

More Creative Writing Invitations: Invitations to Get the Creative Juices Flowing

Borrowed and Adapted From *Room to Write: Daily Invitations to a Writer's Life* by Bonnie Goldberg. Penguin/Putnam: 1996. (Available in the Writing Center)

Diving In

Diving in is a form of free-writing. (See Creative Writing Invitation #4 under the "Creative Writing" link for further elaboration of free-writing) The word or phrase with which you begin is your jumping-off point. Once you write it, let it take you anywhere it wants to: follow it faster than the speed of understanding.

Dive into writing by choosing any one of the following words that have more than one meaning: bear, cleave, lie, tear, or desert. Start by copying the word and quickly, without stopping for any reason, continue writing until you reach the end of the page. Making sense is unimportant. Your goals are speed and endurance. If you get stuck, repeat whatever word you've just written until something new spills out. After you finish read the result to your tutor and talk about what you discovered during your diving expedition. Don't forget to breathe.

(From *Room to Write* "Diving In" p.1)

101 Ways to Remember

As writers, we are often surprised by ideas and images we generate. Where do they come from? Sometimes it might be divine inspiration, others from the deep well of memory. Attempting to reach those waters can be frustrating, or it can be fun. You can't command memory or inspiration to surface, but you can reach out to them, and in reaching toward material you move below the surface and discover the spring.

Stretch your memory by making a list of "101 Places I've Been" or "101 Ways to Dance." Number your lines ahead of time. Generate the list as quickly as you can; try for fifteen minutes. Write whatever comes to mind even if it doesn't make sense. Don't quit until you have 101. What surfaced on your list that surprised you? Explore it.

(From *Room to Write* "101" p.48)

Seeking Similarity

Comparison is as natural as breathing. You hear a train and it reminds you of the ocean. You look at tributaries and you see your veins. One landscape melts into another. The connection between two things can be obvious or subtle. Sometimes it's physical. Other times the similarity is experiential or has to do with function. The tendency to compare has to do with the interrelated nature of the universe we live in. It is possible to find some similarity between any two things.

Make a list of twenty nouns (objects, places, abstract concepts) on a sheet of paper, leaving plenty of room between each word. Cut the words out and put them in a hat, a bowl, an envelope—a container of

some sort—and draw two back out. How many ways can you compare them? Aim for at least twenty. Then choose another pair and start again. Stretch your creative muscles.

(From *Room to Write* "As You Like It" p.39)