

## Possible Types of Writer's Notebook Entries...

*Reading the contents in a writer's notebook is like opening and discovering a chest full of pearls, rubies and diamonds amidst a pile of rubble and discarded things. That little notebook is a powerhouse of ideas for every writer: The more you write down bits and pieces of your thoughts and observations, the more you are adding into the well of ideas for future works. Here are several things you can record in your notebook:*

- Jot down snippets of events in your life – they can be funny, embarrassing, happy, or infuriating experiences. Write down every detail you can remember.
- Write down descriptions of people you meet each day. How do they react in certain situations? How do their names fit their image?
- Whenever an interesting word catches your attention, write it down. If you keep a list of words in your notebook, the words can serve as story starters for you.
- People say the most interesting, surprising or even shocking lines when we least expect to hear them say these lines. Overheard lines in a conversation can sometimes spark your creative mind. Write down these one-liners in your notebook. They can be great story starters.
- Keep a file of memorable lines or quotes from books. Write down quirky billboard ads. Scan the papers for one-liners. These are good idea stimulators.
- Describe what you feel at any given moment. If you feel angry right now, write what your anger feels like. Describe it. Use vivid words. Don't skimp on adjectives.
- Free-writing – write as much as you can as fast as you can on any topic. Don't pick up your pencil. Just write whatever comes out of your head.
- Brainstorming – Make a list of topics, as quickly as you can, then choose one and write about it. Save the list so you can add to it later; for example, put it in the back of your notebook and try again some other time.
- Look out the window and write what you see, or listen and write what you hear. Don't just describe it; try to *think* about whatever is out there. For example, a bridge might make you wonder about all the people crossing over it and where they're going; a house might inspire thoughts about who lives there, or who once lived there.
- Take an object and see how many different things you can say about it. Again, don't just describe its physical characteristics; what can it be used for? Where did it come from? What does it represent? Etc...
- Lists – things you enjoy, things that make you happy/sad/angry, things that bother you, words and expressions you hear, people you know, "You can never have too much...", "You can definitely have too much...", etc., etc., etc.
- Work out a problem, make a decision, or make plans. Weigh the pros and cons by writing them down.
- Cut out a picture or an article from the newspaper or a magazine, paste it in your notebook and write about it. One idea: make up a story from what you see in the picture.
- Re-read your notebook and see if there's anything you'd like to revisit, or write more About.
- Try lifting a single line from a previous entry and starting there.
- Start with a random word or two and write as much as you can. Don't be afraid to let your mind wander from the original word.
- We all love to tell stories. Try starting an entry with, "I remember..."
- Sketch! Don't be afraid to draw in your writer's notebook. Try sketching a picture, making a cartoon, drawing a diagram, using speech bubbles or captions...
- "Fierce Wonderings"- These are the type of wonderings that ask, "What if something was different than it is?" (personal, community, global)
- Describe a person or place that is important to you. What makes it/them important?
- Borrow from the style of a writer you love.
- Collect "hidden gems"; sentences, words, openings, ending... from literature that you love.
- A – Z: Try using as many alphabet letter as possible to describe something/someone