

Scribblers  
Festival

# WRITING JOURNAL

*For Primary Students*



# Welcome to the Scribblers Festival Writing Journal

Over the years the number one question young people have asked our guest writers and illustrators is, 'what does it take to become a published author?' And more often than not the answer is, 'to practise every day!'

This journal is a place for you to do just that. We asked the fantastic children's book writer Deb Fitzpatrick and amazing illustrator Gavin Aung Than to share their top tips and creative prompts here, to help you get started.

So what are you waiting for?  
Pick up a pen and start writing!



**Katherine Dorrington**  
Scribblers Festival Director



**THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO**

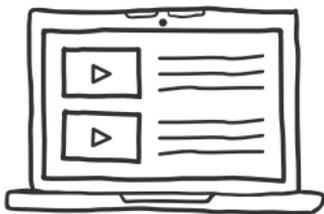
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## **WATCH THE VIDEOS**

Meet creative superstars **Deb** and **Gavin** as they introduce their top creative tips in these super helpful short videos.

**[scribblersfestival.com.au/writing-journal](http://scribblersfestival.com.au/writing-journal)**





Hi, my name's Deb and I'm the author of *The Amazing Spencer Gray*, *The Spectacular Spencer Gray* and *At My Door*, as well as other novels for older teens.

I love working with young writers like you and have pulled together some writing prompts and tips on these pages to get the ball rolling and your stories flowing!

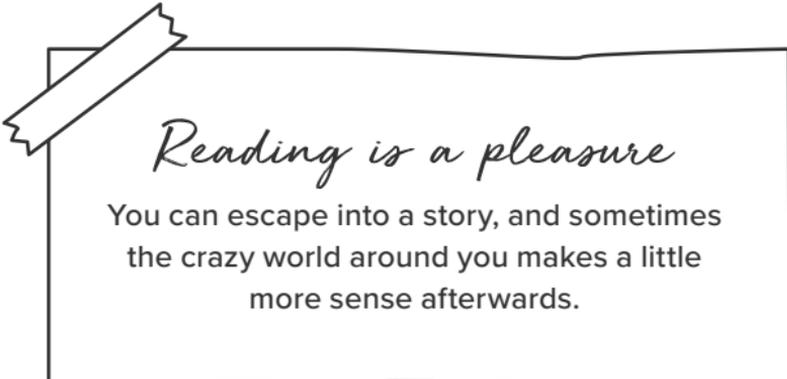
*Deb*

## **One of your jobs as a writer is to entertain your reader.**

As writers we need to keep our readers on their toes. A great way to do this is through the element of surprise.

Working with surprise is super fun for both the writer and reader. It ensures your reader stays with your story to see what happens next.

Two great places to provide an element of surprise are in the opening lines of your story, or in the closing lines (except for the old 'and then she woke up. It was all a dream' ending. No!).



*Reading is a pleasure*

You can escape into a story, and sometimes the crazy world around you makes a little more sense afterwards.

Try starting a story with this unexpected opening line:

***When I woke up this morning I was wearing my brother's clothes ...***

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## Strong emotions are great material for a writer.

One of the reasons that people read books and stories is to *feel*, and to understand themselves and others better.

Writing a letter to someone close to you can be a very personal, vulnerable, act. When you make yourself vulnerable in your writing you allow your reader to connect strongly to your story. In a letter you can explore deep feelings, fears, regrets and joys.

There can be no one closer to you than you. Have a go at writing yourself a letter in many years' time.

**Write a letter to yourself, penned by the 80-year-old you.**



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**VUL-NER-A-BLE:** [adjective] able to be hurt or injured.





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## **I write in a very visual way.**

This means I 'see' the events unfold in my mind as I'm writing. It's a bit like watching a movie of my story playing as I write it. If I can't see my story in this way, I find it hard to write it.

Now it's your turn to practise. Below is a very visual story starter. Try to see this in your mind's eye and write about what happens next.

***I looked through the bush and saw a feral cat standing on top of its prey, an endangered ...***

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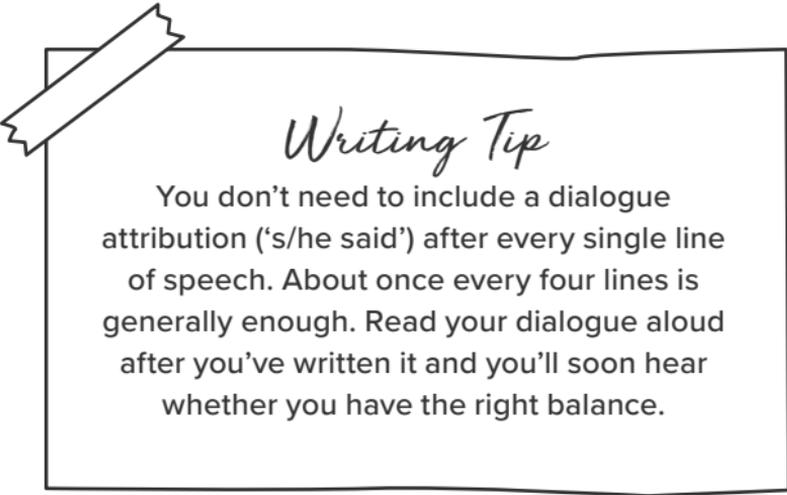


## Dialogue is what your character is saying.

It is a wonderful tool to show your reader who your character is; how they think, what they feel, and all the juicy bits in between. The way you write your character's dialogue can show us a lot about their personality.

Dialogue is also an excellent way to increase the pace of your writing. A lot can be understood about your various characters' relationships from even a short conversation.

**DI-A-LOGUE:** [noun] a conversation between two or more people in a book, play or film.



### *Writing Tip*

You don't need to include a dialogue attribution ('s/he said') after every single line of speech. About once every four lines is generally enough. Read your dialogue aloud after you've written it and you'll soon hear whether you have the right balance.

## Example dialogue

‘Seriously, Dad!?’

‘What?’

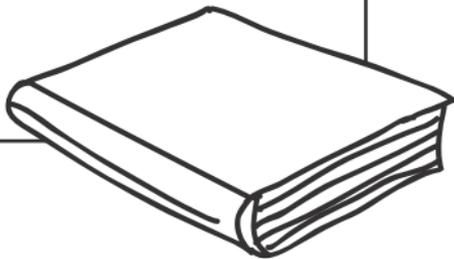
‘You can’t be—You’re not actually serious, are you? You’re not going to apply for the job of principal at my school?’

‘Dead right I’m serious. Why would I joke about something like that?’

I shake my head at him. Because you joke about everything! I want to scream.

He just can’t. He can’t do this to me. I’ll be mauled by the other kids. My life will become a series of day-long torture sessions. As if school itself wasn’t bad enough!

‘Don’t worry, I’ll stay out of your hair,’ he says, like this is no big deal. ‘I won’t embarrass you or anything.’



**Write a dialogue between a young person and one of their parents in which they discuss something they don't agree on.**

**Both characters try very hard to persuade the other to change their view.**

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**Adventure is at the heart of some of our favourite books and stories through the ages.**



Adventure offers the reader the possibility to escape into another life through your story's characters. And, if one of your characters gets themselves into a spot of bother, then your reader has someone to cheer for and fear for, as well!

There can be nothing more exciting than uncovering something long-lost ...

Tell us what happens next!

***You are snorkelling at your favourite beach. You see something half-buried in the ocean floor and dive down to take a closer look ...***

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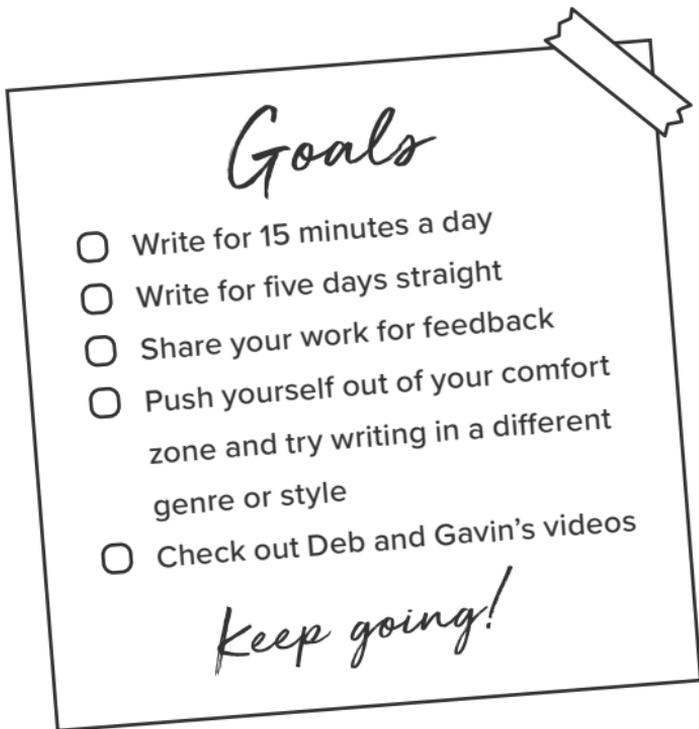


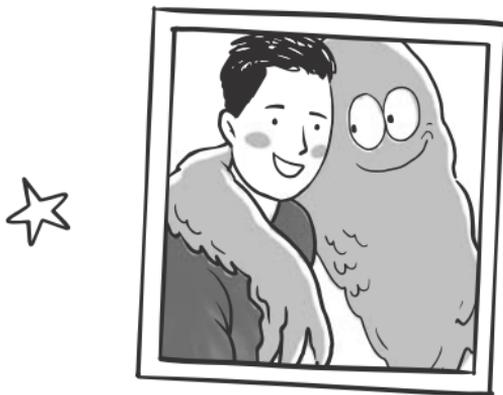
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## CONGRATULATIONS!

You're halfway through your Writing Journal!  
We hope you're enjoying the creative process so far.  
More writing and drawing tips this way.





## **DRAW YOUR OWN FANTASY ADVENTURE!**

Hi, my name's Gavin and I'm the writer and illustrator of the *Super Sidekicks* graphic novel series.

I'm going to help you draw your own magical fantasy story. Follow my five steps and you'll have everything you need to get started!

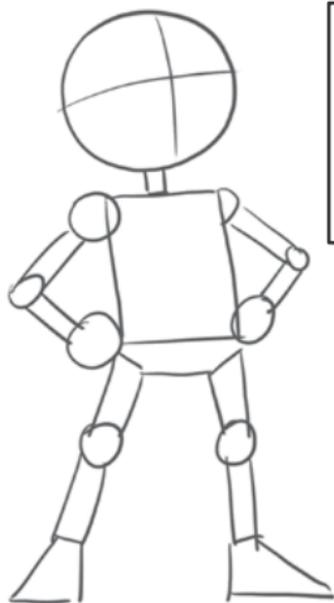
*Gavin*

## CREATE YOUR HERO

First, let's create the hero of your story. This will be the character your story is all about. Your hero will go through highs and lows and it's your job to make sure the reader is cheering for them the whole time. Whatever you do, don't make your hero BORING!

Some things to think about:

- *What is your hero's origin story?*
- *Why should we care about them?*
- *What is their personality like?*



### *Drawing Tip*

Use these tips to draw not only your hero, but all the characters in your story.

### **Step 1**

Start with simple shapes first to figure out your character's entire pose. Sketch lightly with pencil to get the proportions right, we're not adding any details yet.

## Step 2

Still using pencil, press a bit harder to flesh your character out.

### *Drawing Tip*

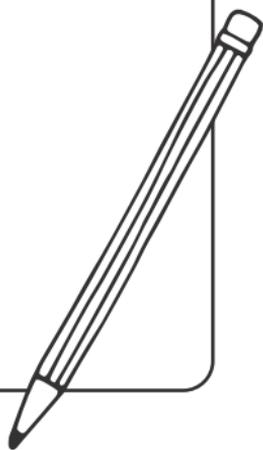
You can base your hero on yourself or someone you know.



## Step 3

Use pen and colour to add all the cool details and bring your hero to life! Meet Sir Aaron Goodhair, a young and brave warrior!

Draw your hero! And any other  
characters you wish ...



## CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON

Now give your hero a cool weapon! Think of famous characters and how important their weapons are to their personality. Captain America's shield, Thor's hammer, Harry Potter's wand and Rae's lightsaber are some examples.

Some things to think about:

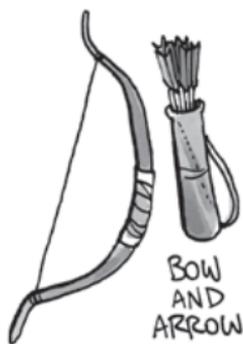
1. *What's the history of the weapon?*
2. *Does your hero start the story with it or do they have to do something (a test or quest) to get it?*
3. *What makes the weapon unique?*
4. *Does the weapon have a name?*



### *Drawing Tip*

Your weapon doesn't have to be a fighting weapon. It could be a book that increases your character's knowledge.

Draw your weapon ...



## EVERY HERO NEEDS A SIDEKICK

Let's give your hero a sidekick or companion. Often, the sidekick provides funny moments and gives your hero someone to talk to throughout the story. The main idea is to have supporting characters that bring out your main hero's personality to the fullest.



Make the sidekick as different from your hero as possible, both visually and personality-wise. Since my hero Aaron Goodhair is a bright-eyed and sincere kid, it would be fun for him to have a sidekick who is an arrogant and vain jerk (like the smug Sir Lancer-Hop here).

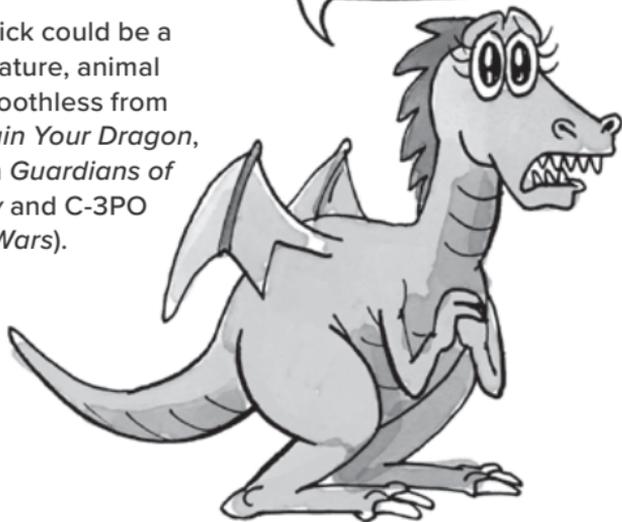


I AM THE  
LAST OF THE  
FOREST FAIRIES.  
GOODHAIR HAS  
SWORN TO  
PROTECT ME.

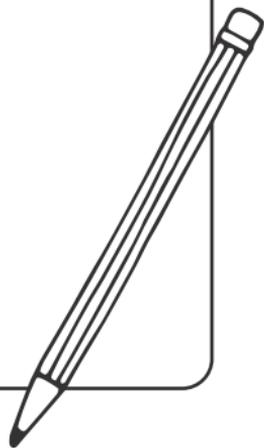
Sometimes the sidekick is an experienced older character who guides your hero throughout the story (Yoda from *Star Wars* or Dumbledore from *Harry Potter*).

AARON  
PROMISED TO HELP  
ME FIND MY  
MOTHER.

Your sidekick could be a talking creature, animal or robot (Toothless from *How to Train Your Dragon*, Groot from *Guardians of the Galaxy* and C-3PO from *Star Wars*).



Draw your sidekick ...

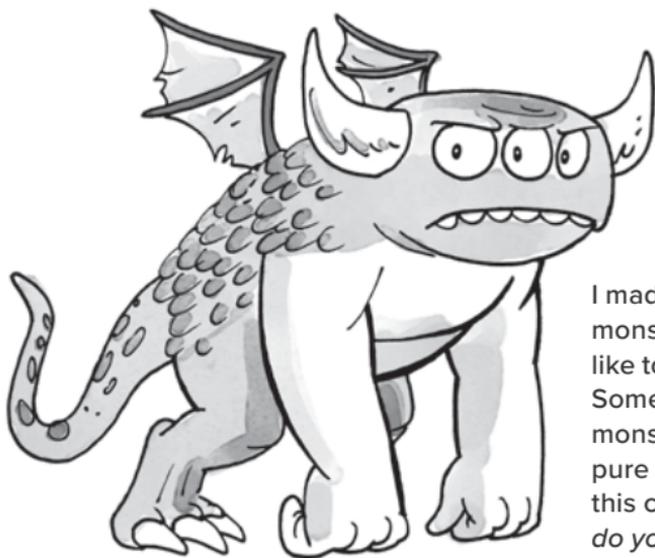


## GOOD VS EVIL – IT'S TIME TO CREATE THE VILLAIN

They say your hero is only as good as their villain. Batman wouldn't be as cool if there wasn't a Joker and Harry Potter wouldn't be so memorable without Voldemort.

Having an interesting villain is very important. Remember, the villain doesn't think of themselves as the villain, they think **THEY'RE** the hero of the story.

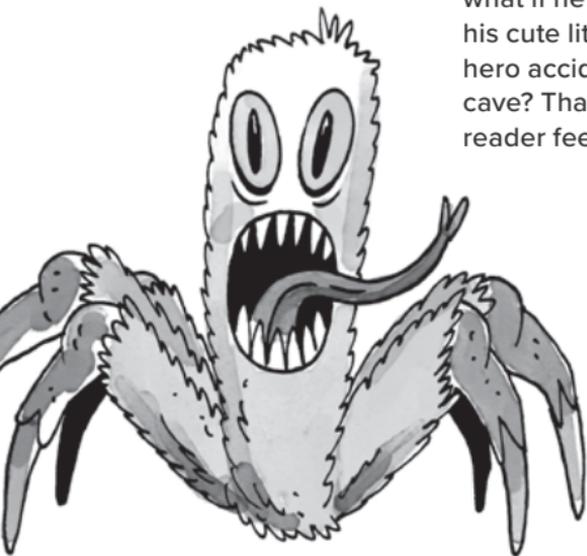
So why do they act the way they do?



I made my villains monsters because I like to draw monsters! Sometimes my monsters come from pure imagination like this creature. *What do you like to draw?*

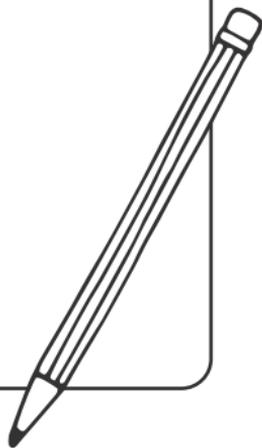


This monster may look like your regular scary troll-type bad guy. But what if he was just trying to protect his cute little troll children when the hero accidentally stumbles into his cave? That would change how the reader feels about him.



Sometimes a monster can be inspired by a real animal. Here I drew inspiration from a spider.

Draw your villain ...



## LET'S PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

Ok, so you have your hero with their cool weapon, a sidekick and a really unique villain. Now it's time to put them all together in your very own, mega-awesome, totally amazing **STORY!**

You can make your story a comic book or an illustrated novel. Just be sure to fill it with lots of your awesome drawings. I've used these steps to draw a fantasy story, but you can use the same steps to make **ANY** kind of story - superhero, spy, romance, funny, sci-fi, dinosaur - write and draw your story about something that gets **YOU** excited.



**Here's a few more tips if you're not sure what to make your story about:**

1. A good story usually involves **CONFLICT**.
2. The hero usually wants something and the villain is trying to **STOP** them from getting it - that's where the **CONFLICT** lies.
3. What does your hero want?



Sir Aaron Goodhair, Sir Lancer-Hop and all related characters, © Gavin Aung Than, 2021.

4. Why does the villain want to stop them from getting it?
5. In most stories the hero must change and learn something about themselves throughout the story - how does your hero change in order to defeat the villain?

**CON-FLICT:** [noun] a serious disagreement or fight.

Use the blank pages to complete your story.  
I want you to try your best and have fun and once you finish I encourage you to enter it in The Golden Pen writing competition. As you get to know your characters better, you can put them in more and more adventures. Good luck!

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**Deb Fitzpatrick** (WA)

is an adult, YA and children's author, with a Master in Arts (Creative Writing). Her books have been named Notable Books by the Children's Book Council of Australia, shortlisted in the West Australian Young Readers Book Awards, published in the US, and optioned for film. Deb uses real life stories for her novels and regularly teaches creative writing at schools. Deb's seventh book will be published by Melbourne's Wild Dingo Press in 2022. She has two teenage children and a kelpie.



**Gavin Aung Than** (WA)

is a freelance cartoonist based in Perth. His webcomic *Zen Pencils*, a cartoon blog which adapts inspirational quotes into comic stories, has been featured by *The Washington Post*, *The Huffington Post*, *Slate*, *Buzzfeed*, *Gawker* and *Brain Pickings*, and was named one of the top 100 websites of 2013 by *PC Mag*. His first series for children, *Super Sidekicks*, grew out of Gavin's long-time obsession with superheroes.

Illustrations by Cinthya Lovin, 2021.



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**FORM.**  
building a state of creativity

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# Mark Your Diaries!

Don't forget to tell your family and friends about the **2022 Scribblers Festival Family Weekend!**

**7 – 8 MAY 2022**

📍 **SUBIACO ARTS CENTRE**

**Scribblers  
Festival**



*See you there!*



# Scribblers Festival



**4 – 8 MAY 2022**

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