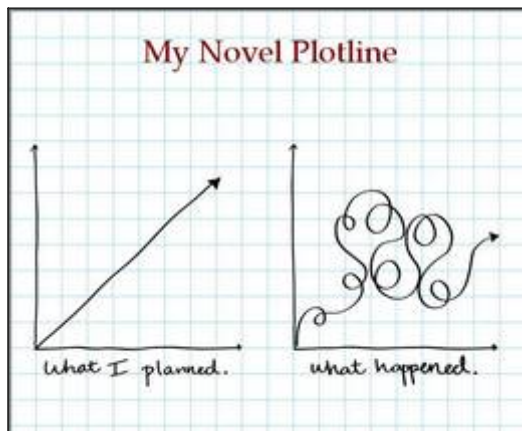


Just Write Newsletter ~ Vol 7, No. 3 ~ April / May 2018

Just Write: The Online Chapter for the LUW



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Writing Quotes

“Read a thousand books, and your words will flow like a river.” – *Lisa See*

“I believe the first draft of a book – even a long one – should take no more than three months...Any longer and, for me at least, the story begins to take on an odd foreign feel, like a dispatch from the Romanian Department of Public Affairs, or something broadcast on high-band shortwave radio during a period of severe sunspot activity.” – *Stephen King*

“Don't start your story with a character alone in a room unless you're Kafka.” – *Dennis Haritou*

“More people are leaving TV behind to read my books than ever before. In the last year alone I gained three new readers. So I'd like to take a moment and say thanks to mom, dad, and the kidnap victim I keep chained in the basement.” – *Jarod Kintz*

Chapter Officers

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New Members

A hearty welcome to our new members: Arno Copley, Bryce Hess, Thomas Paxton, and Tom Baldwin. We're happy you've joined our chapter. I hope you have a great year with the League and with Just Write. Some of you have already joined our critique group. We hope to meet you in person at a workshop or conference.

Welcome!!

Editorial: Deleting Expletives

I'm not referring to the 'swear word' expletive. This article is about the 'grammatical' expletive, which is defined as: "a word or phrase used to fill out a sentence or a line of verse without adding to the sense." This includes any form of "there is" or "it is."

"There are, there was, and it is" are expletives that should be eradicated from our writing, especially our fiction. Readers want an author to keep them interested and entertained, yet nothing sucks the energy out of a sentence like "there was." Those two words are dampeners, rather like a wet blanket: Not useful and not welcome. For example, compare these two opening sentences:

1. There is a ghost in Bob's apartment.
2. A ghost roams Bob's apartment.

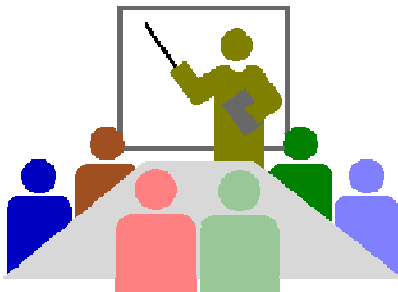
Which one is the stronger invitation to keep reading? One problem with "there is" is that it delays the intrigue, the payoff. Check out your descriptions, especially for setting, where deleting these passive expletives pays big dividends. Instead of writing, "There were six candles atop the mantle," delete the boring expletive, add an active verb, and rearrange the sentence. Now you have something like, "Five red candles crowded the center of the mantle." Or, "There were numerous flaws in his schematic" can become, "His schematic contained numerous flaws," or, "I noticed numerous flaws in his schematic."

"There is" and "it is" expletives do not represent grammatical errors, but they do indicate a lack of style and efficiency in the writing. So let's activate our writing by deleting them!

Write on...



Writing Conferences and Workshops



- ▶ **Summer Writers Symposium:** June 16th at USU in Logan. This full day writing conference is co-sponsored by the League and the USU English Depart. The event features renowned authors, university writing educators, and presenters from the League. Early bird pricing for a full day of great classes is just \$25. The schedule and list of presenters are available on the website.

Mechelle Morrison from Just Write is one of the presenters.

Hooray! I hope most of you plan to attend the event. Some of you could meet in SLC or Ogden and carpool to Logan. Information and address for the summer event is here:

<https://www.leagueofutahwriters.com/summer-symposium-2018>

- ▶ **LUW Quills Conference:** August 24th-25th in SLC. This is the League's fall conference, the largest of the year. This year the conference will be held at the University Park Marriot on Wakara Way. Conference, registration, and motel information plus Google map are all here: <https://www.leagueofutahwriters.com/quills-conference-2018> Be sure to check out the schedule and list of presenters – when it becomes available.

L UW Writing Contest

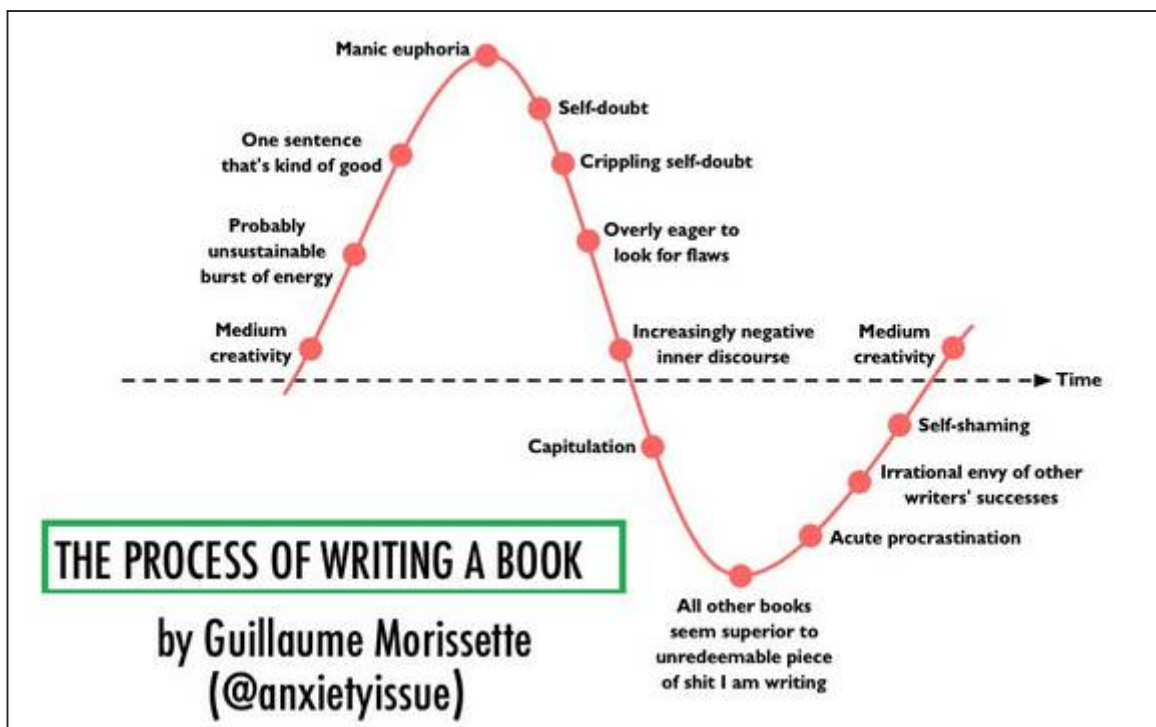
Deadline: May 19 – That’s midnight Saturday. The annual creative writing contest categories include Fiction, Nonfiction and Poetry.

New Writers Category: This is for writers who haven’t ever been paid for their work. The category is designed so new writers can compete with each other without having to compete with authors who have been paid for their writing.



Resources: *Tightening*

- ▶ **25 Editing Tips for Tightening Your Copy** – from *The Write Life*: Good tips, some of which are more applicable to nonfiction. For fiction I strongly endorse steps 2, 7, 8, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21 and 22. <https://thewritelife.com/edit-your-copy/>
- ▶ **7 Simple Edits that Make your Writing 100% More Powerful** – from *SmartBlogger*: Tips for nonfiction writers, but most are applicable to fiction as well. <https://smartblogger.com/editing-tips/>
- ▶ **Editing Tricks to Tighten your Writing** – from *Just Publishing Advice*: <https://justpublishingadvice.com/editing-tricks-to-tighten-your-writing/>



Keep writing!

Ann