

Quick Tips to Better Creative Writing

AUTHOR COLUMN

Richa Gupta, a former academican and author of 'Slices of Life' (2020) and 'Skeins' (2018), shares tips on how to improve your creative writing skills



Creative writing is expressing yourself through imaginative writing in any genre such as essays, stories, novels, poems and plays. To be an effective creative writer, you need a vivid imagination, strong language skills and sensitive observation of the world around you. Here are some tips to develop your skills in creative writing.

Read a lot, and enjoy reading books

The most important technique to improve your language skills, imagination and knowledge base is to read widely and read the books of good authors. Many youngsters lose interest in reading because they try to read books they find difficult to understand. If the original classics are beyond your comprehension, read their simplified versions; and read various genres in lucid language: poems, short stories, novels, essays, sci-fi, biographies, non-fiction, blogs and articles on different topics.

Build a strong vocabulary

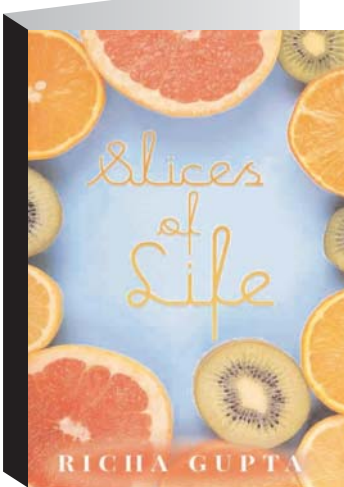
While reading, try to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context and confirm your guess by looking up a dictionary. Words that you understand intuitively will become part of your active vocabulary. Play word games such as scrabble with a strong adversary.

Practice writing

Do graded exercises in creative writing, and learn to write dialogue such that it sounds natural. There are several websites and workbooks that provide prompts, pictures and story starters to trigger your imagination. Start with writing based on a guided framework of visual or written cues, such as a series of pictures. Then, proceed to writing on the basis of a stimulus such as a leading or concluding sentence. Finally, write a creative piece on a topic. Get constructive feedback from an expert at each stage.

Strengthen your knowledge of grammar and punctuation

First, jot down your thoughts and then



Do take criticism positively, evaluate its veracity and learn from it. There is always scope for improvement

refine your writing. Learn the basic rules of grammar and punctuation so that you can correct all the errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation. Revise your writing after a few days to make the writing flow smoothly and enhance the content.

Remember the principles of good story writing

Develop realistic characters placed in a recognisable geographical and social milieu and familiarise readers with their thoughts and feelings. The start of the story must be attention-grabbing. Include an element of mystery to hook the readers and keep them guessing.

Start by writing about what you know

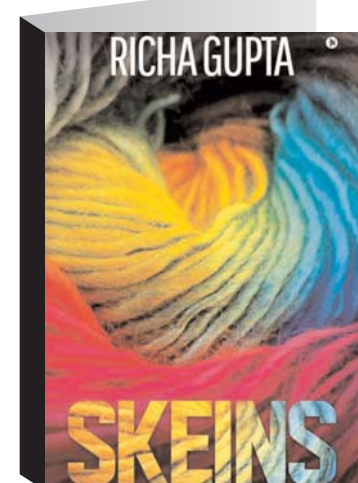
In the beginning, write about the world you know with characters you are familiar with and linked to topics of your interest. When you write on an unfamiliar topic, do thorough research to make it plausible.

Add a twist at the end

Try to build up a short story to an anti-climax so that something unexpected happens at the end. For inspiration, read the stories of Hector Hugh Munro, better known by his pen-name Saki, who used this device with mastery.

Understand the use of figures of speech

Start with writing simple sentences but as you become an advanced writer, understanding and using metaphors, similes, personification, puns and extended metaphors will enrich your prose whereas using additional rhetorical devices such as oxymoron, alliteration, euphemism, hyperboles, transferred epithet and metonymy will enrich your verse.



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Take criticism positively

When you write for an audience, readers will react differently and there may be criticism as well as appreciation. Take criticism positively, evaluate its veracity and learn from it. Remember that there is always scope for improvement.

Watch It!

ToiStudent presents NEP 2020. Our educators decode the way forward as envisaged in the National Education Policy of 2020 in this video presentation.

WHEN: We are live at 3 pm on August 11 (today).

WHERE: Watch the video at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyT6h6Z3gg948AhHqG5m-Ag> Subscribe for more such videos, discussions and movie screenings.

Have something to add?

1. Send us a video on your thoughts about the policy and whether you think this is the way forward for the education sector.

2. Make sure the video is clear and crisp. Do not exceed 2 minutes.
3. Send your video to nieyteam@gmail.com.

Meanwhile join the discussion on our hashtag **#FutureForward** on <https://twitter.com/ToiStudent/>



FITNESS TREND

COPING UP

It is no more about losing flab or gaining abs alone. Fitness is more about survival for today's burned out youth



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need to stay in one spot. "Although we have more health clubs than ever and new fitness programs are being introduced almost every month, people are still getting unfit and fighting health issues. A huge population is lacking basic cardio respiratory endurance and strength required to perform daily chores effortlessly," adds Arora. Agrees Raoul Hirani, strength and conditioning coach, "The biggest problems people come to me with are mobility issues. People have incorrect postures and flawed squat patterns."

GET STARTED

Exercise is a must. The energy you produce when exercising breeds more energy, not caffeine and sugar. "We need to rethink and redesign our schedule to squeeze in some



SAY NO TO

SODAS: Drink plenty of water throughout the day that you never crave for any sweetened/aerated drinks/packaged fruit juices.

STARCH: Prefer wholegrain food items over refined flour.

PACKAGED FOOD:

They are high in preservatives and excess salt.

ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS:

Diet colas and artificial sweeteners contain less calories but have adverse effects on insulin levels.

to do their household chores and professional jobs better. "Doing the kind of work I do, there's always a lot of load on my back. I started functional training recently with the prime objective of not losing weight but to strengthen my back and get overall endurance," shares Mansi Midha, a Delhi-based photographer.

TOO MUCH TO HANDLE

Today's adrenaline-fuelled lifestyle leaves less room for physical movement. There is so much to do — the endless updates to read and like, emails to respond to, photos to post, and with it all, rarely a full night's rest. Even technology is working around our ridiculous

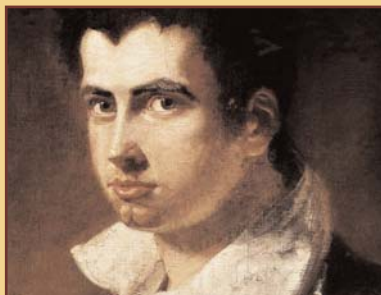
movement on daily basis. Simple tasks like standing, walking few steps every hour, climbing stairs or 10 minutes of morning/evening yoga can deliver positive health benefits than being sedentary all day," says Arora. Do not get too ambitious if you seek everyday strength.



An Angel Appears

'Abou Ben Adhem' tells the story of a celestial visitation to a man who 'loves his fellow men'. Answer each of these questions on Leigh Hunt's 19th century narrative poem (from 'Treasure Trove') by choosing correctly from the four options in each question.

1. When does Abou Ben Adhem see the angel?
A. Morning B. Afternoon. C. Evening D. Night



2. What is the angel holding?
A. Book B. Bell C. Box D. Bugle

3. What word does the poet use to indicate Abou's courage?

A. Bold B. Fearless C. Brave D. Valiant

4. 'Nay' is one of the archaisms in the poem. Which is another?

A. Thee B. Thine C. Thou D. Thy

5. A flower 'in bloom' features in a simile in the poem. Which flower?

A. Daisy B. Lily C. Rose D. Tulip

SURYAKUMARI DENNISON, teacher, Aavishkar Academy, Bengaluru

ANSWERS: 1) D. Night 2) A. Book 3) A. Bold 4) C. Thou 5) B. Lily

Quiz time

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Q.1) Which is the first Harry Potter book?

A. HP and the Goblet of Fire
B. HP and the Philosopher's Stone
C. HP and the Chamber of Secrets
D. HP and the God of small Things

Q.2) What was the nationality of Robert Louis Stevenson, writer of 'Treasure Island'?

A. Scottish B. Welsh
C. Irish D. French

Q.3) 'Jane Eyre' was written by which Bronte sister?

A. Anne B. Charlotte C. Emily
D. None of the above

Q.4) What is the book 'Lord of the Flies' about?

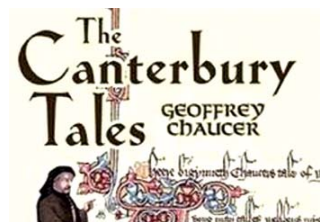
A. A round trip around the USA B. A



swarm of killer flies C. Schoolboys on a desert island D. None of the above

Q.5) In which century was Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales written?

A. 13th-14th B. 14th-15th
C. 15th-16th D. 16th-17th



ANSWERS

1. B) HP and the Philosopher's Stone 2. A) Scottish 3. B) Charlotte
4. C) Schoolboys on a desert island 5. A) 13th-14th

COMMON GRAMMATICAL MISTAKES

1. FORMERLY/FORMALLY

THE RULES:

- 'Formerly' is something that happened before.
- 'Formally' (adj) in a formal manner.

HOW NOT TO DO IT:

- The store was **formerly** opened on Tuesday.
- It was a custom **formally** observed.

HOW TO DO IT PROPERLY:

- The store was **formally** opened on Tuesday.
- It was a custom **formally** observed.
- Gaidar was **formerly** the vice governor of the Kirov Region.
- He was **formally** certified as a CA.

IDIOM OF THE DAY

MUM'S THE WORD

Meaning: To keep quiet. To say nothing.

THEY SAID IT MIXED BAG

There is no substitute for hard work.

~ Thomas A Edison

The greatest gift of leadership is a boss who wants you to be successful.

~ Jon Taffer

Always do your best. What you plant now, you will harvest later.

~ Og Mandino

CURRICULUM EXERCISES

Q1. What is the frequency range of the IEEE 802.11a standard?

addition of ____.

Q3. Identify the following monument.

Q2. Fill in the blanks:
A. Potassium nitrate is used in ____.

B. Permanent hardness of water may be removed by the



Answer: (1) 5GHz (2) A) Fertilisers B) Sodium carbonate (3) Bibi Ka Maqbara

EXPLORE YOUR CREATIVITY

Develop a story based on the pictures in around 250 words. Send your entry along with your name, class, school and picture at toinie175@gmail.com



THESE JUMBLED WORDS

1) amldse
A: damsel B: perfection
C: glorious D: query

2) yrpdam
A: depend B: pyramid
C: confidence

ANSWERS

1) A: damsel 2) B: pyramid

IDENTIFY THE PERSONALITY



He is the 18th Chief Minister of Maharashtra

Answer: Devendra Fadnis