

Solving Writer's Block

By Dennis Knight

Memo to me: It's all in your mind. Or maybe it's that there's nothing in your mind. Nevertheless, you are under deadline to produce an essay, and the topic for tomorrow morning is "Writer's Block".

I am delighted to have a challenge in line with my own expertise, an opportunity to be a mentor to my fellow slaves to quills and keyboards, where I am now, poised to deliver lines of wisdom. But before I start, there's a squeaky hinge in the hall closet that I really should take care of while it's on my mind. Now where is that little can of oil? Not under the sink with other household liquids, not in my tool bag, and not under the bathroom sink. I checked the hall closet to no avail but heard the squeak again, twice. It's more like a squawk.

Let me get back to writing. As I was musing, writer's block is all in the head. I wonder if our assignment is in the singular or plural. Is it writer with an apostrophe-s or with an s-apostrophe? I guess it depends; it's a group assignment, so maybe it should be in the plural, but since it's about a misery suffered by authors individually, it's probably the other. Happy with my analysis, I will assume the singular, change my title accordingly, and move along. But plural or singular, it's all mental, I know it is, and I can easily write any number of inspiring words for the afflicted. That is, once I get started.

That squeaky hinge, in its very silence, is still torturing me, and I need to take care of it now. I'll go buy some oil. After what seems like an hour in Walgreens, I finally found a little can of sewing machine lubricant in the hardware section next to shoelaces. But now I'm hungry, and, if I expect to write until the wee hours, I need nourishment. I'll just put the pot of yesterday's bean soup on the stove and catch some of that ball game while it heats. After supper, I'll grease the hinges and happily get back to that old salt mine I call my PC.

Midnight! How did that happen? The whole apartment smells of scorched beans, and I'm sure the pan is ruined. I'll let it soak and check it in the morning. I opened my can of oil, put a few drops on the hinges, cranked the door a couple of times and my squeak is vanquished. I'll hit the sack, get up early and finish my piece.

Monday, 7 am; I overslept, but the coffee is made, and it's time to wake the computer up. Now where was I? Ah yes, how to fix a writer's block. The answer is simple, and I am happy to finally get right to it. Solving writer's block is just a matter of oiling the hinges. Now how do I say that in five hundred words?