

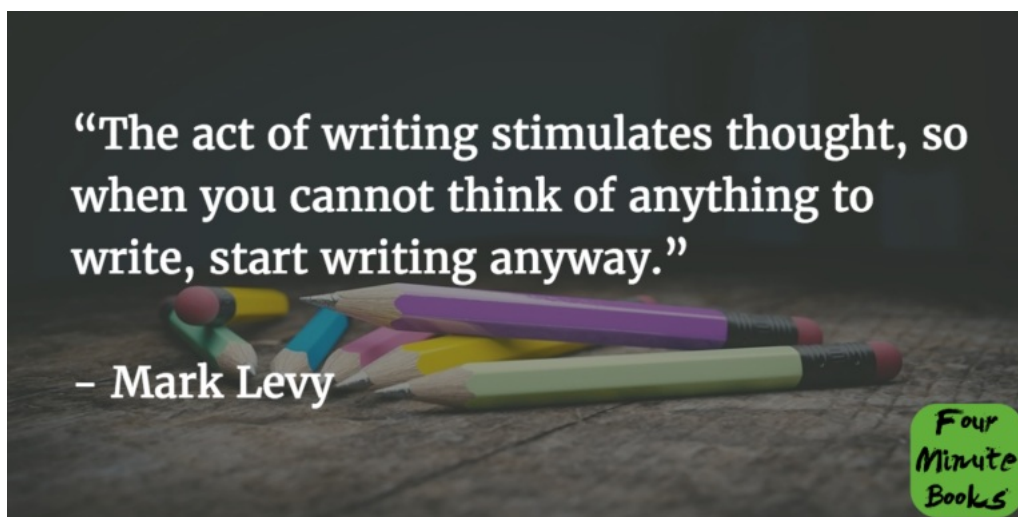
Accidental Genius Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/accidental-genius-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *Accidental Genius introduces you to the concept of freewriting, which you can use to solve complex problems, exercise your creativity, flesh out your ideas and even build a catalog of publishable work.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Often we've known the tools we need to deal with our everyday problems for a long time. Some of the best of them we learned as children – and promptly forgot while growing up. I remember writing short stories and poems and little essays as a kid. Even most of the early writing assignments in school I ended up liking.

But the older I got, the more forced it felt. Eventually, writing faded away and it took a very concentrated, deliberate effort to bring it back into my life three years ago. Maybe *Accidental Genius* can do the same for you. With this book, Mark Levy gives you all the tools you need to give freewriting a shot.

If you ever sat down when you were little and let the words just bubble out, this'll bring that feeling back – and help you solve complex problems and practice your creativity at the same time.

Here are my 3 big takeaways:

1. Follow three rules while conducting your first freewriting session.
2. Lying in freewriting can boost your creativity.
3. Freewriting might be the fastest way to finally write your book.

Here's more about my favorite activity and how it can help you succeed: writing!

Lesson 1: Your first freewriting session should follow three rules.

Warren Buffett likes to joke that the secret to a happy marriage is low expectations. I'm not sure about that, but for freewriting it sure sets the right context. The whole point of the exercise is to get ideas flowing, so perfectionism would only get in the way. Before you start a stream-of-consciousness session, relax, remember it's no pressure and put yourself in a 90% mindset, rather than 110%.

The second key to a successful freewriting session is writing quickly and coherently. Don't stop. Don't edit. Never question your statements. Repeat lines if it helps you keep moving. Focus on quantity over quality.

Lastly, and this helps with the second point, set a time limit. Whether it's an alarm, the wait for your coffee brewer or a washing machine cycle, a fixed start and end point will help you focus and move fast.

So, for a good, first freewriting session:

1. **Lower your expectations.**
2. **Write fast and fluidly.**
3. **Set a time limit – 5 to 20 minutes will do just fine.**

Lesson 2: Lie all you want in your freewriting. It's an exercise in creativity.

Reality, psh, so yesterday, right? While most of the time the truth serves us well, freewriting might be the one of the few cases where you can and in fact *should* lie like a trooper. Since it's an idea practice, abandoning reality for fantasy adds to your creative process. There are two ways you can do this:

1. **Exaggerate.** Turn slouching into running, houses into skyscrapers and mediocre into exhilarating.
2. **Flip.** If it rains it may now be sunny. Slow becomes fast. What was quiet now is loud.

Other exercises you can try are imagining a conversation with a fictitious character or person you know, writing a letter dedicated to a group of people or to your past self. You can even imagine what questions these characters would ask you and then try to answer them.

The whole point of lying in your freewriting is to question the assumptions you hold and see if there are new paths your neurons haven't explored yet. It's like the Einstein quote goes:

| *"Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere." – Albert Einstein*

Lesson 3: A freewriting habit might just be what you need to finally start your book.

I really believe everyone of us has at least one book in them. Most people would probably agree. Yet, very few write books. Why is that? Well, writing a book seems – and is – one of the most daunting challenges we can think of. The financial reward potential is terribly low. The work is hard. It takes forever.

Now contrast that with writing for five minutes a day about your favorite topic. How does that sound? Doable, right? Fun, even. But if you do that for a year you'll easily produce 60-150 pages of material! **A regular freewriting practice might be the easiest *and* fastest way to write a book.**

Or let's say you write every time you do laundry. Three one-hour sessions each week. You'll easily write 500 pages in a year. If you file and archive those, it'll be very easy to pick these tidbits back up, edit them, revise them, link various ideas together and voilà, your first book is ready for a professional's scrutiny before it goes live!

Even if you don't intend to publish a book, keeping an archive of your freewriting sessions with a good tagging system will quickly add up to an invaluable idea stash.

Pro tip: If you write by hand, you can scan your documents into Evernote and it'll make the text searchable.

Accidental Genius Review

Most of science agrees: genius is not a genetic trait reserved for the magnificent few. Instead, what we've learned from books like *The Eureka Factor* is that genius happens in serendipitous moments. In *Accidental Genius*, Mark Levy presents a practice to facilitate these chance encounters in our brain. More freewriting, more firing neurons, more good ideas. That's the idea. And from over three years of both free and deliberate writing, I can assure you: it works.

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

- What usually keeps us from articulating our best ideas
- Three more rules for successful freewriting sessions
- Why writing is better than thinking
- A few writing prompts to get you started
- How freewriting forces you to assess ideas more realistically

- Why you should share your freewriting outputs with others

Who would I recommend the Accidental Genius summary to?

The 27 year old Physics PhD candidate, who's gotten weary from writing over her academic career, the 49 year old logistics manager, who's used to a strict system of rules at work, and anyone who wants to one day write a book.