

## How to Write a Picture (or How to Paint a Story With Words)

In simplistic terms the answer would be, 'write from the heart'. But realistically it's more than that. We can be genuine and sincere with all the right motives and intentions and our words just don't seem to create the painting we had hoped.

Now many are the books and writing guides that will lead you step-by-step on how to be a creative writer. Not that these are not valuable or that the steps are not essential. I just prefer to begin with a simpler approach and then touch up my painting from there.

### Part I-Exercising the mind

As you prepare the canvas it is a good idea to do some exercising of the mind. Most assuredly, the mind will play a major part in creating your painting. To exercise the mind: Think. That's it. Just think of something, anything. It can be a single object, like a ring or box or fishing pole. It can be a memory of something that happened years ago. It may be something pleasant or it may be something painful. Whichever you choose, it can become your painting.

Note: unless you are writing a biography or non-fiction, it doesn't even have to be factual. If it's in the mind then it's fair game to use.

Now once you have picked something out of the mind to think of, stop thinking about it. Instead, close your eyes and see it. What do you see?

One thing is for sure you probably don't see a painting. Not yet anyway and that's because there are no words attached to it. Words are the brush strokes that will add the color and texture. Add enough of these elements (but without too many words) and soon everyone that reads the words you have written will see the painting.

Back to seeing it. Close your eyes again and just look at it for a moment. Slowly allow your thoughts to drift around it. You can drift as far away or as close to it as you want but just make sure that it is always in view. In other words, it must remain a part of any new thought you may have. If you start thinking of something unrelated, then stop and return to your original thought. Drift again. See the things around it, the things it touches. If you are thinking of a person, see clothing, physical features, or their surroundings. If you can remember, hear their voice or mannerisms.

Don't try to formulate any type of story from these thoughts just yet. This is just an exercise in training the mind to recall fragments that you may have thought were forgotten. It's not the thought here that is important at this point, but it's the exercise. The stimulus of the mind.

Repeat this exercise as often as you like. Use the same thought or choose another. The purpose here is to get the mind used to bringing up thoughts that may seem unimportant, but that we can associate in some way to the core thought. Remember if you only paint a core thought you will have a picture of a single object, such as a ring or fishing pole. Your painting will appear incomplete. Think of your story in layers of hues and colors that will be added to with each stroke of the brush.

By bringing any associated thoughts up again you make them available to use in your painting. Before long you will train the mind to see the core of the painting and all that it wants to associate with it even before you begin the brush strokes upon the paper. Your mind will see it and create it even before you do.

Lets try a simple exercise to get you started. Let's say your core thought is "an old lady walking on the street". Close your eyes and see her. What else do you see? Is she hunched over? Where is she going? Can you hear any sounds around her? Remember, no storyline, just what you see that is associated with the lady on the street. If something caught her attention, what would it be? Can't see anymore than that? Then EXERCISE DONE.

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