

Top Tips for Young Writers

from Sarah Webb

1 - Read!

I couldn't live without books. They're like my best friends. There's always a book in my bag. I read while walking – and yes, I do walk into things sometimes – a bit embarrassing! And I can't go to sleep without reading at least a few pages.

The great thing about reading is you learn so much, it's like a "how to write" workshop right there in your hands – how to create characters who are so real they hop off the page, how to structure a plot, how to hold a reader's attention.

But most of all, read because it's fun.

2 - Write!

It may sound obvious, but you learn how to write by actually writing. Write as often as you can. The more practice you can get in, the better you will be. Work those writing muscles!

Carry a little notebook and pen so you can jot down ideas as they come to you. Especially when you are travelling. I get some great ideas on planes and trains. My favourite notebooks are called Moleskins and they have an elastic band that hold the pages shut and a little compartment at the back to pop in pictures and leaves and anything that inspires me or makes me smile. My current one is yellow silk and I got it in New York – très posh indeed.

3 - Never Give Up!

It took me a long time to get my first book published. But I kept trying. If being a writer is your dream, never give up. Good luck!

4 – Now you give it a try!

Here is the start of a story involving Amy - have a go at finishing it!

'I have no idea what to buy Seth for his birthday. Help!' Amy rolled her eyes at best friend, Mills. Seth was her boyfriend but they hadn't been together all that long so she was really stuck.

'What are his hobbies?' Mills asked.

'Hobbies?' Amy laughed. 'You make him sound like a boy scout.'

Mills crossed her eyes and poked out her tongue at Amy. 'You know what I mean. What does he like?'

'Oh, I don't know: trees, iguanas, art...' Amy tailed off. 'That's about it. Apart from his dog and weirdo music.'

'I see your problem.' Mills thought for a second. 'Hang on I've got it. How about...'

Send your stories to me at sarah@askamygreen.com. Who knows, you might get a special mention in my blog. If it's really good, I might put it on the website!

