

# Cristy Burne's top 10 tips for great writing

1. **Have fun, make mistakes:** Don't worry about spelling or neat writing or being perfect in your first draft. Just start writing and run with your idea.
2. **Start with someone who wants something:** Hook us into your story by starting with a character who wants something really badly, but can't get it.
3. **Make us barrack for your character:** We love BIG characters. Create a character who is 1) being unfairly treated, 2) in danger, 3) funny, 4) flawed and/or 5) brave.
4. **Ask "What if?":** Great ideas come from asking "What if?" questions about ordinary life.
5. **Celebrate you:** You are the only person with your exact set of experiences and likes and dislikes and interests. When you write your stories, use the details of what you know.
6. **Show, don't tell:** Give yourself more words to describe characters and events. Instead of *telling* me "He was stinky," *show* me: "When he took off his socks, half the class fainted."
7. **Turn on your senses:** Write about what characters can see, smell, feel, hear and touch.
8. **Adventure inside:** Just like you, your characters think inside their heads: they wonder, imagine, and fear. They make guesses about other people's thoughts and judgements.
9. **Write, write, write:** Writing is just making stuff up, and it's fun. Don't worry too much about doing it right, just do it. Write lists, jokes, comics, songs, diaries, stories and dreams.
10. **Read, read, read:** Reading can take you across oceans, through solar systems, into danger and secrets and magic. The more you read, the easier it is to write the stories you dream of.
11. **Turn off your TV:** You can write a book like *Takeshita Demons* if you write 1000 words (or three pages) every day for 30 days. You can write a book like *Fantastic Mr Fox* or *The Twits* by writing just one page every day for 30 days. You can't write a book if you're watching TV.
12. **Learn to count:** There are more than 10 tips on this list. But that doesn't matter. What matters is that these writing tips are all things that have worked for me. I hope they work for you too!

Happy writing!

