

**FREE SAMPLE FROM THE “PUZZLES FOR WRITERS” BOOK**

**By C. J. Solomon**

# 1. NOVEL OPENINGS

Grabbing the attention of the reader from the first sentence is one of the most critical and difficult things for an author to do. Here are some famous opening sentences for analysis and inspiration.

Match the novel line below with the novel it comes from and its author.

Quotes	Book and Author
'It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen.'	
'It was a pleasure to burn.'	
'I have never begun a novel with more misgiving.'	
'Call me Ishmael.'	
'It was a queer, sultry summer, the summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs, and I didn't know what I was doing in New York.'	
'He was born with a gift of laughter and a sense that the world was mad.'	
'We started dying before the snow, and like the snow, we continued to fall.'	
'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.'	

## Book and Author

"Scaramouche" by Raphael Sabatini

"Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen

"1984" by George Orwell

"Tracks" by Louise Erdrich

"The Bell Jar" by Sylvia Plath

"The Razor's Edge" by W. Somerset Maugham

"Moby Dick" by Herman Melville

"Fahrenheit 451" by Ray Bradbury

## 2. WORD SEARCH - TOUCH

Solve the Word Search by finding this collection of words that feature the sense of touch. The words might go across the page, up, down or could run diagonally.

Bring descriptions to life by using all 5 senses. Adjectives are often thought to be unnecessary in writing but the following examples of the sense of touch create vivid impressions. Use them to begin making useful lists or to provide inspiration for use in a story, poem or novel scene.

Y	E	A	T	H	G	I	L	E	A	W	I
L	L	S	T	F	E	L	L	A	R	O	L
A	Y	R	Y	N	I	A	R	G	Y	O	B
N	L	M	U	Y	F	T	V	E	T	L	R
T	B	E	E	C	O	W	G	Y	A	L	E
O	B	D	R	A	H	T	H	K	F	E	H
K	O	V	E	E	R	C	P	W	A	N	T
Y	N	L	N	I	T	A	S	T	C	G	O
P	K	L	M	A	O	V	P	N	F	T	O
M	A	N	R	R	W	E	D	T	L	O	M
U	E	C	S	I	E	S	S	U	E	S	S
B	S	I	L	K	T	E	V	L	E	V	A

BUMPY  
CURLY  
GRAINY  
HARD  
HEAVY

KNOBBLY  
LIGHT  
SATIN  
SCRATCHY  
SILK

SMOOTH  
SOFT  
VELVET  
WOOLLEN

### 3. CROSSWORD – NOVEL PLOTTING TERMS

Answer the clues to solve the crossword and find a list of words that can be useful in understanding how to write an effective outline for a novel.

Across

- 1 Evolution of protagonist during novel (12)
- 7 Choosing what happens in a story (4)
- 8 Not present tense (4)
- 9 Explanation of setting and characters (10)
- 11 Someone to help the protagonist (4)
- 12 Wishes the main character has (5)
- 16 The overall mood of a novel (4)
- 17 A popular method of plotting that goes back centuries (12)

Down

- 1 A way of dividing blocks of text (7)
- 2 An outline can be divided into 3 of these (4)
- 3 ‘\_\_ to action’ – an adventure awaits (4)
- 4 Beginning (8)
- 5 Events (6)
- 6 A big scene before the end (6)
- 10 Someone who crafts a story outline (7)
- 13 Writing as creative expression (3)
- 14 The pattern of events (5)
- 15 Voyage ‘\_\_’ the unknown world (4)

1		2			3		4		5		6
	█		█	█		█		█		█	
				7							
8				█		█					
	█	█	█	█	█	█					
9		10									
	█		█	█	█	█		█	█	█	█
█		11					12		13		14
						15					
16											
	█		█	█			█	█	█	█	
17											

## 4. MIX 'N' MATCH – CHARACTER FACTS

The following list is designed to help you create a character for a novel or story. It can be used with the later Mix 'n' Match pages, which cover aspects of appearance, to help build up basic information.

Start here by picking one or more item from each category to create a character's appearance. You might have a particular character you want to create or you could see what happens by randomly picking items and putting them together.

### Basic Facts

**Name:** (Pick first name, surname and any nickname you want to give your character)

**Age:** (add exact age plus description from following list) adolescent, ancient, baby boomer, centennial, child, elderly, flower child, infant, juvenile, kid, mature, middle-aged, minor, OAP, octogenarian, old soul in a young body, pensioner, senior, stripling, teenager, toddler, wrinkly, youngster, youth

**Gender:** female, male, non-binary, transgender

**Height:** (add exact height and descriptors from following) average, beanstalk, colossal, diminutive, dinky, giant-sized, lanky, little, petite, pint-sized, short, slight, squat, statuesque, tall

**Weight:** bony, curvaceous, lean, muscular, obese, plump, rounded, slender, slim

**Race:** choose your character's race

**Nationality:** choose your character's nationality

**Purpose in novel:** choose one or more idea from the following list to define the reason for the character being in your novel, story or play

- To protect and save others
- To learn more about themselves and grow as a person
- To achieve goal
- To solve crime/mystery
- To overcome a source of evil
- To invent or create something
- To find love
- To need rescuing
- To help and support protagonist
- To protect protagonist physically or emotionally
- To be a lesser person and highlight strengths of protagonist
- To lead protagonist into adventure
- To give crucial advice
- To reveal crucial information/secret
- To atone for past mistake
- To try to beat protagonist
- To try to kill protagonist
- To try to gain power
- To be love rival
- To have unrequited love for protagonist
- To betray protagonist or antagonist
- To sabotage something protagonist wanted to achieve
- To die or get hurt trying to help or kill protagonist
- To get hurt or killed by antagonist

## 5. THE LIFE OF A WRITER

“A writer is someone for whom writing is more difficult than it is for other people.” –

**Thomas Mann**

“Many people hear voices when no one is there. Some of them are called mad and are shut up in rooms where they stare at the walls all day. Others are called writers and they do pretty much the same thing.” – **Margaret Chittenden**

“Writers are really people who write books not because they are poor, but because they are dissatisfied with the books which they could buy but do not like.” –

**Walter Benjamin**

“When I was a little boy, they called me a liar, but now that I am a grownup they call me a writer.” - **Isaac Bashevis Singer**

“If there weren’t so many interesting conversations taking place inside my head, I might venture to speak out loud.” – **Richelle E. Goodrich**

“The only impeccable writers are those who never wrote.” – **William Hazlitt**

“If the English language made any sense, lackadaisical would have something to do with a shortage of flowers.” – **Doug Larson**

“Actually, writers have no business writing about their own works. They either wax conceited, saying things like: 'My brilliance is possibly most apparent in my dazzling short story, "The Cookiepants Hypotenuse.'" Or else they get unbearably cutesy: 'My cat Ootsywootums has given me all my best ideas, hasn't oo, squeezums?'” –

**Connie Willis**

“Writing is easy. All you have to do is cross out the wrong words.” – **Mark Twain**

“Writing well means never having to say, ‘I guess you had to be there’.” – **Jef Mallett**

## 6. LOGIC PUZZLE – PLOTTING A NOVEL

Add all the information from the clues into the first grid and, by a process of deduction and elimination, solve the puzzle.

Fiona attends a writing group once a week and wants to know how other people go about outlining a novel. The 3 people who answer her questions each give different replies, showing that one is a planner, one is a pantser (not planning at all) and one is a plantser (part planner and part spontaneous). Work out the name of the person, how many books they have sold over how many years and whether they are a planner, pantser or plantser.

CLUES	
1	The person who has written the least number of books has taken the longest amount of time, as he wants each one to be perfect and always finds himself making major re-writes to the first draft.
2	Lynette loves the Snowflake method of detailed planning and believes it is largely responsible for enabling her to write so many novels in just 4 years.
3	Robert doesn't plan his novels at all as he believes they are more fresh and exciting this way.
4	The pantser has been self-publishing for 2 years.
5	The planner has self-published 11 books.

	Books			Years			Method		
	2	4	11	2	4	6	Planner	Pantser	Plantser
Eduardo									
Lynette									
Robert									
2 books									
4 books									
11 books									
2 years									
4 years									
6 years									

Name	Number of Books	Number of Years	Method

## 7. CODEWORDS

Each number corresponds to one letter of the alphabet. Fill in the letters from the starter word and work out which letter represents each number, then use the letters to de-code the quotation on writing by J. R. R. Martin.

8	24	2	24	19		25		16		22
18			1		3	21	10	7	20	13
19			9			13		9		6
19	24	11	24			2		23		4
15				24	15	15	18	15	26	15
					S					
					24					
					A					
23	6	2	17	24	20	15				23
					Y					
24		9		15			14	6	5	21
12		23		5			9			17
18	23	8	9	21	17		13			18
23		15		17		16	20	2	18	16

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	S					Y				A		

15	6	23	21		4	13	18	26	21	13	15		21	2	14	6	20		4	13	18	26	18	2	22	
18		24	23		26	6	19	17			2	6	26		23	21			18		21	2	14	6	20	
7	24	11	18	2	22		4	13	18	26	26	21	2													



## 8. STORY CROSSWORD

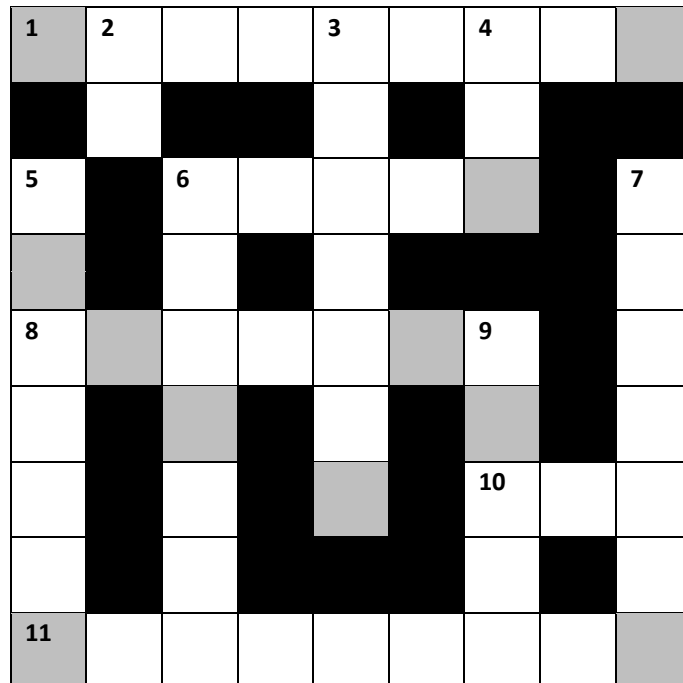
Complete the story and fill in the clues about this famous novelist. The shaded squares are an anagram of his name.

This award-winning writer was born on 21 September 1947 in Maine, USA and has gained world-wide fame over the (9D)\_\_\_\_\_, particularly for his horror novels. He began earning money writing short stories while he attended the University of Maine. In 1971 he married writer Tabitha Spruce and used his English degree to get a teaching job. His first novel, published in 1974, was “Carrie”, which was an instant success and let him write full-time. This novel was adapted for a film, featuring Sissy Spacek, in 1976 and again in 2013.

Some of his 58 novels – written under his own name plus the pseudonym, Richard Bachman – include “Salem’s Lot”, “The (3D)\_\_\_\_\_”, “Cujo” and “IT”. (2D)\_\_\_\_\_ has also written (6D)\_\_\_\_\_ novels and non-(5D)\_\_\_\_\_ books, including “On Writing – A Memoir”, an autobiography and (6A)\_\_\_\_\_ to the (10A)\_\_\_\_\_ of writing.

Many of his stories and novels have been turned into films, TV serials and TV series. These include the massively successful movies of “The Shining”, starring Jack (11A)\_\_\_\_\_, and “The (1A)\_\_\_\_\_ Redemption”. He has also (7D)\_\_\_\_\_ TV screenplays, including “Under the Dome”.

He and his wife have 3 children, 2 of whom (4D)\_\_\_\_\_ also published writers, and 4 grandchildren, and they donate millions of dollars each year to (8A)\_\_\_\_\_.



The name of this writer is \_\_\_\_\_

## 9. ANAGRAMS - INSPIRATION

Where can you get writing inspiration from? Solve these anagrams for a few ideas.

A REPPEN WAS  
ZAG SNAI ME  
GLINT NISE OT LOPPEE  
BIVE GORNS LOPPEE  
ORDIA  
TREN IT EN  
STROOS VIC ANNE  
SMIOEMER

## 10. MATCH THE WORD – UNUSUAL WORDS

Here are 10 unusual but interesting words. See if you can match them with their descriptions

### Words

Agelast  
Apace  
Canorous  
Cavil  
Descry  
Sang-froid  
Solipsism  
Sylvan  
Tendentious  
Vulpine

### Descriptions

‘Biased and often controversial’  
‘Catch sight of’  
‘Crafty or cunning’  
‘Equanimity’  
‘Quickly’  
‘Relating to forests or woods’  
‘Self-centredness; also the philosophical idea that only the self can be known to exist’  
‘Someone gloomy who never laughs’  
‘melodious or resonant’  
‘To be petty or to find fault’

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# SOLUTIONS

## 1. Novel Openings

‘It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen.’ - “1984” by George Orwell

‘It was a pleasure to burn.’ - “Fahrenheit 451” by Ray Bradbury

‘I have never begun a novel with more misgiving.’ – “The Razor’s Edge” by W. Somerset Maugham

‘Call me Ishmael.’ – “Moby Dick” by Herman Melville

‘It was a queer, sultry summer, the summer they electrocuted the Rosenbergs, and I didn’t know what I was doing in New York.’ - “The Bell Jar” by Sylvia Plath

‘He was born with a gift of laughter and a sense that the world was mad.’ - “Scaramouche” by Raphael Sabatini

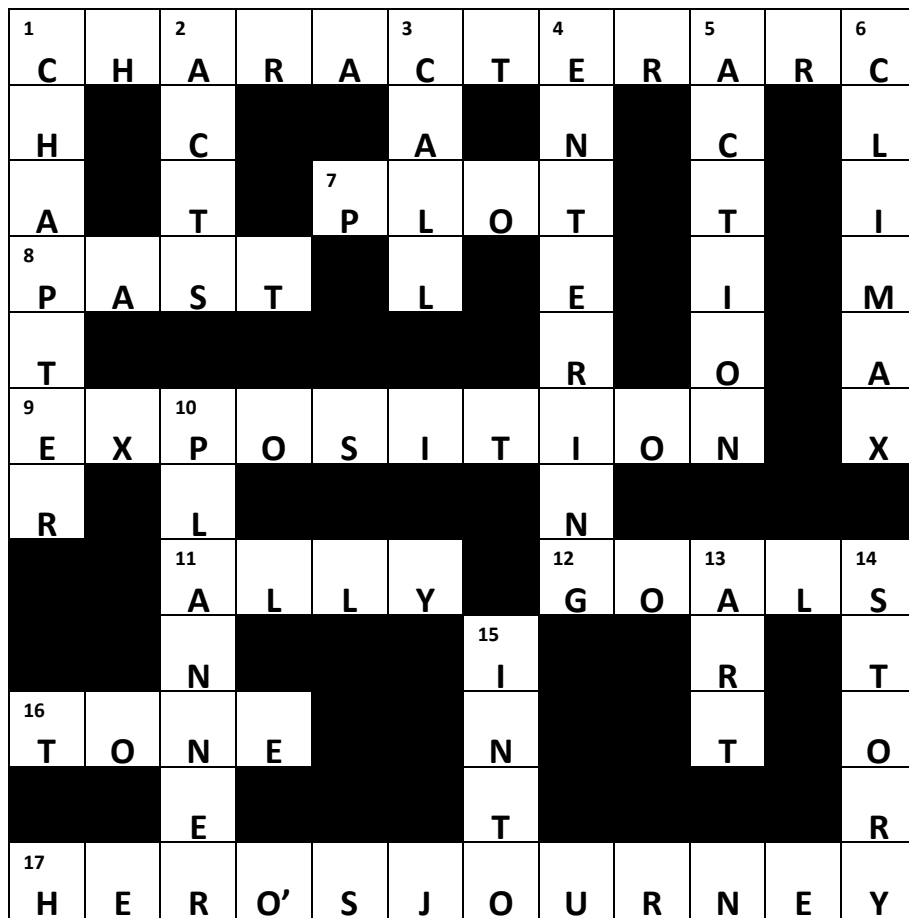
‘We started dying before the snow, and like the snow, we continued to fall.’ - “Tracks” by Louise Erdrich

‘It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.’ – “Pride and Prejudice” by Jane Austen

## 2. Word Search – Touch

Y			T	H	G	I	L			W	
	L				E					O	
	Y	R	Y	N	I	A	R	G		O	
	L		U				V			L	
	B			C				Y		L	
	B	D	R	A	H		H			E	H
	O					C				N	T
Y	N		N	I	T	A	S	T			O
P	K			A					F		O
M			R							O	M
U		C									S
B	S	I	L	K	T	E	V	L	E	V	

### 3. Crossword – Novel Plotting Terms



### 6. Logic Puzzle – Plotting a Novel

Name	Number of Books	Number of Years	Method
Eduardo	4	2	Plantser – half and half
Lynette	11	4	Planner - Snowflake
Robert	2	6	Pantser – no outlining

### 7. Code Word

8	24	2	24	19		25		16		22
B	A	N	A	L		F		C		G
18			1		3	21	10	7	20	13
I			Q		Z	E	P	H	Y	R
19			9			13		9		6
L			U			R		U		O
19	24	11	24			2		23		4
L	A	V	A			N		M		W
15				24	15	15	18	15	26	15
S				A	S	S	I	S	T	S
					24					
				A						
23	6	2	17	24	20	15				23
M	O	N	D	A	Y	S				M
24		9		15			14	6	5	21
A		U		S			J	O	K	E
12		23		5			9			17
X		M		K			U			D
18	23	8	9	21	17		13			18
I	M	B	U	E	D		R			I
23		15		17		16	20	2	18	16
M		S		D		C	Y	N	I	C

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Q	N	Z	W	K	O	H	B	U	P	V	X	R
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
J	S	C	D	I	L	Y	E	G	M	A	F	T

15	6	23	21		4	13	18	26	21	13	15		21	2	14	6	20		4	13	18	26	18	2	22	
S	O	M	E		W	R	I	T	E	R	S		E	N	J	O	Y		W	R	I	T	I	N	G	,
18		24	23		26	6	19	17			2	6	26		23	21			18		21	2	14	6	20	
I		A	M		T	O	L	D	.		N	O	T		M	E	.		I		E	N	J	O	Y	
7	24	11	18	2	22		4	13	18	26	26	21	2													
H	A	V	I	N	G		W	R	I	T	T	E	N	.												

### 8. Crossword Story

1	2			3		4		
S	H	A	W	S	H	A	N	K
	E			H		R		
5		6						7
F		G	U	I	D	E		W
8						9		
C	H	A	R	I	T	Y		
						10		
						A	R	T
11								
N	I	C	H	O	L	S	O	N

The name of this writer is **Stephen King**.

## **9. Anagrams - Inspiration**

NEWSPAPERS  
MAGAZINES  
LISTENING TO PEOPLE  
OBSERVING PEOPLE  
RADIO  
INTERNET  
CONVERSATIONS  
MEMORIES

## **10. Match the Word – Unusual Words**

Agelast – someone gloomy who never laughs  
Apace – quickly  
Canorous – melodious or resonant  
Cavil – to be petty or to find fault  
Descry – catch sight of  
Sang-froid - equanimity  
Solipsism – self-centredness; also the philosophical idea that only the self can be known to exist  
Sylvan – relating to forests or woods  
Tendentious – biased and often controversial  
Vulpine – crafty and cunning