

I love this book. It is like a talisman, a beacon shedding light on all that is required to become a writer. Brigid Lowry is well versed in writing for young adults; she is a teacher of writing and a successful author. *Guitar Highway Rose* and *With Lots of Love From Georgia* have been very popular books in my library.

In this book Brigid has provided a vast number of ideas for young people to develop and ensure a continuous writing journey. As a teacher of Creative Writing for 25 years I found this book like a drowning person finds a life raft. So many ideas! So many hints! So many ways to keep pen in contact with paper or finger in contact with keyboard! The book is littered with generous quotes from fellow writers and clearly and succinctly outlines what is required to become a better writer. It is not about becoming a published writer but being a writer for the sheer enjoyment of the craft. The book is targeted at teenagers and urges the reader to keep a journal; be observant; be precise, be unique; and make every word count. Brigid offers countless exercises that would require a lifetime to execute but that doesn't matter. This is a dip in, dip out book. You can take what you want today and leave the rest for tomorrow.

I want all students of writing to own this book and will seriously consider including it on the booklist for students of Creative Writing in 2009.

Writing does matter, it is how we make sense of the world. This book gives students a set of keys that unlock the secrets of writing success.

Highly recommended, 10/10. Well done Brigid!

Sharon Marchingo, Bendigo South West Secondary College, VIC

An inspirational book with thought provoking exercises.

As an unpublished writer and homeschooling mum this book has got my creative juices flowing...If only the days were longer. Even the kids' fingers are itching to push their pen across paper. This book of practical advice is written with style and flare. The light-hearted humour and words of encouragement make reading this book from beginning to end a pleasure. Brigid makes you realise that you can write, with no idea being a silly idea. Through her writing exercises she takes you on a journey of self discovery and self enlightenment. A journey that has you thinking like you have never thought before. Brigid takes you from your normal train of thought to beyond your wildest thoughts. Her creative use of words soon has your mind racing with your pen trying to catch up as you write words as they spring to mind. She has you looking at your surroundings and life from a totally different perspective - every moment is a story in the waiting.

For the student or writer to be who needs that little bit on encouragement I highly recommend this book. For the teacher who is looking for inspiration for their students then I recommend you introduce them to this book. The chapter *Writing games* provides fun light-hearted activities that will get the students' creative brains in gear and be sure to leave a lasting impression on all involved. Students who struggle to put pen to paper will struggle no more. *Juicy Writing* is a book that the reader will refer to time and time again.

Juicy Writing reinforces that writing can be fun.

Jennifer Deaves, Homeschooler, SA

Subtitled *Inspiration and Techniques for Young Writers*, *Juicy Writing* will be a boon for all aspiring writers, young and old. Often asked by students for help in their creative writing, it is great to see such a well produced and informative guide. In the past, books by Hazel Edwards and Eleanor Nilsson have been indispensable, but this new guide by award winning adolescent writer, Brigid Lowry, is set to be used by a wide variety of aspiring writers. Her light touch makes the book most accessible, and she gives advice with humour and enthusiasm.

The five easily read chapters go through the different needs for an aspiring writer, from journals and the need for an inquisitive mind, to where to look for ideas, to 'funking it up', to lots of ideas to get started. The list of starters intrigued me, and I can see many teachers getting good mileage

from these sections. Easy exercises too, litter the pages and kids could as easily use these at home or with a group of friends, as a teacher in the classroom. The book will have wide appeal to students, teacher and librarians. Lowry discusses narrative as well as poetry, offering suggestions for writers of both genres. Several chapters were a surprise, giving advice that I had never heard of making me immediately think of how I could use it. Such a chapter is the one entitled 'Dialogue'. The Glasgow Rules outlined by Lowry make marvellous sense and would appeal to young writers.

It is well worth a look at the book for your library or classroom, as it offers a huge range of suggestions in an easy to read format.

Fran Knight, SA

"I can't think of anything to write!"

"I hate creative writing!"

"This is boring!"

"How do I start my story?"

"Writing stories sucks!"

If at some stage you have heard the above teenage whines, then you need *Juicy Writing!* Brigid Lowry's writing guide is full of the juiciest ideas and techniques to encourage young writers. Her guide will inspire and provide helpful techniques that will make imaginative and descriptive writing accessible for all young writers.

As soon as I began flicking through the pages and delving into the ideas presented in this book, I could not wait to put these handy hints into action. In the classroom, the simple and inspiring ideas, the helpful techniques, rules and accessible exercises, immediately turned reluctant imaginative writers into eager, enthusiastic and confident connoisseurs of words! Once they got a taste for *Juicy Writing* ideas and techniques they wanted more to quench their thirst!

This book will get the creative juices flowing. Young writers will no longer be writing clichéd stories. They will be delving into Brigid Lowry's quirky world of witty garden gnomes, cutting lawns with nail scissors, radio-active chives, bad-tempered gold-fish and chairs that have healing powers!

Brigid Lowry's handy hints, ideas and writing rules will excite young writers and give them the tools and confidence to write - and to write well! Brigid Lowry encourages writers to take the first step. With this guide, they won't be stepping... They will be leaping into the exciting world of writing!

Lauren Sims, NSW

Original and appealing in its approach, *Juicy Writing* is indeed a "juicy gem". Not just a dry DIY writer's manual, it offers a unique mix of practical creative writing suggestions and technical advice, blended with heart-felt wisdom, to inspire and encourage on a journey of self discovery which is the essence of the journey of writing itself. Brigid Lowry brings together her years of experience as a popular professional writer of Adult and Young Adult Fiction, short stories and poetry, as a teacher of creative writing, and her life experience itself, in this treasure trove analysis of all aspects of the writing process, relevant for all writers. We get to know Lowry the person, just as she says writers must get to know themselves, because authentic and honest writing comes from knowing "who you are". These "juicy writing" tips, told from the heart and revealing the soul, are supported by extensive references to, and quotes from, other respected and experienced writers.

Beginning with the basics - collecting and recording ideas, discovering and delighting in words as "building blocks", establishing a dedicated creative space and daily free writing or journaling - Lowry exhorts the beginner to "write hard and fast into the wild land of your imagination". A wide range of "Starters" and other writing exercises is included for this purpose. The writer needs to experiment and let creativity blossom, to "pay homage to the richly peculiar side of life",

all the while trusting in one's own voice. We learn, too, that reading widely and critically goes hand in hand with the writing process, as we are encouraged to analyse "the magnificence of good writing". This particular chapter is a wonderful affirmation for our students of the undisputed value and importance of reading.

Also included is a detailed discussion of essential writing techniques and valuable suggestions for "making writing better" through editing, done with a positive attitude, seeking feedback from others. Tried and true strategies offered to combat writer's block are very useful, as are helpful links to writing-related Web-based resources, including those to publishers, writing organisations, and "technical advice" sites.

What sets *Juicy Writing* apart is Lowry's very personal and fresh approach, her understanding that "writing is hard....it is a journey into the wilderness of your heart", and her warmth and positive tone. The underlying, recurrent theme that life and writing are intricately connected, that being a good writer is learning what you want to say by being yourself, and the repeated emphasis on "feeding mind, body and spirit" is encouragement indeed in exploring and honouring the creative pull as one begins the writing journey. *Juicy Writing* resonates with the enthusiasm, insight, joy, humour, passion and compassion which drive Brigid Lowry's own writing. Brim-packed with a wealth of ideas and suggestions, from the "nitty gritty" to the self-affirming and motivational, presented in Lowry's own style, the book is a must-have, invaluable reference recommended for inclusion in the secondary school library collection, for purchase as a Teacher Reference text for English Department staff, and for the personal libraries of aspiring writers, young and old alike.

Alison Cassell, QLD

Not sure how to teach writing effectively? Want new ideas? Need to inspire your students to write? *Juicy Writing* by Brigit Lowry is the book for you. As a new teacher, teaching writing is one challenge I face daily so it was refreshing to find a book written by an experienced writer and teacher of creative writing and poetry.

Juicy Writing is full of practical ideas, activities and games for use with primary and secondary students. As a primary teacher I am often faced with students who lack motivation to write however after reading this book I felt inspired and refreshed by the endless creative writing activities and techniques available. Writing for fun, is a strong theme emphasised through the passion and experience of this author and after reading half the book I even wanted to pick up a pen and paper to discovering my own creativity. Lowry takes you on a journey to discover your imagination and how to use it effectively to write meaningful pieces of text. Lowry suggests drawing on your own life events and experiences to inspire you to write. Creative writing activities that would be useful to try with your students include:

- Using the five senses to write
- Being inspired by events in your own life (e.g. birthdays, holidays,)
- Descriptive writing using your name, a piece of clothing (E.g. A day in the life of a shoe...)
- Making changes in your life that lead you to new and interesting places
- Write a poem based on a piece of fruit
- Create a character based on the contents of your fridge/a shopping list

Not only is this book full of creative writing activities but is also balanced by exercises that explore the technical parts of writing such as:

- parts of speech
- metaphors
- similes
- point of view, and
- dialogue

This book inspired me to set fun writing tasks on a daily basis for my students and also gave me ideas for reading group activities. So... if you are searching for ideas to juice up your teaching or inspire disengaged students I recommend you take some time to explore the fantastic ideas in this book. It is sure to fulfil your student's literacy needs!

Kelly Barnett, Raceview State School, QLD

Juicy Writing...something for both the aspiring writer and the reluctant writer to sink their teeth into. It opens with an invitation "to embark on a long mysterious journey for which there is no real map." Each chapter has a delightful mix of instructional advice, quotes, anecdotes, story starters and exercises designed to motivate you to write. In fact, you won't be able to stop yourself from writing. Although written for a youth audience, it can easily be adapted for use by younger students as well as mature adults. Brigid Lowry uses gardening as an analogy of how writing comes together, and reminds us that not every seed germinates, but many do. She encourages us to get our hands dirty and be willing to plant some seeds. There are many helpful suggestions about making your own creative space, using notebooks and journals, making lists as a device and developing your sensory awareness. She emphasises the importance of reading widely, being honest as well as inventive, and exercising your individual creativity. As well as stimulating our minds, Lowry provides us with the essential components of writing, such as having characters with depth and believability, plotting, using dialogue and different points of view, effective editing and the like. Throughout the text, a variety of fonts are used effectively to denote sub-headings, but my favourite font is the handwritten-like one which reminds me to pick up a pen and be expressive. Any home or school-based learning would be greatly enriched by the inclusion and application of this marvellous book!

Barbara Caruana, Home Educator, VIC

As the subtitle suggests, 'inspiration and techniques for young writers' this truly is an inspiring text for young people wanting to write. Brigid Lowry has considered everything; there are chapters on good ideas and how to get them, creative spaces, notebooks and journals, characters, senses, word choice, form, point of view, dialogue, etc.

Lowry's first person approach, with anecdotes and humour of her own reading and writing style, engages the reader and certainly presents a positive encouragement for young people. There are numerous activities listed for young writers to complete and plenty of writing games and suggestions for when young people are 'extra stuck'.

Juicy Writing is light hearted and entertaining, full of inspiring quotes. Visually the text is aimed at young writers, a variety of modern fonts, pictures and inserts maintains the readers interest.

Importantly, Lowry explores the necessity to read as part of the writing process and acknowledges Stephen King's belief that reading is the creative centre of a writer's life.

Lowry has also included a number of ways to use the internet for writing: researching, blogs, wikiquote, teen writing websites, writer's block websites, writing organisations, etc.

While this text has been written for young people, it certainly is great for teachers in upper primary or lower secondary looking for inspirational ideas to help students with creative writing.

Juicy Writing also lends itself as a class set text, it could easily be used for an entire creative writing topic or for individual lessons. It is an honest and realistic approach to drafting, editing, and feedback, while experimenting with the writing process.

Jodie Webber Hurlstone Agriculture High School, NSW

Juicy Writing is a very useful tool for the upper primary or early secondary literacy teacher. The author shows readers a series of interesting ways to make their writing better, or as she says, more "juicy."

Many of the old favourite writing activities are presented, from Haiku's to innovative proverbs, but it is the author's use of humour and tremendously varied examples that draw the reader in to

want to write. The ideas lead to both short and long pieces of writing , chapter headings like “why you have to make your characters miserable” show young writers how to create interesting tensions between characters that draw the reader in. This book would be a must for any young aspiring authors but it would also be a fabulous thing to have at hand when planning writing lessons for your class. I shall be keeping this one handy!!!!

Wendy Fletcher, Lenah Valley Primary School, TAS

Juicy Writing by Brigid Lowry is a valuable resource for all primary students learning creative writing. It is packed full of inspiration and writing techniques to kick start even the most reluctant writer into picking up a pen. This resource is comprehensive in detail and I would highly recommend all teachers of English to consider using it in the classroom. The book is written in an easy to read style that appeals to young writers. It is separated into chapters with exercises at the end of each section. The book begins with a chapter titled ‘starting out’ which focuses on the process of gathering ideas and includes exercises and starters to stimulate the writer’s imagination. The following chapters include ‘good ideas and how to get them’, ‘the five senses’ (using postcards, photographs and songs as inspiration) and ‘quirky, weird and strange’ (how to stimulate creativity). The author also reminds writers of the unending knowledge bank of ideas that is found in each potential writer and that our writing comes from who we are and what each of us has experienced. There is an entire history of people, places and events for writers to call upon and use. A helpful ‘getting to know you’ quiz and exercise follow to help draw out the writer’s ideas.

The chapter titled ‘Words’ covers the different parts of speech, information on choosing nouns and inventing new words and meanings. A chapter about poems is also included as well as information about creating characters, plot, form, place and landscape, point of view and dialogue. The use of lists as a way to condense language and gather ideas is discussed. I particularly enjoyed the chapter titled ‘Why you have to make your characters miserable’ in order for there to be the all important narrative tension in the story. Information about the first draft, editing, clichés, overtelling, lazy adverbs and feedback are also included. Every student at one time or another feels stuck with their writing and techniques such as brainstorming, mind mapping, getting a writing partner or writing group to help ease a writers block is provided. At the back of the book, a chapter titled ‘getting juicy on the net’ provides websites that can further assist writers with the various aspects of the writing process.

Melanie Honeycombe, Relief Teacher, Auckland, New Zealand

Brigid Lowry sees writing as a long mysterious journey for which there is no real map. Over the past eighteen years she has read lots of books for writers – some inspiring and encouraging and others full of technical help. She created this book to be both – and this is what it is.

Brigid’s chapters are full of inspiration followed by practical exercises. For instance, names: How did you get your name? Brigid explains her story and then follows on with four suggestions for writing: where did you get your name; use your name as a verb; write a piece about your name; write an alphabet of names using fanciful and whimsical descriptions. She follows with suggestions for reading (pieces involving names ranging from Pablo Neruda’s love poem ‘Matilda’ to ‘Names’ by Billy Collins, dedicated to people caught up in 9/11) and more exercises (renaming yourself, your city, street, house, favourite band; create new names for your family, and a suggestion for a short story).

I love the fonts and layout. They encourage opening to any page and dipping in. Even if all you do is read one of the quotes provided (“Don’t say the old lady screamed—bring her on and let her scream” is one from Mark Twain.) you’ll go away with something more to think about.

Juicy Writing should appeal widely from English teachers looking for writing ideas to students dreaming of becoming writers and wanting inspiration as well as practical advice.

Jan Brown, Craigmore High School, SA

From the very first page of juicy writing by Brigid Lowry I felt two things; 1. Relief that I had already recommended many of her techniques to my students. 2. So excited that I have also taken up her advice and begun writing again. Lowry is overwhelmingly encouraging and her techniques accessible, for producing high quality writing. I hear teachers saying 'you cant teach creative writing in the timeframe we have', but Lowry's techniques sparkle with brilliance because they are so simple! Its size and price also make it the ideal supplementary text book for English for year 9 and up. I have actually had trouble reviewing this book as my year 12s swooped on it the moment they saw it, and refuse to give it back! Such is the enthusiasm that her writing on writing creates.

Melanie Williams, Lavalla Catholic College, VIC