7 Simple Steps to Write Your Memoir

You follow the Memoir Map in The Memoir Writing Workbook using right-brain/left brain techniques and visual writing exercises—which are fun to do.

Step 1: Getting Started
Learn to Navigate Memory

Step 2: Finding Your Way
Visual Writing Techniques
Ingredients of Memoir Writing
Point of View (POV)

Step 3: Events
Recalling and Evoking Memories
How to find and view what it is in your life that you have to write about

Step 4: People
How to make you and your Characters come to life
Understand the secrets of how to write Truth

Step 5: Setting
Bring Setting to life—create atmosphere

Step 6: Structure
The hidden elements of building a creative Structure
Evoking Theme

Step 7: Navigating Story
Tips on how to weave your story together creatively

The course provides an in-depth knowledge on the art of memoir writing. Upon completion of the course you finish the writing of a short-length memoir, ready to start another, or complete your full-length memoir.

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Start
a
Memoir Writing Club
using
The Memoir Writing Workbook
by
Irene Graham

How to Form and Guide a Memoir Writing Club 1 of 3

Note: The Memoir Writing Workbook is unique. It is an uncomplicated, clearly written, easy and simple 7 step approach on how to write short or full-length memoirs. All right-brain/left-brain exercise based, it is a creative game changer in terms of understanding how to translate life experiences into story. It is fun to do. Enjoy the process. Find the joy in writing. Let your creatively flow. Grow as you write.

Note: Each club member will require a copy of The Memoir Writing Workbook in order to partake and continue with exercises and writing outside of club meeting times. The Memoir Writing Workbook is only available from the website: www.TheMemoirWritingClub.com

Note: The Memoir Writing Workbook is not licensed to any individual to 'teach'. It is prohibited by copyright law for any section of the workbook to be copied in any form.

1. Become a founder of a Memoir Writing Club in your area or online. Make a list of people, male and female, that you feel would complement and be supportive to each other.
2. Choose four to eight members. Less than four participants may inhibit sharing. More than eight may dilute concentration. It is advantageous in writing to listen to what a number of people write in response to the same questions. This enhances writing.
3. Form a Club and mix writers at all stages of writing – new, emerging and advanced. As all the exercises in The Memoir Writing Workbook are personalised, they work for writers at each stage of the writing process. There is no right or wrong way to do, or answer, any of the exercises.
4. Meet weekly if you can. Decide upon a time and day of the week that suits each member.
5. Choose a place to meet. To be effective it is easier for participants to sit and write at a table. Your local library, art offices, community hall, school, pub etc may provide a room for the club. Perhaps you may alternate meetings between member homes.
6. Organise your seating arrangement boardroom style, if you can, so that participants sit facing each other.
7. The duration of the meeting should, if you can, be two hours. To aid and enhance creativity, there should be no breaks in this time period. Wait until after your meeting to celebrate and socialise.



8. The founder of the club is the organiser. The founder does not have to chair each meeting. This role can, if wanted, rotate between club members on a weekly basis. You can agree at the end of each session who will guide the next meeting. Alphabetical order is an easy way to make this decision.
9. There are no set rules as to how long it should take to complete the workbook. Example: 2 hours per week, workbook should be completed in approx. 12 weeks. Thereafter, club members will then write their memoir and gain deeper feedback on their writing.

General Guidelines

1. It is important to stress, and to make members aware, that a Memoir Writing Club is not a therapy session. If members have life experiences that they may find stressful or difficult to share, it is best not to write about these experiences at the meetings, or share them with members. The purpose of a Memoir Writing Club is to learn the art of writing memoir. When one has more writing experience, and an understanding of how to write memoir, they can then in private choose how to write about their difficult life incidents.
2. The founder of the club should acknowledge that as a condition of joining the club, each member agrees to abide by a mutual confidentiality and respect in each member's writings. 'What is written and spoken in the room, stays in the room'.
   This will provide for a safe and happy writing space.
3. It is important to read The Memoir Writing Workbook chapter by chapter, and to complete the exercises in chronological order.
4. Ask club members to complete Exercise 1 (page 11) in The Memoir Writing Workbook prior to commencing the club, i.e., to get set up with their writing material. The founder of the club may want to supply these items and share cost with members. For ease of set-up, the founder should provide the non-lyrical background music for the session and a means to play it.
   Note: As the development exercises in The Memoir Writing Workbook are of a visual nature, it is not possible to do them on a computer, therefore a sketch pad (plain paper) is best, and to then write your written exercise in a journal. Outside of club meetings members can develop their stories further on computer.
5. Prior to first meeting members should read up to page 29 in the workbook. This way you will have a discussion point for starting your Club. And then together do the exercise on page 33.
6. It is advised to decide on homework and what portion of the workbook to read prior to each club meeting. This will provide a deeper understanding of memoir writing prior to the next meeting and allow members to converse on a deeper level.
7. If members skip a meeting it is advised to complete exercises missed at home prior to the next meeting. This will ensure writing progress is maintained.



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General Guidelines (cont)

8. **When Reading Work Aloud**: It is important for all members not to pre-empt reading of work by apologising for its content.
9. Allocate an exact period of time for each member to read their writing, or a selected portion of their writing that they want feedback on. Seven minutes is a good length of time, to include reading and feedback. This allows the meeting to be kept on track.
10. As the Memoir Writing Club gains ground and the members' stories progress, if necessary, members can agree to concentrate upon one, two or three writers per meeting (whatever works time wise), to enable more time for feedback and support.
11. It is very positive to read work aloud and gain constructive criticism. It also instils confidence in the writer. And it also helps all members to understand individualism in writing and to learn from each other's work. But remember, there is a difference between being inhibited, shy and unconfident about reading work aloud and genuinely not wanting to share what one wrote because it is private. Members should respect the difference.
12. If a club member consistently insists that their work is too private to read, encourage them to read aloud their writings from the sensory exercises. Also encourage them to pick a humorous topic from their life story to write about, one they will be happy to read aloud.
13. **Providing Feedback:** Do not judge or criticise another's work. Encourage and share in their life story. Be positive in your remarks about their writing. Express what you learnt from their story and how their writing effected you. Do not relate it to *your* life; it is their turn to discuss *their* work. If any part of their writing confused you, discuss this positively and suggest how it might be reworked. You might express an idea as to how their story and/or writing could be developed. Discuss ideas among members; bounce ideas around and initiate discussion. Interact with each other. Create a platform of trust and safety for the members' creative expression.

Follow the road in The Memoir Writing Workbook
and enter the magic land of words.
~Irene G.