



Creativity Works - At Home

Stichomancy

A creative writing prompt from Writing Space

What is Stichomancy?

Stichomancy is one of the oldest ways of seeking knowledge of the future or the unknown by randomly selecting lines or passages from books. At least 3,000 years old, it traditionally uses the bible, but you can use any book e.g. a cookery book, dictionary, novel... The choice is yours!

Try using this approach to inspire your creative writing!

What you'll need:

- A pen or pencil
- A notebook or sheet of paper
- A book or selection of books
- Date [can be your birthday or another date]
- A playful mind!

Watch the short video here:
[Stichomancy](#).

Inspired by Greg Atkins, Writing Space.

Step 1

Choose a few books at random from your shelf. Start with one book.

Step 2

Write down your birthday or another date in numbers
e.g 15th September 1973 = 15.9.73

Step 3

- Open your book and use the year to find the page e.g page 73
- Use the date to find the line e.g line 15 [working down from the top]
- Use the month to find the word e.g the 9th word on the line
- NOTE: if there are not enough words in the line just count on until the next line.
- Write down the word you have found

Step 4

- Use this method as inspiration to jumpstart your writing.
- Repeat this process in 5 different books and write down each word you find.
- With this list of words use your imagination to make a sentence, a paragraph or a story.
- How else could you use this prompt?

Other Ideas

Another good idea for a random writing prompt is to take the first line of either:

- A poem
- A newspaper article
- A song

Writing Space

If you live in B&NES and would like to join Writing Space please contact philippa@creativityworks.org.uk