

THE SECRETS OF STORY WRITING ...since the beginning of time

1. AUDIENCE, AUDIENCE, AUDIENCE!

Who is your main audience? A writer who chases two rabbits catches none.

2. NARROW THE VISION!

How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. Think bite sizes. Keep in mind that you can always write several books for different periods of one's life.

3. START TALKING ABOUT THE IDEA!

This is like going to weight watchers. If you tell someone about your story idea you get committed.

4. DATES, PLACES, AND NAMES – limited!

Who cares? Really in the big picture, it is the stories that will be remembered. Dates and such are great but integrate them into the story rather than make them the story.

5. SPRINKLE WITH HUMOR!

Besides never forgetting a story, humor is second in our memory chart. When writing a story try to learn of the fun things.

6. ADD CONVERSATION!

We all love to hear what he or she said. Whenever you can use the person's voice in story telling, the better the story. But remember, too much of a good thing loses its flavor.

7. CONCENTRATE ON THE STORY THREADS!

It is the story that we remember. You want to ensure that you weave together the fragments of the person's life into one story thread. It will happen like magic once you catch the right thread,

8. HIGHLIGHT WHAT APPEALS TO YOU!

Never forget that you are the author. It is your story. Because you have written it, everyone will love it too. Don't try to please others as it is impossible.

9. ADD FAVORITE QUOTES AND POETRY

For those who do not have an over abundance of words, sprinkling the story with favorite family quotes and poetry is a wonderful way to complete a storybook.

10. CLOSURE, CLOSURE, CLOSURE!

This is the time for the punch. A quote, a short line of a poem, or your own words of love are great endings!

GETTING STARTED: the most commonly asked questions.

1. How do I create a story when I have a writing phobia?

Answer: First decide the topic of your book. Second, convince yourself that you are creating a draft. A draft is nothing more than your very own experiment. Next, begin to write a letter to that person. Suddenly you have the workings of a story.

2. Help! Where do I start?

Answer: Heritage Makers wears the crown for the storybooking process. The website (www.heritagemakers.com) has Story Cue Sheets to make any story idea a success. You are asked questions, guided what to put where, and given ideas to make you an author.

3. What about grammar?

Answer: Just keep in mind that YOU are the author. Also, I always remind myself that editors are rarely authors and often lack creativity. I suggest that after you are satisfied with your creation, you have someone review it for possible suggestions.

4. How do you condense someone's whole life into 28 pages?

Answer: No one wants to read a book three inches thick, probably the size needed to tell a life's story. But, we all love to read short excerpts (10 minutes) of a story. Many of our customers write their stories in chapters depicting stages of one's life. In addition, HM has other storybooking formats for incorporating more photographs and more text.

5. What if I do not know much about the person's life?

Answer: There are several great genealogical websites to visit to learn more about our ancestors (www.ancestry.com). In addition, sending emails and calling family and friends are great ways to learn the stories. It is amazing what a little scratching will do!

6. How do I make the story exciting?

Answer: There are several formats to make this happen. Use a question and answer format in creating your story. Use humor whenever possible. Keep the dry facts to a minimum. Write the story from a child's perspective using simple language. Use quotes from others' perspectives of this person.

7. What if I do not have time?

Answer: HM has consultants throughout Canada and the USA ready to help busy people to create their storybooks. There are also products designed especially for you – the Brag Book and the Scrapless Book.