

Writer's Quest

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Dear Writer,

Try this issue's exercise and make adjectives work for you. If articles are your passion, read about how to avoid common mistakes found in articles. Wondered how much of the information found online can be trusted? Andrea Flint answers that question.

Want to tell the world about your up-and-coming release date for your book? Subscribers get boasting rights here, so send us an email to mystory@broaeditingandservices.com.au and don't forget: writers are readers too.

Please contact us via email or check our web site if you would like to contribute to our e-zine.

Happy writing!

From the Writer's Quest team

Writers' Corner Solving Writers' Block: Using Adjectives to Create Stories and Poems

by Mary Broadhurst © 2007

In the last issue, we developed stories using three words; let's take that idea another step further. Choose three words, but they have to be adjectives (a word that describes a thing, a person or a place). If you can't think of your own then pick from the list below:

- angry, guilty, panic-stricken
- peaceful, soothing, imaginative
- loud, crazy, hinder
- risky, temperamental, confused
- frustrated, withdrawn, happy

Write a short story/poem, but instead of using the actual word in your piece, create the effect of the word, for instance, instead of telling us the scene was peaceful,

Tell the world about your work. [Send us](#) the release date and/or a review. It's free.

instance, instead of telling us the scene was peaceful, describe the scene in a way so we think of the word peaceful. It may be a spot that a fisherman has stumbled on, or the quiet that descends on a soldier after a fierce battle while peace talks are being discussed, or it may be an enchanted forest that a child visits to get away from her parents' quarrelling, or something else entirely. The aim is to make the reader feel it, see it, and believe it.

Let's say we chose: angry, frustrated, and panic-stricken. Now think about what imagery you can create without using the words. We'll start our story with the intent to show 'panic-stricken'.

Libby trembled as she tried to force the key into the lock, it scraped against the duco as she flicked her head around at a sound nearby, but the darkness was all she could see. She spun around and peered at the bush highlighted by a blinking streetlight - did it move or was it her imagination? There wasn't even the slightest of breezes to force branches to sway. The bush moved again, she was sure of it this time. She held her breath and tried to unlock her car without looking away from the bush. The key jumped and spread a deeper gouge into the duco.

Green cat-like eyes glowed at her from a couple feet from the ground; too high to be a cat. The bush shook again. She screamed. The bush shook violently, the eyes moved closer and closer until out stepped a woman wearing a large jumper with a cat sewn into it, its eyes glowed even in the poorly lit car park.

'Sorry dear,' she croaked. 'I dropped my purse somewhere around here and I was looking for it.'

We'll jump ahead in the story to demonstrate 'guilty'.

Libby pulled up outside of Rick's house, the light streamed from the window and played upon the duco. She climbed out and slammed the door hesitating long enough to run her fingers around the lock, the scratch marks felt like crevices. She stomped the ground, how would she explain the damage to her boyfriend, he had lent her the car under strict guidelines of where to park and to

strict guidelines of where to park and to be gentle with it. He appeared in the open doorway, light flooded the walkway and where Libby stood. She quickly moved to block the damage; her stomach felt as if something inside was doing the jitterbug. He stared at her for a moment before he rushed towards the car. He always could read her face.

Let's speed this up so we can show 'anger'.

'I thought you'd be home ages ago.' He gasped and pointed to his car door. 'What the hell have you done?' he shouted.

Of course we don't have to end it here. I daresay Libby would have a few choice words after what she's gone through, but that should be enough for you to get the idea.

When you have finished, try some of the other words to create a different story or mix and match words to create your own combination.



Having trouble with your story or article?

Why not post the problem to our Writers' Workshop forum and gain help from other writers. It's free!

Sentence Starter ...

Many writers suffer the 'blank page' complex; therefore, each month we will supply you with a first sentence. Now your page isn't blank any more. Let your imagination take you on a journey.

This issue's sentence starter:

I promised myself that he wouldn't beat me this time, not when it was so important ...

Views on Writing

Can You Trust the Information You Find Online?

(Reprint article)

By Andrea Flint

The internet is currently estimated to consist of around 100 billion pages with articles and information on absolutely any subject you care to mention. Advanced search technology, such as that used by Google and Ask, make it easy to find a site or article covering a topic you wish to research, whether it's historical data, medical information, recipes or even just fun stuff like jokes. But can you trust what you read online, and how far should you use the internet as a research tool?

One of the strengths of the internet is that it gives a voice to anyone with access, and through forums and other kinds of sites, anyone can make their opinion heard. This democratic aspect is unfortunately one of the web's drawbacks as well, as there are few things to stop anyone publishing information, which is inaccurate, outdated, or even flat out deceptive.

For this reason, it's best to take much of what you read online with a pinch of salt. Opinionated people can make a lot of noise, but it's not always those that shout loudest who are the most correct.

Even well respected sites, such as Wikipedia, needs to be treated with a little caution when researching a topic. Owing to the fact that virtually anyone can edit or add a topic, the information found on it isn't necessarily well researched or corroborated, although many fine entries do exist. Wikipedia relies on collaboration to weed out inaccuracy, and while in some categories this works well, in the fiercely commercial areas the provision of accurate information is not necessarily the writer's primary motive for contributing to the site. Conversely, in topics with extreme minority interest, the collaborative aspect can fall apart: there aren't enough readers of a topic to pull it into shape and check the facts.

Adding to this, the fact that there are millions of commercial sites out there which, while maybe offering good information on their business category, are almost inevitably going to show some sort of bias towards their own company or services rather than being truly impartial.

So, back to the original question: can you trust what you read? So far the answer would appear to be no, but that's not the case. So long as you research a subject properly and read a range of views on a range of sites, you can probably come to a good understanding of a subject with few or no errors or inaccuracies. You just need to remember that publishing a web page doesn't always entail the same level of rigorous fact-checking and comprehensive research as traditional journalism

and comprehensive research as traditional journalism aspires to, and the fact that something can be read online doesn't always mean it's true.

About the Author: Andrea writes on a wide variety of subjects, from health issues to parenting and more.
<http://www.reprint-content.com/Article/Can-You-Trust-The-Information-You-Find-Online-/81062>
Article Source: <http://www.reprint-content.com>

Résumé Builder:

Content Makes the Article

by M Broadhurst © 2007

There is more to your article than making sure it contains good readability and no grammar or punctuation errors. The content must be correct as well. Many people have a tendency to write as they speak, and while this may create an interesting read, problems can crop up, and I'm not talking about syntax. When we talk, we try to make our conversation as interesting as possible, as a result, we may be tempted to embellish the facts or create statistics that are not true. This is acceptable when you're talking to friends, but they shouldn't make it into your articles.

Statistics

There is no better way to prove your point than supply a few statistics to support your claims, but make sure they are real statistics. Include the source where you found these statistics, which means it's best not to quote something you've heard without researching the facts. It's advisable to include the date that the statistics were collected, after all it's hardly worth mentioning them if your facts are outdated unless you want to compare it with another day.

Statistics and other facts are a great way to add credibility to your article, and will set your work apart from another on a similar topic. Think about it: if you were an editor of a magazine and you had two articles on the same topic, but only one can be used. Both are written beautifully and grammatically correct; however, one has statistics with accompanying resources while the other doesn't. Of course you'll use the one that has evidence to back up the author's claims because it reflects well on the magazine as well as the author.

I'm not saying that you have to include statistics with every article that you write; some pieces simply don't require it. But if you are intending to include figures then make sure they're accurate. Don't make up or embellish them.

them.

Beware of what you say

If you are stating things that you haven't checked on then research it now! Or rephrase it so it reads as an opinion, or do away with it entirely. Don't ignore it, and say, 'It'll be right, mate!' because there is a possibility it won't be. This, or any part of this article, is by no means legal advice; however, it is a caution to remind you to think about the larger picture - what effect will your article have on its readers. That means all of your readers, not just the ones you have intended it for. Besides, do you really want to alienate other people? And even if it is only one person who might object to what you have written, how do you know that person won't seek retribution if your article offends or discredits him/her personally, financially, or in some other way.

Don't speak for others

How many times have you come across an article, or heard a reporter or politician comment on something where they include you in their opinion, for instance, 'Everyone wants it ...' or 'I speak for the people when I say ...' The truth is the writer/speaker has an opinion and thinks by using grand statements that includes everybody will give his/her plight more weight. Even in the instances when the majority of people do share the same opinion, don't speak for those that don't.

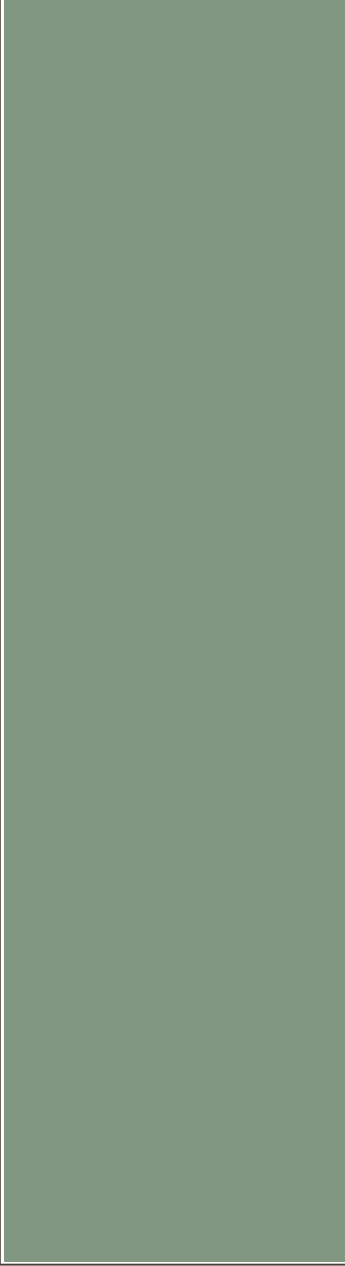
If you need to emphasise that an opinion, want, like/dislike, or whatever is shared by others then use appropriate phrases, such as the following:

- many
- large proportion
- the majority
- the minority
- some
- a few.

These and others are perfectly good terms that convey the size of support without having to use precise numbers or including someone who doesn't want to be included.

Passion or browbeating

You may be so passionate about a topic that you go on about it, repeatedly forcing the information, explaining your views and why your opinion has to be the right one. After you have written this type of article, it may be beneficial to leave it for a few days and come back to it. Reread it with a critical eye - have you written about an interesting topic or have you tried to browbeat your reader into agreeing with you? People may be less willing to read or listen to someone who is on a soapbox, talking incessantly, or practically shouting.



In some cases, there is little difference between such an article and an overbearing and pushy salesperson determined to sell you something. And what do you do in those cases? Walk away (if not run), ignore, or get really annoyed and start shouting back. In the case of the article, readers may stop reading it or resort to use it to clean up the pet's little accident. Is that the effect you want?

A few small changes, deleting repetitive thoughts, and easing back a little can turn the article around into something that is informative and/or enjoyable. The reader may not frame it and hang it on the wall, or think about it much after they have finished reading it, but at least they finished reading it and it's not wrapped around smelly faeces in the bin.

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