

# The Magical Writer

## Introduction — Welcome to Magical Writing

What is writing to you?

Something you do every day? A dream job? An all-too-real job? Journaling? Something you did in college? A glimmer of an idea for a story you want to tell?

Is it your hope to write a novel? A memoir? A dissertation? A recipe book? Poetry? Short fiction? A compelling grant application?

Whatever your writing ambitions — why stop with just one? — we benefit from the support of a steady magical practice. If you have a daily practice, you'll find ways to weave support for your writing. If you don't have a practice, here's a chance to develop simple yet powerful personal magic.

Writing, like rituals, spellwork, and other aspects of magic, involves working with and shaping flows of energy. Magical experience and skills can bring new support and richness to our art.

From creating sacred space in which to write, to invoking characters, to integrating the shadows of the Inner Critic — welcome to magical writing.

### Join a class — or form your own group

This series of handouts forms the basis of a seven-week class taught in the Reclaiming tradition. The class is taught in the San Francisco Bay Area and other locales, and also via online classes.

The seven numbered sessions cover:

- Creating Magical Writing Space
- Invoking Allies and Characters
- Working with Narrative Energy
- Shadow Work — Integrating our Inner Critic
- Plot, Story, and Myth
- Editing Alchemy
- Taking Writing Into the World

In addition, there is a series of “Craft” handouts which focus on various aspects of narrative writing. These skills are woven into the seven classes, and also form an advanced curriculum for repeat students.

To find out about upcoming classes, visit [www.directaction.org/magicalwriter/](http://www.directaction.org/magicalwriter/), or email [george@directaction.org](mailto:george@directaction.org)

Or you can download the flyers and gather your own group to work through this material. If you do, drop me a line and let me know how it's going.

*See page 2 for exercises*

## The Magical Writer

A Writing Intensive  
in the Reclaiming Tradition

With George Franklin and Guest Teachers

Want to write a novel, memoir, or other narrative? Want to jump-start your writing, regardless of the style? Let Reclaiming magic help!

We'll look at the craft of writing and the emotional blocks that keep us from reaching our full artistic potential.

We'll meet in sacred space, share writing and support over the web, and gain understanding and skill from working with others. Writing can be an isolating practice - we'll use magic to weave a web of support and encouragement.

With magical tools such as circle-casting, ancestor invocations, trances, and spellwork, we'll free our expressive gifts and strengthen our belief in ourselves as artists.

We will also work on writing that expresses our unique voice, creating plot-structures, developing characters, and other aspects of the writers' craft. Each class includes directed writing time.

Class is suitable for those working on writing projects who want a supportive circle and new inspiration, and those looking to begin the process. Although you'll determine your own work-pace, be prepared to dedicate time to your writing, and to write for at least ten minutes each day.

For more information, contact George, <[george@directaction.org](mailto:george@directaction.org)>

*George Franklin is a Reclaiming teacher and co-editor of Reclaiming Quarterly. He has written several novels and published one (visit [directaction.org](http://directaction.org)), and helped edit work by writers such as Cynthia Lamb, T. Thorn Coyle, and Starhawk. Magic is a key part of his creative process.*

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*Magical Writing Ancestor — the scribe Nebmestab of ancient Egypt.*

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## Introduction

### Are You Ready?

Joining a Magical Writing circle is about commitment. Most people *can* write — the question is, who actually does. We'll use magic to make our work more sustainable, to develop and improve our writing — and most of all, to learn to enjoy the entire process.

Before you sign up, you can use magical tools to discern whether this class is right for you at this time.

Try these exercises. If they work for you and you are ready to commit to seven weekly sessions and to ten minutes a day of writing, the class may be a good fit for you.

**Set up a writing altar.** Dedicate a space that you can leave set up. Decorate your altar with inspirational objects, writing tools, favorite books, etc. Spend a couple of minutes a day at the altar, breathing and opening yourself to the flow of your writing. Afterward, do a few minutes of freewriting before starting into a project.

**Do a tarot reading about your writing.** Ask for direction in your creativity, then draw a few cards. Remember — the cards are a source of inspiration and fresh perspective. The final decision is yours. (Never done tarot? See Handout # 1 for a sample reading. Don't have a deck? You'll need one. If in doubt, start with the Rider-Waite deck.)

**Create magical space and write.** Cast a circle, call in allies, and see if it makes a difference. See Handout #1 for ideas.

Ask: Would it be helpful to have others to talk with about this process? Do you have the attention and patience to listen to others talk about their artistic process?

### Movie Magic

The “magic of film” may be a cliché, but for many people movies are the most powerful form of storytelling we know.

Beyond special effects, exotic locations, and dream fulfillment, film brings a special element of magic to the craft of writing: we can experience an entire story in a single sitting.

For learning the craft of writing, this telescoping is invaluable. I learned a lot about the possibilities of the novel by reading *War and Peace*. But I can't very well re-read the book ten times in one month to study its nuances.

When the plotcraft of *Ever After* captivated me, though, I could watch the film twenty times (and the opening scenes far more) to study every character interaction, every transition, every subtle foreshadowing...

When I unexpectedly enjoy a movie, I go back and watch the opening to see where they first hooked me — and how. What was its special magic?

When a promising film disappoints me, I think about how it might have been written or directed differently.

In discussing plot and character development, we'll refer to movies as often as to novels. In particular you'll want to have seen these films:

- *Dirty Dancing*
- *Casablanca*
- *The Wizard of Oz*
- *The Sound of Music*
- *Sliding Doors*
- *Ever After*

### Writing Exercises

#### Write About Your Life

Dedicate ten minutes a day to journaling about your life, your thoughts, strange things you've seen or heard, ways in which the world is an irritating place, etc.

Set a realistic goal. Maybe it's “five of the next seven days.” Maybe it's “300 minutes this month,” and keep a running tally. Find what works. Celebrate when you reach a milestone. Try a different approach when you miss.

Write as if it matters. Even if at first you have to make believe. For ten minutes a day, pretend it matters. Light a candle.

Write one day as if all the world will read it. On another, write for your eyes only. Write for the Goddess, whose eyes and ears you may be. Write for the future, who may want to know what it was like to be alive just as the Great Turning got underway.

#### Write About Something Else

Write about something besides your life.

Maybe you already have a project underway. If so, here's a chance to work on it and say you're doing magical writing.

If you're looking for a new challenge, consider starting one paragraph at a time. Write a good paragraph describing your living room, a person you are watching, a news event you heard about, etc. Try to capture it in one paragraph.

Take a short break. Then rewrite one of your paragraphs three times, starting as differently as possible each time.

Breathe into the variety of your writing.