

Here are the books I mentioned in the introductory workshop:

Jane Cameron's *The Artist's Way* – This is the one that preaches about the usefulness of morning pages (filling 3 sides of A4 first thing every morning). As you'll have gathered from discussion in the introductory workshop, some of us (me included) loathe morning pages. I do know people who love them and find that the habit really opens up their thinking and increases productivity in all sorts of ways later in the day. Try them to see how you get on with them. Neither UoP nor the Portsmouth public libraries have this one.

Jane Cameron's *The Right to Write* – I find this one useful. I discuss one of my favourite chapters ('The Well') from it in this blog post – <https://ewc.coach/2023/08/26/how-to-find-creativity/> – and I've been rereading it in preparation for being a guest on Matthew Bellringer's podcast, *Delightful Dissent* (<https://www.youtube.com/live/Dx9PO4vmEso?si=DwyUgQ0XMXEh1jGX>) on 26 October 2023 (I think – we're still working out details). Matthew and I will be discussing creativity; here's how they describe the episode:

Description: Working without inspiration is a miserable grind. But we can't rely on inspiration arriving when we need to get something done. So how can you get stuff out the door without forcing yourself to do it?

Join Jennifer Jones and I as we "wait for inspiration". We'll explore what creativity is and how it comes about. We'll share our own experiences of finding inspiration and creativity in our own way.

Since neither UoP nor the Portsmouth public libraries have this book, you might read the post and/or listen to the podcast episode to help you decide whether or not you'll find it useful enough to buy a copy (there are lots of used copies about; also, since it's not from an academic press, it doesn't cost a fortune – you can get a new paperback copy for under £20).

Peter Elbow's *Writing without Teachers: Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process* – Elbow invented freewriting. If you want to know more about it and how it might help you, have a look at chapter 1. I haven't read the rest of this book or any of Elbow's other books. However, his work influences all American writing instruction, so I likely use lots of his techniques without knowing they're his. *Writing without Teachers* was originally published in 1973, so keep that in mind as it's possible that not all of what he says will have aged as well as the practice of freewriting. UoP has both eBook and hardcopy versions of this one.

Jolie Jensen's *Write No Matter What: Advice for Academics* – I like this one. Jensen's advice on keeping your work contained so it doesn't take over your life is brilliant, as is the suggestion that you check in with your writing regularly. It's short, readable, and useful. You don't necessarily need to read it start to finish. Part three, which is called 'Challenging Writing Myths', is worth reading soon – it'll help with impostor syndrome, overcoming the belief that you can't

possibly do anything productive in under 3 hours, dealing with the fear of dealing with peer reviewers, and more. UoP has both eBook and hardcopy versions of this one.

Rowena Murray's *Writing for Academic Journals* – This is the one that takes a very granular approach to outlining – down to what you'll write in each 100-word section. Chapter 2 is on targeting journals, which I know some of you were wondering about. That may be worth taking a look at to see what's involved and to help you formulate questions for your research mentor. However, REF is always changing, so I'd find more up-to-date information than a book that came out in 2009 (second edition; first edition 2004). Chapter 9 is on dealing with reviewer's feedback. If you're anxious about dealing with reviewers, that might be worth a quick read – but also make sure you bring up those worries in our 1:1 sessions. UoP has both eBook and hardcopy versions of this one.

Rowena Murray's *How to Write a Thesis* and *How to Survive Your Viva* – I didn't have these with me yesterday and haven't read them. I'm mentioning them because we do have a few PhD students in the programme. They might be useful, so long as you remember that Murray can be rather prescriptive and you are not required to follow her sometimes rigid approach. UoP has both eBook and hardcopy versions of these.

Rowena Murray and Sarah Moore's *The Handbook of Academic Writing: A fresh approach* – This one has some useful stuff in it, but I found it hard to read (I kept falling asleep). I do like Murray and Moore's focus on social writing (Murray develops this further in *Writing in Social Spaces*), and we'll talk about that idea in our next workshop (on writing groups). Some of what they say about motivation and integrating writing in your life is helpful, but some of it's not so helpful. The parts I find less helpful are the parts that suggest that if you 'just' manage your time better you'll produce more 'outputs' (I loathe that word – you are not a machine). As I said in the introductory workshop, you are not broken; you don't need to be fixed. Here I'll add, neither do you need more management (self or otherwise). UoP has both eBook and hardcopy versions of this one.

Rowena Murray's *Writing in Social Spaces: A social processes approach to academic writing*. As I said above, I like her focus on social writing – we'll talk about that in the workshop on writing groups. Also as I said above, I find her style hard to read (though it's great for bouts of insomnia), also, don't let her sometimes prescriptive approach make you feel guilty for not following her dictates). UoP only has one hard copy of this one.

Helen Sword's *Air & Light & Time & Space: How successful academics write* – This is the book in which Sword realises prescriptive, one-size-fits all approaches aren't helpful. There's some useful stuff in the book; there are also a lot of quotations from academic writers. Some of those are useful, but others make me worry about the academic in question's priorities because they describe writing routines that would leave most of us exhausted – I'm a firm believer that in the wee hours of the morning, unless we're out celebrating with friends, we should prioritise sleep, not writing. UoP has both eBook and hardcopy versions of this one.

Helen Sword's *Stylish Academic Writing*: This one's not as useful for the kinds of writing practice/finding time to write things we were talking about. I suspect this will be most useful to those of you who are newer to writing/publishing in your discipline - so those who come from industry/practice based-backgrounds and PhD students. That said, there are some good reminders in this book for all of us, and I end up pointing my academic editing clients to it to help them save money on their next book – if I don't have to help them figure out how to cut 5,000 words from the introduction, I won't charge as much as if I do (don't get too excited about the idea of hiring an editor; since the pandemic, universities worldwide seem to have cut funding for such things). UoP has both eBook and hardcopy versions of this one.

Paul J. Silvia's *How to Write a Lot: A practical guide to productive academic writing* – This one has some useful stuff in it, especially the discussions of having a writing ritual (my word for it, not his) and of what 'counts' as writing; it's easy to read and short. It's also very prescriptive and can make writers feel like failures if they can't stick to the routine of writing x hours before they start work every day. Helen Sword discusses this feeling of failure (and how common it is for people not to stick to such routines) in *Air & Light & Time & Space* – she compares it to monastical discipline and boot camp; in other words, most people struggle with such rigid routine if they don't have a Mother Superior or drill sergeant hauling them out of bed before sunrise every day. UoP has both eBook and hardcopy versions of this one.