

Say What?

Edwina Perkins

Voice is bleeding onto the page, and it can be a powerful, frightening, naked experience.

I write only because...there is a voice with in me...than will not be still.

—Sylvia Plath

Why do you need a writing voice?

What is Writer's Voice?

Tips to find your voice:

1. Relax

2. Learn the difference between good writing and voice.

3. Pay attention to writers you like. Read, read, read.

4. Stop comparing yourself to other writers.

5. Make envy work for you.

6. Honest critiques

7. Pay attention to the sound of your writing in your head.

8. Picture one specific reader.

9. Write.

An Exercise for Finding Your Voice

By Jeff Goins

1. Describe yourself in three adjectives. _____

2. Ask (and answer) the question: "Is this how I *talk*?" _____

3. Imagine your ideal reader. Describe him in detail. Then, write to him, and only him. _____

4. Jot down at least five books, articles, or blogs you like to read. Spend some time examining them. How are they alike? How are they different? What about *how* they're written intrigues you?

5. List your favorite artistic and cultural influences. Are you using these as references in your writing, or avoiding them, because you don't think people would understand them? _____

6. Ask other people: “What’s my voice? What do I sound like?”

7. Free-write. _____

8. Read something you’ve recently written, and honestly ask yourself, _____

9. Ask yourself: _____

10. Pay attention to how you’re feeling. _____

Remember: Writing from compliancy is your worst enemy.

Recommended reading:

Unleash the Writer Within by Cecil Murphey
The Elements of Style by Strunk and White
The Sound on the Page by Ben Yagoda
Bird by Bird by Anne Lamott