

Inspiration & Writing

By Gail Grenier Sweet ©2006

Inspiration: Feed it.
Recognize it.
Use it.

Katherine Anne Porter sat for four hours in front of a blank piece of paper. She said,
“I’ll be ready when inspiration comes.”

Feeding it — Try having a “date with your artist” (See *The Artist’s Way*)
Walk, etc. (Clara Schumann & other composers were great walkers)
Put SILENCE into your life
“Open your funnel” (your mind) and let the SPIRIT pour in.
Root of inspiration = SPIRIT.

Recognizing it — Think back & remember body feelings when you were inspired,
“high,” in your “right brain.” Sometimes it’s there when you’ve just awakened from
sleep. That’s IT! Inspiration! Grab a pen.

Using it — Put notebooks and pens all over the place. Make it easy for yourself.
Develop your own “sys” for grabbing inspiration when it hits.

Inspiration and VOICE are deeply connected. When you’re inspired, your voice is
strong. Strong voice = strong writing. Listen to “This American Life” on NPR, read
nonfiction books by David Sedaris, or try the Stephanie Plum books of Janet Evanovich.
All have strong VOICE.

Voice: attitude, tone, way of looking at life. “The Simpsons” has a strong VOICE.

To be a writer is to be aware. Nurturing inspiration, recognizing it, and using it all
demand a writer’s way of life: awareness. Be awake!

What to write about? Find your passion.

What is my voice? Listen to yourself and your friends & loved ones. What stories of
your own or theirs do you find yourself repeating or thinking about over and over?
Listen to yourself. By repeating a story, you have already “polished” it and tested it on
your audience.

Losing words is like losing weight — it feels good!

Writing is like any other discipline. Write and write and write. “Swim in the language”
(Maya Angelou). The two parts of writing are (1) nuts n’ bolts... and (2) soul. The first
takes study and practice; the second takes awareness, openness, and experience.

