
How to Build Writing Awareness

A Damn Fine Words Casual Conversation Interview and Worksheet Package

brought to you by James Chartrand of Damn Fine Words

And special guest [Johnny B. Truant](#)

Johnny B. Truant is a problogger who can't really define his career neatly – but who knows a lot about writing. He shot to fame for his bold writing style, his unapologetic hard-hitting messages and his particular ability to sell anything with words alone.

I sat down with Johnny for a casual conversation about our writing careers, perspectives and experiences. It was a great call and very candid. We discussed all sorts of topics, from pen names to writing myths to building businesses through the content we wrote...

We talked so much that some listeners even wondered exactly who was interviewing whom!

You can listen to the call by [clicking here](#).

The biggest theme of our conversation was awareness – and being aware of what you're writing, how you're feeling and the emotional pull you can create through writing is a huge bonus.

To help you put those awareness ideas into action right away, I've put together an action worksheet for you. It includes a summary of the big ideas, tasks that help you build greater writing awareness and some straight talk for you to think over.

Pretty soon, you'll have all the awareness you need, right at your fingertips and ready to go to work for you in your writing. Enjoy!

The Big Idea

Johnny and I are both keenly aware of our writing ability and skills, not to mention the various ways we can put both to good use to help build and sustain a business. (Both online and in the brick-and-mortar world, by the way.)

This specific understanding of ability means you can:

- Know your writing voice intimately... and know how to manipulate it to your needs
- Feel confident in your writing and never let your self-worth be measured by others
- Understand different types of writing to help you succeed – and how long each takes!

In this action worksheet, you'll explore ways you can develop greater awareness of your writing needs, skills and abilities so you can start getting better results.

As a bonus? You'll be able to improve your skills... through awareness alone.

Mission #1: Build Your Writing Confidence

Johnny and I began by talking about writing confidence and pen names. We both use them – neither of us write under our [given names](#). (And I don't even write under [my given gender](#)!)

We both agreed that who we are – what we call ourselves – doesn't define our personalities or our writing ability. But Johnny mentioned his "character is confident", while I mentioned my pen name gave me greater confidence to put on my business hat and say what needed to be said.

Pen names are just one way of conveying confidence in your writing. Think of some other strategies you can use to create more confidence for yourself and list three below.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

All done? It's time for the next step.

Mission #2: Judge Yourself; YOU Are All that Matters

How you judge your writing is a big part of writing confidence, and unfortunately, so many judge their success by external means. They measure whether they're good enough based on other people's approval. They believe that if they get lots of comments, their blog post was awesome. If they get great sales, then the sales page was awesome.

That may be a good way to measure business success, but that isn't a good measure for whether your writing was "good enough". YOU are the only person who can judge that.

This mindset is a game-changer for many people. It's a way to stop feeling judged by others and a method of starting to listen to yourself. Accept feedback from others, sure, but never let it affect you personally.

Think about this: Imagine there was no audience, no clients, no blog readers... no one to tell you whether you'd hit the mark. Write 5 ways you'd determine whether your work was "good enough":

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Like Johnny says, learn from your writing and how people react to it. Take that knowledge and make it your own. Observe reactions, tweak your work and continually learn how to become a better writer... without letting others be the judge of your words.



Mission #3: Even Writing Needs Efficiency

There are hundreds of different types of writing. Two lines of ad copy. A page of website copy. A 1,000 word blog post. An epic novel.

Different types of writing require different types of awareness – and they also require different focus, different process of creation and different blocks of time for each.

As a writer, you need to be aware of the time it takes to write each type of project. Unfortunately, human beings are horrible at estimating time correctly, and without awareness of actual writing time, you may bite off more than you can chew.

That would be a mistake. Try this instead:

1. Write a list of all the writing tasks you need to do for your business on a weekly basis – no matter how small they are.
2. As you go about your weekly tasks, pay careful attention to how much time you're spending on each task. Write down the time when you start writing, and when you stop.
3. At the end of the week, add up all your writing time. You may be very surprised!

This mission builds awareness of your writing process and the time it takes to create content for your business. The more aware you are, the more you'll properly estimate time and plan plenty to spare.

You may also find opportunities to tweak and improve your writing process – is it truly as efficient as it could be? What could you change about your routine or your schedule to become more efficient at content creation?

Think about that now. List 5 ways you could improve your writing routine and increase efficiency. (Like any good business owner would!)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

And that's the crux of awareness: It gives you the ability to improve your writing skills, become better at your tasks and develop more efficient ways of writing the content your business needs.

While Johnny and I probably disagree on whether writing is a craft, one thing is for sure: We both believe there's always room for improvement, and awareness is the key.

Happy writing!