

The Bubbling Pot (Notes, May 4th 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 Rhymes (6 minutes)

- One column of random objects (2 mins)
- One column of rhymes with these objects – the more unusual the better (2 mins)
- Take each rhyming pair and try to write a rhyming couplet. As many as you can. Be as silly as you can. (2 mins)

Underneath the stars and above the clouds... (8 minutes)

- Begin a sentence 'underneath the stars...'
- Begin a sentence 'above the clouds...'
- Trail through with a coloured pen and highlight any words or phrases that stick out to you.

Rhythm sounds around the house (9 minutes)

- Find something that sounds pleasing to you. (2 mins)
- Play with the sound, listen to it, find some rhythm or just enjoy making the sound for a couple of minutes. (2 mins)
- Look at your stars and clouds words and start vocalising along with your found sound. See where it takes you... (5 mins)

5 notes; long and short (15 minutes)

- Hum and hold some notes until you find one that feels really good. Then sing it a bit longer. Then find your way to another note, and hold it. Move back between these two sustained notes. Then find a third, fourth and fifth note in the same way. They don't all have to be different notes. Keep it slow. Really feel the notes. Record your 5 note motif. Feel it. Enjoy it. (3 mins)
- Then sing the notes faster and find a more energetic rhythm. Record this. (2 mins)
- Now try to move between your slow and fast melodies, and let your brain meander about to find some words. If any words come to mind, just jot them down, don't worry about if they fit with the melody. They might be words with the right meaning but the wrong taste, or the right shape but the wrong meaning. They can all help you get closer to the words you want to add to this tune. If you like, look at some of the words from previous exercises to see if any of these resonate. (5 mins)

Developing Characters and voices (18 mins)

- write down as many mundane/everyday sentences as you can. (2 mins)
- Write down as many extraordinary sentences as you can. (2 mins)
- Imagine someone who would say the first batch of sentences and describe them. (2 mins)
- Imagine someone who would say the second batch of sentences and describe them. (2 mins)
- Put them into conversation with one another. Imagine the scene, give them a backdrop. See where the conversation leads you. Write as much as you can in 4 minutes. (4 mins)
- Scan through and highlight any words or phrases that you like or find interesting. (2 mins)
- Simmer down some of the prose into pairs of rhyming couplets of conversation – one line for each voice. (4 mins)