

Title:

Busted: 5 Writing Myths

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Summary:

One common element whenever human beings gather is the need to talk and share experiences. Often that need turns into something a little more fun, a little more dangerous -- gossip. Gossip is often fun but it can also be dangerous because it spreads quickly (because it is fun) and often distorts or even completely avoids the truth. Gossip creates myths in many fields and professions, and the field of writing is especially prone.

The top five myths about writing are:

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Article Body:

One common element whenever human beings gather is the need to talk and share experiences. Often that need turns into something a little more fun, a little more dangerous -- gossip. Gossip is often fun but it can also be dangerous because it spreads quickly (because it is fun) and often distorts or even completely avoids the truth. Gossip creates myths in many fields and professions, and the field of writing is especially prone.

The top five myths about writing are:

Myth 1: Writing is easy for some people. Let me tell you that is just about the biggest myth going. I have been a professional writer for going on three decades now. I also know many other professional writers of various ages, experience, and income. I don't know a writer that will tell you that writing is easy. Writing is brutal, hard work and there are times when I think it would be easier to simply open a vein as Red Smith said. However experience and practice can make many writing tasks easier. There are some writing tasks that I can almost accomplish on autopilot because I have written that specific format and/or topic a lot.

Myth 2: Writing requires talent. I won't lie. Talent can certainly help and talent is what separates the great writers from the good writers. But the truth is that talent is not enough to make a writer great or even good and talent is not a necessary requirement to be a good writer. Writing is a skill that can be learned, developed and honed. If you practice your craft, if you read the writing of others to learn more about your craft, and if you seek and accept guidance and suggestions about your writing then you will improve and grow as a writer. Dedication harnessed with talent can create amazing results but if I had to pick just one then I would go with dedication. You can always increase your skill level through dedication.

Myth 3: Writing isn't a useful skill. I have made my living as a writer for my entire professional life but even if you don't intend to make your living with words you will need this crucial skill. There simply isn't a profession that does not involve writing. Perhaps the form will vary, but written communication is the cornerstone in every professional field. Your writing ability will often impact landing a job as well as advancing in your career. Today written communication is even more crucial in professional and personal relationships.

Myth 4: You can't make a living as a writer. I can remember when I told my father that I wanted to be an English major in college. He was very worried that I wouldn't be able to support myself. The truth is that I have never had trouble finding a job and today I own my own business because of this flexible and important skill. Not only can you make a living as a writer but writing is an essential tool for many other careers and professions.

Myth 5: Writers block is alive and torturing writers as you read this. I'm not dismissing the difficulties inherent in dealing with writers block but whenever I talk with writers purportedly suffering from it they fall within two general groups. The first group actually creates their own block by insisting on the perfect place, mood, or alignment of planets in order to write. This is beyond ridiculous. One of the many benefits I gained from years of newsroom experience is the ability to write in almost any condition or mood. Deadlines will teach anyone how to give writers block short shrift. The second group I have more sympathy for as their problem really is internal in nature. Usually the problem is that the particular story (whether fiction or nonfiction) they want to tell is not yet finished cooking in their brain. In this case, while the writing may be stalled I don't agree that it is blocked. The writer must listen to that inner voice and respond appropriately. Sometimes the idea needs more time to percolate and sometimes more research and/or planning is necessary. Once the proper adjustments are made the writing will begin to flow again.

Don't let your writing fall victim to these five myths about writing.

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