

# What Does Every Writer Need to Know?

From  
*Ten Things Every Writer Needs to Know*

(Stenhouse, November 2011)

## *Scientific Method for Studying Models*

- [notice]** Observe what the writing is doing. What is working? What do you see or react to?
- [interact]** Highlight what you notice, jot down reactions, and talk with a partner.
- [name]** Build theories about what you see happening in the text and why the author made that choice. Name the effects.
- [experiment]** Apply something the writer did through imitation or revision.
- [reflect]** Think about how and where you will use this craft in other writings you do.

**"Trees are the keepers of stories."**

-Kathi Appelt, *The Underneath*



Never hesitate to imitate another writer. Imitation is part of the creative process for anyone learning an art or craft. Bach and Picasso didn't spring full-blown as Bach and Picasso; they needed models. This is especially true of writing.

-William Zinsser, *On Writing Well*

## Power Writing Grid

Number of Words	Round I	Round II	Round III
121+			
111-120			
101-110			
91-100			
81-90			
71- 80			
61- 70			
51- 60			
41- 50			
31- 40			
21- 30			
11- 20			
0 - 10			

*Ten Things Every Writer Needs to Know* by Jeff Anderson (Stenhouse, 2011)

## Ten Things Every Writer Should Know

- Motion
- Models
- Focus
- Detail
- Form
- Frames
- Cohesion
- Energy
- Words
- Clutter

### Power Writing

- Choose a word.
- Write as much as you can, as fast as you can, as well as you can in one minute.
- When the time is called, lift your pencil in the air, draw a line underneath what you wrote, and record your word count under the line.

–Leif Fearn and Nancy Farnan

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So go ahead and make big scrawls and mistakes. Use up lots of paper. Perfectionism is a mean, frozen form of idealism, while messes are the artist's true friend...we need to make messes in order to find out who we are and why we are here, and by extension, what we're supposed to be writing.

–Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird*



Good writing  
needs to stand  
up and make  
something happen  
in the world.

-Student to Andrea Lunsford, shared at  
TCTELA, January 2011

# 5.7.10

- Share a stimulus: a word, a list of hot topics, or a short read aloud.
- Write for five minutes.
- Share writing aloud with a partner and talk for seven minutes.
- Write for ten more minutes.

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*The pen is mightier than the sword, but both can ruin a good shirt.*

-Cuthbert Soup

# Form, Text Structures, and Cohesion

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- *What is this author doing?*
- *How is the author organizing his or her ideas?*
- *How do you know?*

Henry Aaron had a dream. He wanted to be a big-league baseball player. He didn't have a bat, so he'd swing a broom handle or a stick or whatever he could find. Henry didn't have a baseball, either, so he'd hit bottle caps or tie a few old rags together or crumple up a tin can.

## Words

### Squirrels

One of the oldest groups of mammals, squirrels first evolved in North America and spread to other continents during periods of great continental shifts and climate change—when other, less successful mammals disappeared. One of the reasons squirrels thrived is that many of them adapted to life in the trees, where few predators could follow them. To this day, speed, climbing ability, and the world's most versatile tail enable them to evade midlevel predators such as coyotes or foxes. They are also omnivores, eating anything handy: seeds, nuts, fruits, insects, mushrooms, small mammals, and frogs. Most squirrels live very happily alongside humans, raiding food sources at will and gnawing with ease through wood, plastic, even metal. Squirrels survive cold northern winters by “scatter-hoarding”: burying nuts and seeds, then digging them up later. Some of these nuts are forgotten and sprout into saplings—thus it is said that industrious squirrels plant more trees than humans do.

–Joyce Sideman, *Ubiquitous*

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