

## Writing Exercise: Modelling community

### Modelling community

This exercise takes pieces from different exercises I have developed over the years, a bit of one from Nick Bantock, and recognizing the exigencies of Covid-19.

This is not a writing exercise, per se -- but is an exercise in creative thinking and making ideas manifest in a material.

I once had a student who, with her sister, had used lego to make a scale model of their neighbourhood in their basement. They started building it when she was 11 or 12 and her sister a couple of years younger, and they were still adding to it years later. They had made up stories for each house and family. Some were fanciful, some "real." She said she wanted to create a tv series about it. Of course because the model was created during adolescence, the tv series was something perhaps suited to the Disney channel -- but I told her as she grew older, she could also see how adult themes could emerge.

This exercise is a much less ambitious version of that. Do this: Take some time to build a village. If you have an opportunity to go outside to a park or even a yard, you can use things from nature. A stick for a bridge, pine cones for houses, flat rocks for streets and lanes, etc.





In this time of covid-19, we may not have the opportunity to play outdoors. But even inside you can model your village on a tabletop using salt shakers and pencils and post-it notes, cutlery and and orange peels forgotten buttons. When you are finished, take a photograph and post it.