

# Mini-Module: Your Voice is Gold Workbook

## For the writing soul:

To get your pen primed:

- Write badly

Someone's cut you off in the traffic or eaten the last vegetarian meal or traipsed dirt in over your fresh clean floors. What did someone do to you today, this week, this month, this lifetime that really grates your patience?

Write them a letter. Let rip, let fly, let live. Tell them everything. All the words you can think of. No editing. No censoring. Just full-blown rant. Don't worry about punctuation or grammar or made up words. Let it all go. (Repeat as often as necessary.)

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Read back over what you wrote. On a scale of one to ten, ten being TOTALLY TRUE, how much does what you wrote sound like you? Which are the bits that don't? Highlight them. Why not? What did you censor? WHO did you think might read those bits?

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Are you pizza? Yes/No

Are you chocolate? Yes/No

Are you a cool drink on a hot day? Yes/No...if you answered 'no' to any of those questions, then NEWSFLASH, you can't please everyone.

Keep writing.

## For the writing mind:

Now that you've flexed those creative muscles, let's get down to the basics.

### Activity 1: My reading lists

What are your top 10 fave books of all time? Yes, it's difficult to pick only 10, but the first ten you can think of.

- Identify each one's theme (Hint: don't use romantic love as a theme). What do these books' themes have in common?
- Choose three of the books. Use three adjectives to describe each main character. Are there any similarities?
- Can you use these same adjectives to describe yourself?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

## Activity 2: Game of Moans

- What's a genre you really don't enjoy reading? Detective? Mystery? Sci-fi? Pick one.

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- Those three adjectives you narrowed down (or thereabouts) in the activity above...flip them. List their opposite. So if your list was witty, bubbly, and smart, write down humourless, dull and well, *dull*.

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Now write a passage (a paragraph or so) in the style of that particular genre with your character displaying those three flipped adjectives.

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Did you find it easy? Why not?

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Now write that same passage in a genre you love.

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Did you find it easier? When you write in your favourite genre, it's easier. Writing away from your own genre is HARD. If it wasn't...well, you have a new aspect of yourself to uncover!

### Activity 3: Hearing voices

Who are some of the authors whose voices you love? Find one of their books and choose a passage.

- How do they construct their sentences? Are they long, paragraph style or are they short fragments?
- What kind of words do they use? Big ones? Slang? Lots of metaphor? Do they make words up?
- How would you describe their tone? Ironic? Pompous? Playful?
- Do they meander round the story, taking their time or do they prefer to cut straight to the action?
- Short chapters or long?
- Chapter headings or not?

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Voice is about **how** you write. That includes everything that makes up a sentence, a paragraph, a scene, a novel. It's all your quirkiness rolled up in how you speak on the page. It's what readers are looking for — the unique thing that makes you you.

#### **Activity 4: Write what you know**

You know who you are, right? That means you know who writer you is...write!

- Ten things you WILL NOT STAND FOR

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

- Ten reasons why love conquers all

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

- Ten uses for a time machine to alter direction in your own life

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

- Ten times you lied

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

- Ten times you were in awe

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

These lists are about you — who you are, what you stand for, what you love, mistakes and all. Use them in your writing.

