

Cap'n Author Jones Says You CAN Get Some Writing Done in an Hour

Contributed by Author Jones

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Oh, Author Jones... I just don't have the time to write... Cry me a wading pool, sugar. Sometimes A.J. thinks that if people are what they eat, then a whole lotta you are serving up a steaming bowl of hot spicy excuses. But, Doctor Jones, you say I'm in school, I have kids, I have a job, there's a kegger, I have to grocery shop, I have blah, blah, blah... I have a choo, choo, choo... I have to yingy dingy, – America, I have news for you – you got the time.

How to Write When You Seem to Have No Time

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A.J. knows this because 30 + million of you are somehow able to watch American Idol or Grey's Anatomy or whatever distraction you and the media have convinced yourself you must see. Oh, but, A.J. I NEED to relax so --

I'm cutting you off. You hear me. Do you want to be a writer or not. You decide.

Those shows are AT LEAST AN HOUR LONG. You gonna feel better about yourself after you write for an hour, or after you sit on your soft ass watching a yahoo from Bodunk, Nowhere botch to bits an Aretha Franklin classic?

People – many of the following exercises could be completed in a time crunchy 30 minutes, if you must. The Author will never believe you can't squeeze out 30 minutes a couple of times a week.

Have I got your damn attention?
Let's get to What you CAN write in a Hour.

- Looking to write a memoir? In one or two sentences write down 3 stories from you life you'd like to tell. Use the rest of the time to begin expanding on of those stories.

- Keep a notebook with you. When you hear good lines of dialog from people as you are walking around or conversing – jot'em on down. These make for a delicious first sentences. Write this story (or maybe two) in your hour.

- Familiarize yourself with websites like the fabulous writer Aimee Bender has – on her site she has samples for writing prompts.

- Read a short story, poems or chapter from a favorite writer of yours for one half hour. Use this person's writing as inspiration to write a piece for the second half hour.

- Put pen to paper or type a story for an hour straight. No stopping, except for sips of liquid, don't judge – resolve that is merely and exercise and need I remind you to chain your internal editor to a bedpost for that hour.

- To practice dialog (which is one of the MOST difficult things to master) secretly record a conversation you are having with someone, or, preferably, some strangers. Use the hour to transcribe the conversation. This will start giving you the feel of how people actually speak. This is an incredible exercise. If the dialog is inspiring, write a story around it.

- If you are at the point with your writing where you feel like you'd like to start sending stories or poems out to be published. Start reading literary journals and writing websites. See which ones a. your work will fit into or b. jot down some ideas for pieces you'd like to write specifically to suit the style of an appealing website or journal. B. Use your hour to write, begin to write, or edit pieces appropriate for favored destinations. C. If you have pieces ready to go. Use the hour to construct a standard cover letter to send places, which you can then alter slightly to customize it for each potential publisher.

OK, there's your starter writing recipe. Now, get cranking, damnit.