

The Writer's Workshop



from Diana Scimone
www.peapodpublishing.com
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Welcome to the latest issue of **The Writer's Workshop**, an e-letter designed to help you write your book.

1. How to Write a Book: From dream to reality

If you recently began subscribing to **The Writer's Workshop**, you missed our initial issues detailing the seven steps to help you write the book you've always dreamed of writing. So let's go over those seven steps briefly. (And even if you're a long-time subscriber, it's good to take a look at the basics every once in a while, right?)

As you work on these seven steps, remember that you might find yourself working on the first three steps concurrently. That's all part of the process.

Step 1: Write an elevator statement. Imagine yourself in an elevator with a book publisher. You have about 5 seconds to describe your book project. Writing an elevator statement—a one-sentence description of your book—is not to prepare you for that possible meeting, but to help you define the essence of your book in one concise statement.

Step 2: Write your objectives. Expand your one-sentence elevator statement by writing three or four one-sentence objectives. They should answer these questions: What do you want your book to accomplish? What do you want the reader to remember? Who is your book for?

Step 3: Brainstorm. Grab a piece of paper (or a blank computer document) and in the next ten minutes, write down, in no particular order, everything you might like to include in your book. Keep your list with you, and for the next few weeks add to it—but don't delete a word yet or rearrange anything.

Step 4: Build your blueprint. Compare each item on your brainstorm list with your elevator statement and objectives. Does the item fit? Does it support your elevator statement? Does it help meet your objectives? If so, keep it on the list. If not, delete it. Group what's left into categories, which become your chapters. Organize the items in each chapter into a logical flow and sequence.

Step 5: Stock your tool shed. Gather your resources—research you've done on your topic, old newspaper clippings, websites with useful resources, little scraps of paper you've saved for years, and more. Do any additional research you'll need, then divide up all that information according to your blueprint.

Step 6: Just do it! It's time to write! Follow your chapter-by-chapter blueprint, beginning with point one of chapter one. As you write, use the "just get it down on paper" method. In other words, just do it—just begin writing. Don't worry about how it sounds at this point; you can go back later and clean up the grammar, spelling, and flow.

Step 7: Let it marinate. Once you've written your first draft, let it sit, undisturbed and unread, for a week. Then go back and read it over with an objective eye. You'll be able to see glaring errors, punctuation and grammar mistakes, meandering thoughts, trite phrases, and the like. Keep your elevator statement and objectives in mind with every single sentence; if it doesn't meet one of your points, throw it out.

These seven steps can help you take your book from dream to reality. If you'd like more detailed information on each step (plus a whole lot more), you'll find it in my e-book called **How to Write a Book** (www.peapodpublishing.com). Just \$14.95, it's a great investment that will help you write the book you've always dreamed of writing.

2. Link of the Month: Finding a literary agent

If you're ready to start sending your book manuscript to agents, check out this fr*ee searchable database of more than 700 literary agents: www.agentquery.com. It includes current address, phone number, email address, publishing experience, titles sold, past and present clients, special interests and more. Click on the "resource" tab, too.

Three cheers for Agent Query for making this database available to everyone. And you gotta love their mission statement: "We want every writer posing as an accountant, office manager, bus driver, police officer, housewife, flight attendant, or juvenile delinquent to know that their story has a chance to be something more than a shameful, indulgent escape—pages hidden in desk drawers that only see the light of day in whimsical dreams of publication."

3. Inspiration: Big dreams

And speaking of dreams: "If your dreams don't scare you, they're not big enough."

I once heard a "big dreamer" say that, and it's always stuck with me. Can I be honest with you? The more I work on the "Not For Sale" child-trafficking awareness campaign that **PawPaw's Pals** is launching in Thailand, the more it scares me! This project is so huge (who'd even think of taking on the multi-billion dollar child trafficking industry?) that it's either my own dream...or it's God's dream for me.

I'm choosing to believe the latter. And if it's His dream project for me, there's no way I can do it on my own. And why would I want to? One of my favorite scripture verses is Song of Songs 1:4: "Draw me after You and let us run together."

Is your dream book scaring you? Good! If it's big enough for you to accomplish on your own, it's probably not big enough. But if it's so big that it scares you, then it's probably God-inspired. And you'll need Him to help you bring it to completion.

Want to join me in praying that prayer? "Draw me after You and let us run together!"

4. The Last Word

Apologies if you mistakenly received the June **PawPaw's Pals** update last month; it was accidentally sent to **The Writer's Workshop** mailing list. If you'd like to receive that update each month and learn more about the "Not For Sale" child-trafficking awareness program, you can sign up at www.peapodpublishing.com.

Do you need additional help writing your dream book? Diana offers personalized coaching to writers all over the world. If you've always wanted to write a book, but didn't know how, a 90-minute coaching session by phone or in person will give you the tools and direction you need. Diana's practical and encouraging style will help you finally write the book you've dreamed of writing. To set up a coaching session: diana@peapodpublishing.com.

Back issues of **The Writer's Workshop** are on www.peapodpublishing.com. The first seven issues (along with much more information) are available as an e-book called **How to Write a Book**. Just \$14.95, it's a great investment that will help you write the book you've always dreamed of writing.

The Writer's Workshop is edited by Diana Scimone, president of Peapod Publishing, Inc. Diana is a writer, editor, journalist, children's book author, and writer's coach. Her writing has taken her to more than 40 countries, including Sudan, China, India, Kenya, Singapore, Korea, Thailand, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere. Diana is author of **Adventures With PawPaw**, a series of children's books about a little dog who travels to a different country in each book, introducing young children to other countries and cultures (www.adventureswithpawpaw.com).

Diana is also founder and president of **PawPaw's Pals, Inc.**, an international relief agency helping children in disaster and crisis situations around the world. Donate to PawPaw's Pals at www.pawpawspals.org. PawPaw's Pals is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and all donations are tax deductible.

Diana recently traveled to Thailand to research what **PawPaw's Pals** can do to help end the multibillion dollar child sexual trafficking industry. Children as young as five are bought and sold, not just in Thailand, but all over the world. As a result of that fact-finding trip, **PawPaw's Pals** will put together an child-trafficking awareness campaign—called "Not For Sale"—for Thai children, parents, schools, and the community. We'll write children's books, comic books, posters, curriculum,

and other anti-trafficking awareness material. Once we test "Not For Sale" in Thailand, we'll make it available to other countries where child trafficking is also a crisis.

If you'd like to contribute to this ongoing effort, you may make a donation by [clicking here](#), or by sending your check payable to **PawPaw's Pals, Inc.**, PO Box 952949, Lake Mary, Florida 32795-2949. **PawPaw's Pals, Inc.** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and your donation is tax deductible. Thank you for partnering with us.

Diana's itinerary:

August 10-14: Washington, DC, Virginia, Maryland

September 7-10: New York

September 29-October 10: Israel

If you live in any of these areas and would like to schedule a Writer's Workshop or personalized coaching session with Diana, please contact diana@peapodpublishing.com

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