

Creative Writing Prompts

Use these prompts to jump start a new creative writing piece or add to an old one. Some will work for poetry and fiction, others for nonfiction writing.

- Humans place a lot of sentiment on objects. Pick an article of clothing or accessory. First describe this item in detail. Then begin to attach it to a time, place, or person.
- Pacing is a big element when it comes to tone and mood. First, write a passage that feels like falling through molasses. Then try another that feels as fast as running beside a cheetah. How do you make words feel rushed or as if they are moving at a snail's pace? Use line breaks, vocabulary, and rhythm to adjust pacing.
- This prompt focuses on characterization. Pick three random adjectives that can be used to describe a person. Build your character and make sure the character embodies these traits. Ask someone to read your piece to see if they can guess what the three traits are.
- Dreams exist outside the bounds of reality and can be a fun starting point. Ask a friend to describe a vivid or strange dream they had. Turn this into a scene in a story or the backdrop of a poem.
- Starting from a real place can help build a believable environment. Take out a map (or use an online one) and pick a name of a town that's interesting. Research what that town is like. What's the climate and what do people typically do for a living? Did a big historical event happen there? Use the research and this town as the foundation for your piece.