

These 7 Unusual Tips Will Explode Your Writing Skills (If You're Willing to Try Them)

"To be successful, you must be willing to do the things today others won't do in order to have the things tomorrow others won't have." — Les Brown

How serious are you about writing?

How badly do you want to be a great writer?

Are you willing to do **WHATEVER** it takes to become a truly, freaking amazing writer?

Being top-of-your game at writing isn't for everyone — I get it. Sometimes you just want to write for fun and personal enjoyment, and that's totally legitimate.

But if you're 100% dedicated to your craft and your dream is to be not just a good writer, but **THE BEST** writer you can be...

If you're in it to win it, and you're committed for the long haul...

Then here are some tough but effective tips that will

make you a truly incredible writer:

1. Hand Copy the Best Writing in the World

The hand-brain connection is mysterious and wonderful. There is something about handwriting that typing just cannot compete with.

Handwriting helps you really learn things, as if writing on paper carves the ideas into your brain. And great writers throughout time have known it to be true:

- Benjamin Franklin tore apart the best writing of his time and rewrote it. By hand.
- Mark Twain taught himself to write by setting other writers' newspaper stories in type, by hand.
- And the great Gary Halbert told his students to hand write his top selling copy multiple times.

When you slow down to copy some story or article by hand, your brain has time to read — not skim — and absorb what you are writing.

No doubt you've read some unforgettable writing in your time — articles and stories that sparkled with witty lines, graceful turns of phrases, and potent paragraphing.

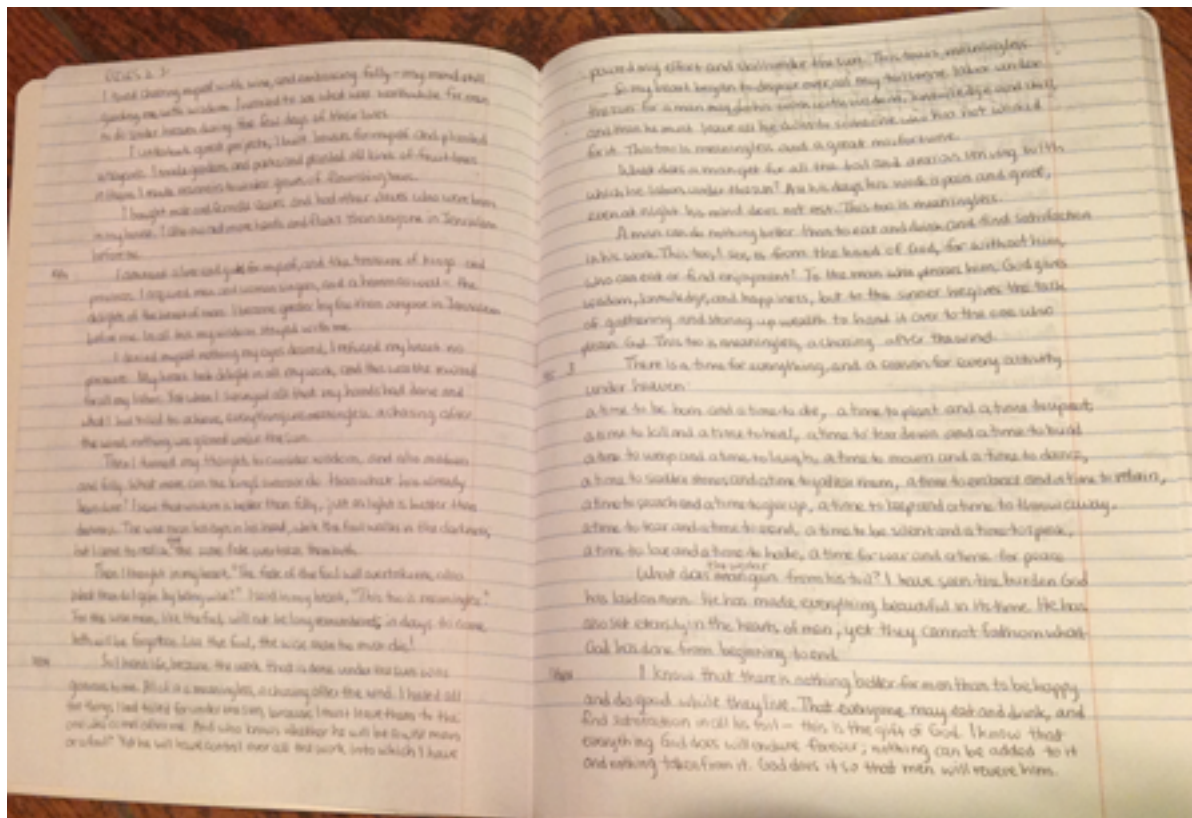
Of course, every beginning writer needs to get down the basics of grammar, structure, and the like. But when you

are ready to advance beyond the bottom rungs and spread your wings, you will need that little something that all the great writers have.

This “little something” cannot be taught. It is absorbed, caught, like a positive virus, or a game-winning fly ball at Wrigley Field.

But in order to catch it, you have to show up. You need to position yourself in the right place.

And you can do that by getting yourself a pen and journal, scouring the archives for the writers you most want to be like, and hand-copying their best work.



Hand-copying an ancient philosopher's observations on life

2. Analyze Successful Writers' Complete Portfolios

If you're a blogger, this one's for you.

Study what works. Make a list of the most successful and popular top writers in your niche and pick your favorites.

Then hunt them down online. Or rather, hunt their WORK down. It's helpful if you can collect all the articles a writer creates on one platform, say, Medium.

Then organize their articles so that you can figure out which ones are most worth reading. If one particular writer's oeuvre is not TOO extensive, you can and perhaps should read it all, of course.

But if you want to be more efficient with your time, either create your own chart of articles, or use a service such as BuzzSumo to locate the most popular and impactful posts.

Now, you can examine your chosen writer's portfolio in two ways: The forest view, and the trees view

The Big-Picture "Forest" View

One of the helpful things about creating your own chart of a writer's entire portfolio from scratch is you can look for overarching patterns.

Does the writer repeat concepts? What kind of headlines does s/he use? What times/days does s/he usually publish on? In which publications does s/he usually

publish, etc.

The Detail-Oriented "Trees" View

Once you have found the top articles, set aside some time to read them, in detail. Take notes. Be observant.

Ask yourself:

How are articles structured? What kind of formatting does this writer use? How does s/he do openings and closings? What is it like to read through the articles?

The more you do this, the more you will find.

And, as with hand-copying, the more time you spend soaking your brain in one writer's work, the more you will absorb details of his/her style, voice, and strengths, which you can pick and choose among to incorporate into your own writing.

123	24 U	11	10 Habits That Change Boys Into Men	3K	122	"
124	26 T	10	Why Keeping a Daily Journal Could Change Your Life	4.1K	101	"
125	29 F	6	2 Quotes That Will Reshape Your Approach To Life	2.1K	65	"
126	30 S	13	The 13-Minute Definitive Guide To Living Your Dreams	1.93	51	"
127	JULY 2017 3 M	18	21 Behaviors That Will Make You Brilliant At Creativity & Relationships	3.1K	79	" 178
128	5 W	5	One Thing Separates Creators From Consumers	2.2K	70	"
129	6 H	4	Why Even Ambitious People Rarely Become Successful	6.2K	99	" 161, 210
130	10 M	32	50 Ways To Live On Your Own Terms	6K	145	"
131	13 H	17	Want To Become A Multi-Millionaire? Do These 14 Things Immediately.	11.3K	180	" 157, 211
132	25 T	2	One Behavior Separates The Successful From The Average	3.8K	69	"
133	AUG 2017 1 T	5	What Happens When You Take Full Responsibility of Your Life	2.7K	56	"
134	3 H	6	Tell Me What You Did Today, And I'll Tell You Who You Are	3.6K	55	"
135	7 M	8	8 Things Every Person Should Do Before 8 A.M.	9K	100	"
136	10 H	7	How To Make Bold Decisions When Others Want You To Play Safe	3.4K	30	"
137	14 M	7	Surround Yourself with People Who Hold You to a Higher Standard Than You Hold Yourself	11.8K	78	"
138	16 W	3	This 10-Minute Routine Will Increase Your Clarity and Creativity	18.6K	44	"
139	18 F	3	Anything Is Possible If You Pay The Price	23K	101	"
140	21 M	7	Want to Become the Best at What You Do? Read this.	41K	145	The Mission
141	24 H	6	Mediocrity is a Virus. Here's How to Banish it from Your Life.	17K	56	The Mission
142	26 S	3	Why Most People Will Never Be Successful	20K	99	"
143	28 M	7	If It Doesn't Suck, It's Not Worth Doing	26K	131	"
144	30 W	13	30 Behaviors That Will Make You Unstoppable	20K	96	TG
145	SEPT 2017 1 F	10	This Psychology Study Teaches How To Re-Invent Your Identity, Turn-Back Time, And Hack Your Biology	11K	43	TG
146	4 M	6	Willpower Doesn't Work. Here's How to Actually Change Your Life.	25K	129	The Mission
147	6 W	4	How To Deal With Uncomfortable Emotions And Reshape Your Identity	12.4K	74	TG 189
148	11 M	6	Free-Will & Willpower Are Becoming A Thing Of The Past. Here's What You Can Do About It.	11.7K	103	The Mission
149	12 T	16	10 Ways to Make Peak-State Decisions and Invest in Yourself	12.3K	73	The Mission
150	14 H	10	This Morning Routine will Save You 20+ Hours Per Week	23K	90	"
151	16 S	14	How I Use My Journal To Create My Future and Achieve My Goals	13K	51	TG

A sample study page of Ben Hardy's articles

3. Break Down an Entire Novel

If you are an aspiring novelist, this is one of the best ways to study your craft.

Even if you are not an aspiring novelist, novel-analysis will still help you understand how to incorporate the basics of story, dialogue, intrigue, and more.

Depending on what kind of writing you do, find the best examples within your niche, ideally a book you've read more than once, and then sit down and dissect it.

There are a hundred ways to do this, so you will have to decide what you want to focus on.

When I was studying children's fiction, I chose a Carl Hiaasen novel and separated it into scenes. I wrote a one-line summary of each scene and noted chapter and page numbers:

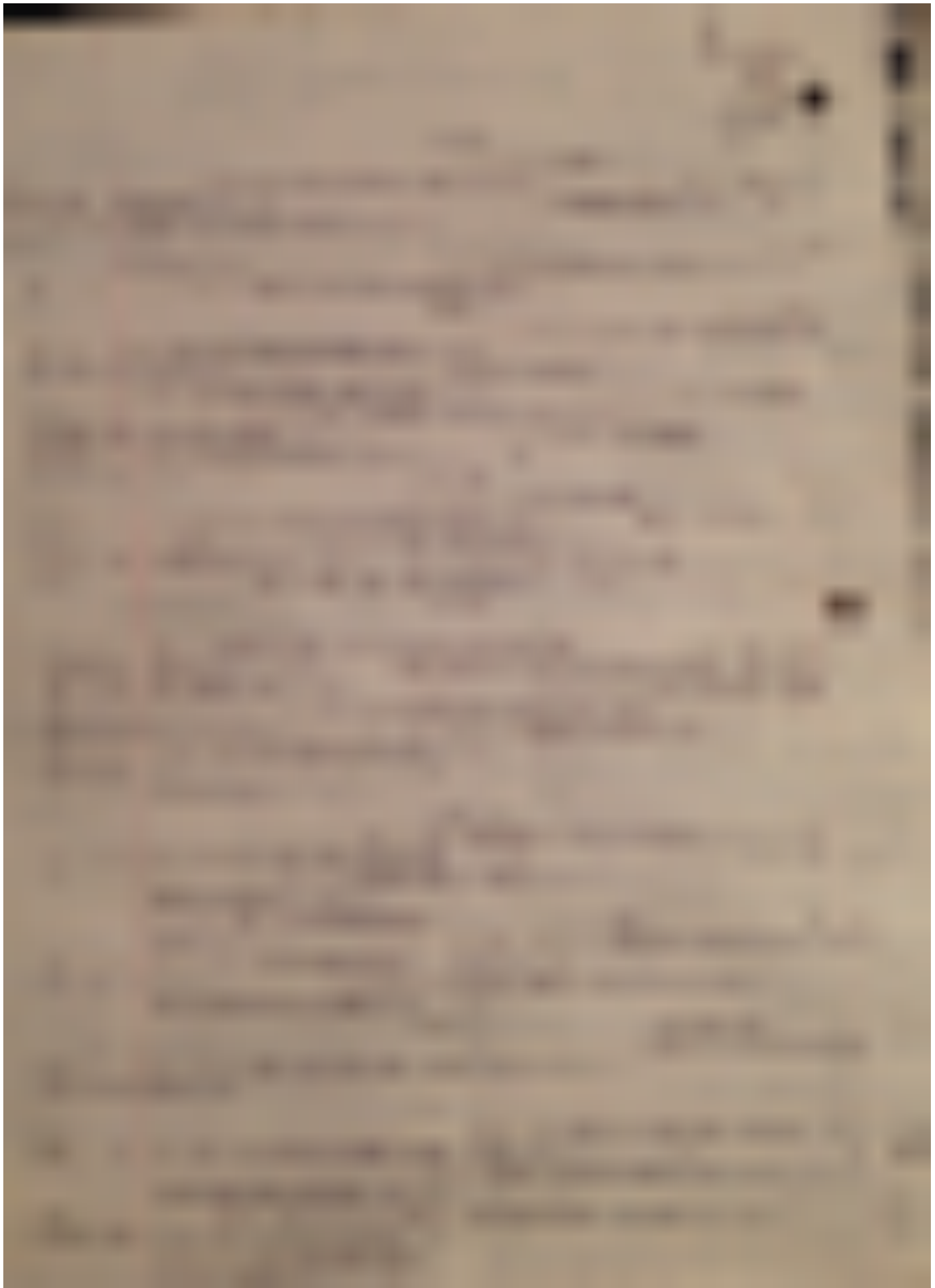


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At the time, I'd recently been introduced to Lisa Cron's Story Genius story-card method, and so my idea was to put the novel through her outline to examine its underlying structure.

But there are other ways you could analyze a novel, including:

- **To learn about character development:** Follow one character throughout the novel, noting every scene he appears in, every line he speaks, and how he changes (or doesn't) throughout the novel.
- **To learn about dialogue:** Locate every conversation within the novel and observe how the author differentiates the voices of different characters. What kind of dialogue tags does she use, and how does dialogue forward the plot?
- **To learn about description:** Look for the descriptive passages in the text and observe how the author creates them. Where are they located? What senses are used? What kind of picture does that create in your mind?

...and if you want to, you can come up with many more ideas.

The key, as with the first point of hand-copying writing, is to dive deep into the novel, consciously and subconsciously absorbing lessons from these expert

writers which you can then incorporate into your own work.

4. Read a * Ton of Books, and DIGEST them**

Every writer needs to read. A lot.

I don't have to tell you this, because if you are on the path to becoming a great writer, no doubt you were inspired by books in the first place.

The key, though, is not only to READ books, but to DIGEST them.

It's fine to read books for fun now and then, but if you want your reading to help make you a better writer, you need to find a way to turn reading into deliberate practice. For instance:

- You could highlight and write your reflections in the books themselves, or in a separate journal,
- Or write detailed book notes and outlines to teach yourself and others information you have learned from your reading,
- Or collect useful quotes that you can use in future blog posts or other writings,
- Or create detailed mind maps to remind yourself of important concepts.

The sky is the limit!

But remember this: No matter what kind of writer you are, reading books is a must.

Even bloggers need to read books, because good books take so much effort and research to complete that they are not as likely to have errors as the here-today-gone-tomorrow internet content that most non-writers are used to imbibing.



Image for post

“assorted-title of books piled in the shelves” by [Iñaki del Olmo](#) on [Unsplash](#)

5. Write 2,000 words a day, 6 days a

week, for at least 3 months at a time

Professional athletes practice for hours every day.

Writing is no less demanding — that is, if you want to be the best writer you can be.

If writing is your calling, you can't afford to be loose with it. Take it seriously. Write 2,000+ words per day, or 2+ hours, whichever unit of measurement works better for you.

Treat it like a job, because that is what it is.

If you want to get good at writing, you have to develop the habit of being serious about your writing, and of giving yourself the time you need to grow your skills and create your portfolio.

But don't write at the same intensity EVERY day. Take one day off per week, guilt-free, to allow your brain to rest and recover.

The proper balance of intense learning, practice, and writing, balanced with one day of intense rest will skyrocket your writing ability in the long run.

6. Edit Ruthlessly

No one is perfect, and if you've spent any time at all writing, you know that the editing process is more

important than the writing itself.

But do you know how to edit your work so that it really gleams?

Diamonds when they are first mined look like ugly lumps of rock. It isn't until they are cut and polished that they take on their wedding-proposal-ready forms.

The same goes for your writing.

If you want to be a ridiculously good writer, you have to learn how to be a ridiculously good editor.

And that means you need to learn to be a ruthless editor.

Here are some ways to do just that:

- **Cut every 6th word, or every third sentence:** This will teach you that you write a lot more fluff than you think, and that your writing CAN be tightened considerably.
- **Cut the intro and the conclusion:** A lot of times, writers start writing before they have anything to say. Or they dawdle when it's time to finish the darn thing and get out. Cut your intro and conclusion and see if your work can stand without them. If so, leave them out. If not, bring them back.
- **Send your work to 10 friends and ask for their feedback:** Look for patterns. If most or all of them agree that something is not working, they're

probably right.

- **Read your work aloud or better yet, have a friend read aloud:** If you find you or your friend stumbling or hesitating on certain words or lines, you'll need to cut or re-word that.

Cut and polish your diamond-in-the-rough and you will end up creating something priceless.



Image for post

"shallow focus photography of beige gemstone" by [Anne Edgar](#) on [Unsplash](#)

7. Invest (A Significant Amount) of Money

Let's face it. All writers at some point suffer from laziness, procrastination, writer's block, and/or lack of motivation.

If you want to be an incredible writer, you need to design your environment so that you are not derailed by these issues.

And one of the best ways to do that is by putting your money where your mouth is.

I've spent thousands of dollars on my writing education. Aside from taking required college writing classes, I've also spent over \$2,000 extra on teachers and courses who have taught me and helped me beyond the basics of the craft.

It's not just that spending money on my writing education allowed me access to some of the best teachers and courses that made me become a better writer.

It's the fact that I INVESTED in my writing.

As top Medium writer and organizational psychologist Ben Hardy has said in multiple articles, the act of investing creates a "point of no return" which in turn increases your motivation and follow-through.

If you've ever paid someone \$100 or \$1000 to teach you how to write, I promise you, you WILL LEARN how to write.

You will do the homework. You will pay attention. You will

believe in yourself, and you WILL become a better writer than you ever thought possible.

So instead of blowing your bucks on \$4 lattes, movie nights, or restaurant runs, save up your discretionary funds for something that will last far longer and produce more meaning in the long run:

Invest in your writing, and in yourself.

This Article is NOT For Everyone

Writers throughout time, from Benjamin Franklin to Mark Twain have used the above tips to launch their own writing through the stratosphere.

But these tips are not for everyone.

They are for the "chosen few."

They are for the ones who truly want to write, who are willing to make the sacrifices of time and effort necessary to fulfill their true potential as phenomenal writers.

The key, though, is that YOU can choose YOURSELF.

The mark of a truly mature artist is the ability to teach yourself. And the tips above will help you do just that.

So challenge yourself to do one of these things per month, or per quarter. Take 3 months and do one of the things on this list. Then rinse and repeat.

You'll be astounded at how quickly your writing skills will improve.

The ideas will come faster, the words will flow freer, and readers will be attracted to your strong content and style.

The mountain is high, the work is hard, but the reward is worth it.

Are you ready to start?

Ready to be a Brilliant Writer?

I've created The Brilliant Writer Checklist to help you write irresistible articles that clarify your message, create rabid fans, and change readers' lives.

[**Grab your free checklist now!**](#)

Helping each other write better.