

THE  
**ONE**  
**WEEK**  
**WRITING**  
**WORKSHOP**



**7 DAYS** TO SPARK, BOOST OR REVIVE  
YOUR NOVEL

**KARIN ADAMS**

BOOK EXCERPT / PREVIEW

# THE ONE WEEK WRITING WORKSHOP

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7 DAYS TO SPARK, BOOST OR REVIVE YOUR  
NOVEL

KARIN ADAMS

AUTHOR IN YOUR CORNER

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## AUTHOR'S NOTES

YOU MAY BE STARTING your first novel, stuck in the middle of a draft or wanting to refresh a project that didn't quite turn out as you'd hoped. There are wonderful resources that can teach you about the craft and the business of writing: books that explore the intricacies of story structure and strategies for writing engaging plots, books full of creative prompts to prime your imagination, books on finding publishers and agents and much more. Something that most if not all these books will tell you about novel-writing: at some point, you are going to have to write (a lot).

My book will not change this fact. But what I'm offering is something that can make the blank page or blank screen a lot less intimidating. I'm sharing my personal novel-writing *method*, one that will help you to gain *momentum* and to keep *motivated* along the way. *Method*, *momentum* and *motivation* are what I believe you need whether you're starting from scratch, hopelessly stuck or deciding to get back to it.

The seven-step method you'll be learning during *The One Week Writing Workshop* is the one I developed for myself that led me to write five published novels. But more importantly for you—I've spent over ten years teaching this method to others in multi-session workshops,

*from first grade students to Senior Citizens.* At every age and every stage, I've seen my approach help to draw out rich, imaginative stories even from the most reluctant of writers. And if you picked up this book, you're surely *not* a reluctant writer.

So, let's break down the writing process together and start building on your creative ideas. By the end of the week, you'll have a reliable method that can take you from the first sparks to the glorious finish and a toolkit to face the blocks that can keep us from writing (a lot).



## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

ONE WEEK SPENT AT a writing workshop is clearly *not* enough time to finish your novel. But it *is* enough time to learn and practice a complete novel-writing *method* from start to finish, one you'll turn to again and again. Plus, you'll be acquiring writing tips for sparking creativity, elevating the quality of your prose and busting through blocks.

### **How does this workshop actually work?**

*The One Week Writing Workshop* is a practical, activity-centered handbook that guides you through my seven-step writing method. It's designed like a personal workshop that you're attending for the next seven days.

Each Workshop Day, you'll do a little bit of reading—but mostly you'll spend your time on fun and inspiring writing activities that acquaint you with my method. When the week is over, I'll guide you through a brief reflection process and offer some concrete thoughts on using what you've learned as you write your own novel.

### **What will I write about during the workshop?**

You can go into this workshop absolutely fresh, with no precon-

ceived story ideas whatsoever. In fact, this may be the very best way to experience my seven-step method from start to finish—beginning with that very first exciting spark of an original idea. However, you might be *really* eager to use elements (characters, settings) from your current novel-in-progress as you're learning the method. That works too—and I'll give you pointers on how best to use pre-existing ideas as we go along.

### **Do I have to do all of the activities in the book?**

No, you don't (but yes, you can!). Each Workshop Day includes a few Warmups, one Core Activity (marked with \*), and some Stretch activities. Here are some optional approaches, with time 'guesstimates' to help you choose:

- (2+ hours per day) Skim the Day's chapter and pick as many Warmups and Stretches as you wish. Do your chosen Warmups, then move on to the Core Activity, and end with the Stretches
- (~ 90 minutes per day) Do one Warmup, the Core Activity, and one Stretch
- (60 minutes or less per day) If you are really pressed for time, do only each Day's Core Activity.
- **Go at your own pace.** Spread out the activities over several weeks, a few weekends—whatever works for you! Just go in order: Day One, then Day Two (etc.). And on each day: first Warmups, then Core, then Stretches.

*\*Don't worry about activities you might decide to skip during your workshop. After the workshop, this book becomes an activity resource you can refer to again and again as you write. I'll talk about how in the closing chapter of the book.*

### **What supplies do I need?**

You'll need: a notebook, a pen/pencil, some colored pencils or markers, a highlighter, and your computer.

Some activities call for a few extra items, like your favorite books, mini sticky notes, index cards, and simple crafting items (scissors, glue, old magazines). *Special Supplies* will be noted at the top of the page.

**\*A Word on Day Four (Plot and Planning):**

I recommend setting aside a bit more time for Day Four. The reason is: on Day Four, I'm asking you to *do all the lessons in the chapter* and to do them *in order*.

On Day Four, I'll be walking you through the steps to create a mini storyboard. Each lesson builds upon (and depends upon) the previous lesson. You can think of Day Four as one big Core Activity broken up into an eight-step lesson.

In live workshops, this eight-step lesson takes about two hours, but you may want to linger even longer. (It's one of my most popular workshops—one that I think you're really going to enjoy!)

# PART I

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## ICEBREAKERS



IN A TRADITIONAL WORKSHOP, icebreakers are short, snappy activities to help you get comfortable with your fellow workshop participants. In *The One Week Writing Workshop*, they are small but impactful concepts that may help you to break the ice with your own writing self.

Grab a tea or a coffee and read through the next few pages any time before beginning Day One. It's a chance to do some reflection on your current writing mindset—and possibly make a few helpful and positive adjustments.

*Read these Icebreakers any time before starting the workshop activities for inspiration and helpful mental preparation.*

HI! MY NAME IS \_\_\_\_\_, WRITER.

**T**HE NAME THAT GOES in the blank space is yours. Copy this statement in your notebook and insert your name. Claim your identity as a writer this moment.

I mean *really* claim it.

Many of us who engage with the writing process and dream of writing a novel contend with fears and insecurities.

*Will I ever finish?*

*Do I have what it takes?*

*What if I'm no good? (etc.)*

Often, we have secret standards against which we are measuring our *right* to call ourselves writers:

*When I write every day, then I'll be a writer.*

*When I write at least five pages a day, then I'll be a writer.*

*When I get through this workshop, then I'll be a writer.*

*When I keep an idea journal and use it daily, then I'll be a writer.*

*When I publish my first book, then I'll be a writer.*

*When publishing houses start calling **me**, then I'll be a writer.*

You can certainly do or strive for any or all of these things as a writer. The trick is to start by affirming that you're a writer already and ditching the conditional 'then'. *When I write every day, then I'll be*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Karin Adams holds a Master of Arts degree from the University of Winnipeg and pursued doctoral studies at Harvard University, focusing on ancient languages and literature. After seven years as a university instructor, she returned to her first love—creative writing.

Karin is the author of five middle grade novels including the acclaimed *Frostbite Hotel*. She combines her passions for teaching and writing in her inspiring workshops for writers. Visit her website at [www.karinadams.com](http://www.karinadams.com).

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