

The Bubbling Pot (Notes, February 2022)

Things to remember

- There is no right or wrong
- Be comfortable – this might mean lying down or walking about while you're doing these exercises
- These are just sparks, so if you find yourself on a different thread, follow it and don't look back
- Try to hold a sense of 'playing' rather than trying to make a 'finished' thing. These exercises are designed to help with the 'bubbling' bit of the creative process.
- Try to step around or move faster than your critical brain so that it can't get in your way.
- Setting a timer can really help if you're doing these exercises independently.
- Take a few seconds to come back to your body between exercises. Feel your breath. Wiggle your fingers and toes. Stretch.

Grounding in the Body (5 minutes)

Close your eyes and feel the ground beneath you, whether you're sitting, standing or lying down. Use your breath to guide you and take a short body scan to connect with your body. Be kind to the bits that feel sore. Be gentle with yourself.

Scribbling (3 minutes)

Think of this as a loosening up of the brain. Of a rubbing out of the critical voice we all have lurking somewhere. Just scribble. Maybe the lines make shapes, maybe they make words. It doesn't matter. Just let yourself follow the pen nib. If your brain is niggling, make a wee box in the corner of the page to drop 'to do' things or shopping lists so they can stop trying to draw your attention. Return to the flow. Use colours if you want to.

Random Word Pairings (6 minutes)

- One column – 20 random objects (2 mins)
- One column – 20 'doing' words (2 mins)
- Pair two words from each column and write a line or a couplet. As many as you can. (2 mins)

Simmer Down (6 minutes)

- Begin with 'I remember' and let your pen carry on. When the thought runs out, write 'I remember' again and keep writing. Write a long-ish paragraph. (2 mins)
- Read your paragraph back and reduce it to two sentences. (2 mins)
- Read your sentences and reduce to a rhyming couplet. (1 min)
- Read your rhyming couplet and reduce to two words. (1 min)

Draw a Window (10 minutes)

- Draw a window frame to fill the whole page (1 min)
- Draw something in the window – it might be a view or a person or a scene of something happening. (2 mins)
- Look out of your imaginary window and begin to write what you see. Let it be prose or rhyme or just random or connected words. Really try and hold and explore the picture in your mind. (3 mins)
- Then choose something tangible from this place that you want to return to. (1 min)
- Confine yourself to a couplet – two short lines that rhyme – that can in some way communicate this place to someone else (3 mins)

Draw and Sing (5 mins)

- Use coloured pens to draw a curved line across the page. Doodle and colour around it to give textures. (2 mins)
- Start to sound it, say it, sing it. Try going from left to right, from right to left, up, down, random.... [you can start to add in words from 'simmer down' exercises if you feel inclined] (3 mins)

Saying the Sound (word clusters) (9 minutes)

- Choose a sound (eg 'b') and keep saying it until a word comes. Write that word down and keep saying the sound and writing words down that come from it. Try to outrun your critical brain – don't worry if the word is unexpected or not the right sound – if it came from your lips saying that sound, it's the right word. (2mins)
- Then write some sentences starting with these words, but not restricted to only them. (2mins)
- Choose a word or a sentence and sing it out loud. Where does it take you? (5 mins)