary short stories in a notebook on the school bus. I've now got 10 books published through Amazon and am currently co-writing a trilogy to be published together in October 2020.

As so many people have so much time, I'm putting together a pack to help you write your first complete short story or novel or just as fun things to do with the days of lockdown. Each part could be a short activity or stretch it out as long as you want. My writing style is very organic, I'm not very good at planning things out but I've tried to make this as usable as possible!

I'm not a teacher, but I am a history graduate and I've been doing Living History for 2 years. Covid-19 has hit my business hard, it's unlikely that I'll be working again before September but I'm fortunate that I don't have any children to look after. So, for anyone who's having to try their hand at home-schooling, I've put together this education pack based on my work as an author and my Living History workshops. Feel free to print, copy and distribute this pack as far and wide as you want.

I'll also be doing packs on:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vikings and Saxons• Ancient Roman society• Ancient Roman army• Ancient Greece- Athens• Ancient Greece- Sparta• Medieval | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• World War One• World War Two• More creative writing exercises• Favourite books• More to follow |
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*Keep an eye on www.peter-sawyer.com
or "Peter Sawyer, author" on Facebook or Twitter*

You'll need:

- Whatever you're most comfortable writing with- pen or pencil
- Whatever you're most comfortable drawing with
- An A4 notebook/pad/paper
- If you prefer, you could do this all on a laptop or tablet: you'll need a writing programme like Microsoft Word and a drawing one such as Microsoft Paint

- *Things to do are marked like this*

This part of the Guide is to play around using the characters, setting and plot elements from Parts 1, 2 & 3, so if you haven't done these, you need to do them! Ideally, you'll need all three of them to hand for this part.



Part 4- Planning and Playing

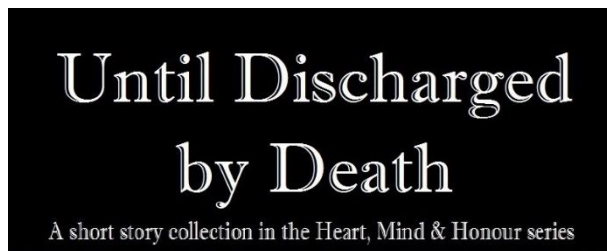
Title

The title is your story/novel's name. Even a working title can help you talk about your novel without just going 'My Book' when mixing with the great novelists of our time, as everyone does.

The books on your bookshelf have titles approved by agents, editors, publishers, PR men and others.

Take a look at 10 of your favourite books or those with particularly catchy titles. Write a sentence or 2 about how the title relates to the book itself.

Perhaps the title's a pun, does it refer to a character, plot point or a literal description. Here's a couple of mine:



Until Discharged by Death is a reference to the Promise taken by all Members of the Order of the Shield and Sword. The final words of this promise are “until discharged by death” and is one of the key tenets of their Order: serving until death, which many of the characters do.

The image shows the cover of a book titled 'Eight Years Walking Seas & Roads'. The title is written in a green, serif font on a white background. The background features a faint, sketchy illustration of a ship's hull and a compass rose.

Eight Years Walking Seas & Roads

Eight Years Walking: Seas and Roads is now a part of *The Walker*. It literally describes eight years of the main character's life travelling across my fictional continent, using seas and roads. His title is *The Walker*, hence the main title.



Princess is a bit more obscure. *Princess* is a term of endearment used by the main character's partner and her father to the main character but also suggests someone special and privileged, which contrasts with how she feels about herself.

Write as many titles for your novel as you can manage.

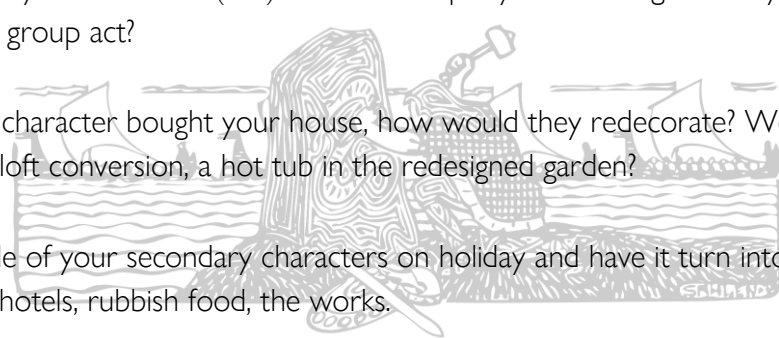
Use the previous task, your story's core, your character's name, the plot. Even if you have a title in mind, do this anyway, as you might come up with something even better.

Playing

These are just a few ideas to play around with your character and setting, to get a bit deeper into their personalities, attitude and surroundings. They might become part of your story, they might be little insights for you or may just be fun. Try not to use them as procrastination when you're supposed to be writing!

Character

- ϕ Write a scene where your character is late for school. Are they bothered? Why are they late?
- ϕ Does your character collect or want to collect something? What is it and why?
- ϕ Pick a secondary character. Have them start a fight.
- ϕ Write your main character's obituary.
- ϕ Take a few of your character (3-6) to a karaoke party. What songs do they sing and why? What's their group act?
- ϕ If your main character bought your house, how would they redecorate? Would they want an extension, a loft conversion, a hot tub in the redesigned garden?
- ϕ Take a couple of your secondary characters on holiday and have it turn into a disaster: late flights, noisy hotels, rubbish food, the works.



Setting

- ⊕ What feature from your house would your main character want in theirs? Would they have it in the same place or would they want your fireplace in their bedroom?
- ⊕ How did the street get its name?
- ⊕ Write a Trip Advisor review of your main setting. What is there to see and do? What's a must-visit and what should be avoided?
- ⊕ What was in your setting 100 years ago? If it's a new housing development, there might have been fields and a farm. If it's a forest, maybe it was a meadow. Take yourself on a tour.

*Why are you still playing? You should be writing!
Go back to the end of Part 3 to the kick in the butt!*