WORKSHOP HANDOUT

Finding Time

Strategies to make writing a priority · Nicki Salcedo



01 · QUIZ RESULTS

My writing time type: _____

A · The Sunrise Writer
Owns the early edge. Prep the first line tonight.
Watch for: trading away sleep.

B · The Night Owl
Wakes up as the house winds down. Use a ritual.
Watch for: running on empty.

C · The Pocket Writer
Writes in the margins: notes, memos, sprints.
Watch for: never going deep.

D · The Deep Diver
Needs immersion: weekends, retreats, PTO.
Watch for: waiting for perfect.

02 · CHECK WHAT SOUNDS LIKE YOU

A time problem, or a feeling problem?

Time problem

- [ ] My calendar is truly full.
- [ ] I write whenever a block opens up.
- [ ] More hours would mean more pages.

Feeling problem

- [ ] The hour opens up, and I scroll or clean.
- [ ] I feel dread before opening the file.
- [ ] I feel relief when a session is cancelled.

03 · THE REAL REASONS

Six reasons that hide behind “no time”

Reason	It sounds like	Try this
Impostor feelings	*“Who am I to call myself a writer?”*	Notice when “no time” protects you.
Perfectionism	*“If I can’t do it right, why start?”*	Fifteen minutes a day counts.
Guilt	*“Writing time is selfish time.”*	Writing is real work. Say it kindly.
Depletion	*“I have the hour, not the energy.”*	Match the task to your energy.
Anxiety and avoidance	*“Opening the file makes me tense.”*	Start tiny: one sentence, with a buddy.
Stigma	*“They think it’s just a hobby.”*	Rehearse your reply ahead of time.

04 · A TWO-MINUTE CHECK-IN

Before you blame the clock

1

Check in

Hungry, angry, lonely or tired? Meet that need first.

2

Set Expectations

Five minutes. One paragraph. Small starts break avoidance.

3

Be kind

Talk to yourself the way you'd talk to a writing friend.

05 · BOOK IT LIKE AN APPOINTMENT

My if-then plan

When _____, I will write _____ at _____.

If _____ gets in the way, I will _____.

Example: When the kids leave for the bus, I will write 300 words at the kitchen table.

06 · FIND 15 MINUTES

My energy map

High: draft _____

Medium: revise _____

Low: read, plan _____

_____

07 · CIRCLE ONE

My writing season

Sprint
Big goals, short time

Steady
Regular sessions

Simmer
Notes keep it warm

Rest
Rest is part of the work

Set goals that fit the season you're in, not the one you wish you were in.

08 · WORK BACKWARD

An 80,000-word draft

Words	Per week	Weeks
250	5 sessions	64
500	5 sessions	32
1,000	3 sessions	27

My math: _____ words × _____ per week = _____ weeks

WHEN IT'S MORE THAN A SLUMP

Losing interest in things you love, exhaustion that rest doesn't fix, or hopelessness for two weeks or more can be signs of depression, anxiety or burnout.

Talk to your doctor or a mental health professional if you have any questions about the way you feel.