

NightScripts



February 2023

Connie Palmer Dodson, Editor

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Writing Prompt:

Does this scene inspire a story for you?

Write a short story of 1000 words or less and get it to me by February 28th 2023. I'll print my favorite in the March issue. You can also just use the image to spark a scene or a story.

If you submit it to me don't forget to title your story. Put Writing Prompt in the subject line and submit it to: editor@tulsanightwriters.org

Supporting
Writers and soon
to be writers on their
journey to publication.

WRITE ON

Commonly Confused Words

By our President, Merle Davenport



I was enjoying a fantasy adventure series a couple of years ago. The story line was great and it was well-written. Okay, it was **MOSTLY** well-written. I had to set the series down because of the glaring spelling and grammar errors that set my teeth on edge.

The worst error was choice of words. The writer often referred to events that happened previously, in the past. Unfortunately, she wrote “passed” instead of “past.” To make it worse, she overused the word, as many as 5 or 6 times on a single page. So each time I encountered the word, I had to pause and puzzle out what she meant. It drove me crazy! In fact, it was so distracting that I eventually stopped reading (and buying) her books. She lost sales because she did not master her writing skills.

Since then, I have run into several e-book authors who made similar mistakes. As a reader, I have learned to avoid writers who make too many errors in grammar and/or word choice. I want to lose myself in the story, not focus on the words I am reading. As a writer, I know I’ve been guilty of overlooked errors no matter how carefully (or how often) I edit my books.

Here are a few of the commonly confused words that distract me as a reader. I’ve also included a few words that I still need to look up whenever I use them.

Farther/Further – “Farther” refers to physical distance and “further” is a metaphorical distance. Sue had to drive “farther” to “further” her education.

Lay/Lie – “Lay” means to place while “lie” means to recline. This one is complicated because the past tense of “lay” is laid and the past tense of “lie” is lay. ARGH!

Then/Than – “Then” is the next thing that happened. “Than” is the comparison of two things. I’d rather be a windshield “than” a bug. I wrote the chapter and “then” took a break for lunch.

Toward/Towards – “Toward” is standard American English. “Towards” is standard British English.

Imply/Infer – “Imply” means to hint at a meaning without saying it directly. “Infer” means to deduce what was implied.

Affect/Effect – “Affect” is usually a verb and refers to behavior. I was deeply “affected” by the moving performance. “Effect” is the result of something. If I wired it correctly, the “effect” of flipping the switch will turn on the lights. One way to remember this one is to substitute the words “alter” and “result.” If “alter” will fit, use “affect.” If “result” will work, use “effect.”

Accept/Except – “Accept” means to receive while “except” is to exclude something. I “accepted” all of his advice “except” for the suggestion that I should give up.

Capital/Capitol – “Capital” refers to many things such as money, upper-case letters, or the city that is the seat of government. “Capitol” is the building where the legislature meets. I went to the “capitol” building in our state “capital.”

Sit/Set – In general, “sit” means to rest on your butt. “Set” means to place something. I sit in a chair. I set the vase on the table. Then, there are the odd uses of the words. The sun set. The vase was sitting on the table. You set a good example. That just doesn’t sit well with me.

There are so many easily confused words, it is not possible to list them all here.

(Continued on page 4)

THE WRITE TOUCH

Writing Humor: Part Two

By our Vice President, Kathryn Helstrom



In the last Write Touch, we talked about why humor in your writing is important, and a little bit of how to incorporate it into your story. Let's dig a little deeper.

When you are writing, you should have already identified

your audience. It is important to know what works for your readers. A funny line to an elderly gentleman might not be funny to a ninth grader. Keep this in mind when you are crafting the scene or dialog. Check out the social media of your audience and find out what memes and videos are getting the laughing emoji. Ask your critique partners (if they are of the same demographic as your intended readers) if they think it is amusing.

Witty dialog is a good vehicle for introducing humor into the story. Cops use some dark, even morbid, humor in their daily lives to compensate for the awful things they have to witness and endure. Romantic banter can illustrate the styles of humor of the two characters; it can also be a source of conflict if one says something in jest and the other takes it as an insult. Or, in any dialog, a joke may unintentionally trigger a deep emotional hurt. This works when one character purposely wants to hurt or provoke someone—others may think it's funny, but the perpetrator knows exactly how this humiliates or taunts their intended victim.

“There is a thin line that separates laughter and pain, comedy and tragedy, humor and hurt.” Erma Bombeck

Running gags, mentioned in Part One, add a light tone. There are some obvious examples: in Star Wars, “I have a bad feeling about this,” in The Dark Knight trilogy, “It comes in black,” and in The Blues Brothers, “We're on a mission from God!” These repeating statements add little weights to your story, anchoring them to previous scenes. However, you don't want to overdo them. Three is enough.

Speaking of threes, the Rule of Three is the pattern for a joke: normal item, normal item, punchline. Or, three things that get ridiculously more outrageous as they progress. For example, from “President of the Galactic Republic” to “2-term Congressperson” to “night janitor at the local high school.” Note that it progresses from important to insignificant. You can do the opposite as well, going from small to large. These are only a couple of the many ways to use the Rule of Three in humor. Check out some websites and articles that give instruction on how to use this time-honored system and add this to your humor toolbox.

“All I need to make a comedy is a park, a policeman, and a pretty girl.”

Charlie Chaplin

As in stand-up comedy, timing is everything. Think through the details carefully. A well-placed joke can relieve tension when needed, but an ill-timed one can deflate the whole scene. Let your readers in on the joke, but don't make them the butt of it.

You can layer in the humor. Introduce a small, seeming unrelated detail, and use it for humor later. (Continued on page 4)

Commonly Confused Words (continued from pg 1)

Some even have the same spelling such as read (present tense) and read (past tense) or rebel (a person) and rebel (an action).

Remember, the reader is not interested in how easy it is to confuse words in the English language. They only want to read a good story without being distracted by glaring errors. If we keep them happy, they will keep buying our books. If not, we'll wish we had taken a little extra time mastering the craft of writing.

“No iron can pierce the human heart as chillingly as a full stop placed at the right time.” Isaac Babel

Writing Humor: Part Two (Continued from pg 2)

Just don't do it 15 chapters later. Your readers have probably forgotten about it by then. Make the joke meaningful if possible. Each of the running gag examples above contribute to the theme of the story.

And, don't forget body language. The actions or reactions of your characters can be the funny part altogether. Or, their individual reactions to a humorous situation can show the depth of the different personalities.

“The more I live, the more I think that humor is the saving sense.” Jacob Riis

Author Highlight

Linda Trout By Connie Dodson

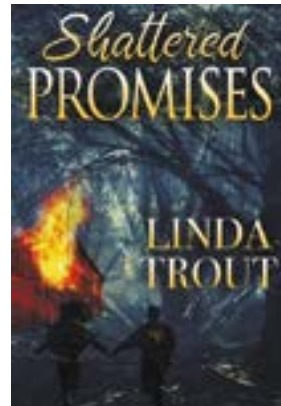


Tulsa NightWriter's own Linda Trout is making great strides in her writing career and getting a lot of recognition for all her hard work.

Linda shared she won Best Romance Novel in the Critters Readers Poll contest with

Shattered Promises. She said, “this is a national contest and she'd like to send out a big THANK YOU to all those who voted for her book.”

She was then surprised to learn that she is also receiving the highly coveted “Crowned Heart of Excellence” with a rating of 4.5



in the *InD'tale Magazine* in the Suspense category for *Shattered Promises*.



Finally she has signed another contract with the Wild Rose Press for *Crushed Promises*, the 3rd book in the Rock Ledge series. The romantic suspense book will be release later this year. She calls this latest contract “the icing on the cake” in a run of recognition and achievements.

Great Job Linda!

February Guest Speaker

Susan Badaracco on **Are You Serious About Writing a Series?**

By Kathryn Helstrom



Join us at the February 21 NightWriters meeting at the OSU Tulsa Greenwood Campus, on JH Franklin Blvd., in the North Hall Convention Center Room 153 at 7:00 pm to hear our guest speaker, Susan Badaracco.

Susan has been a pediatrician, an organizer of multiple fundraisers, a grandmother of intelligent and well-adjusted children, and the author of the Iris Dittmeyer mystery series. She's hiked in the Himalayas, made gnocchi in Tuscany, ran a half marathon alongside a Vatican nun, and consulted a fortune teller at the Taj Mahal.

Susan relishes the opportunity to travel, whether it's a day trip taking pictures of bison, or an international flight to explore another culture. Her experiences (and her research) allow her to explore tantalizing bits of history, the bonds between family and friends, and the comfort of simple food. Writing under the pseudonym of Susan Flowers permits her to investigate another new passion, too. Murder. Check out her website at <http://www.susanbadaracco.com/>

Writing a series is serious business. Mastering the mechanics of crafting a story is hard enough; linking stories is a ridiculous proposition. The author must keep track of his characters and their locales, their backstories and personalities, the timing and the tension of each novel. An insane notion when you consider all that work is done for the purpose of entertainment.

And yet...

Some of us can't seem to stop. If you suspect you have the same flaw driving you toward words like "collection" and "boxed set", I'm here to help. No twelve-step program, just a few suggestions to make your life easier.

Let's learn how to cross that finish line, and join the ranks of C.S. Lewis, George R. R. Martin, Stephen King, J.K. Rowling, Dan Brown....

"If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time
(or the tools) to write. Simple as that." Stephen King

NEWS FLASH



Tulsa NightWriters is growing and making changes to accommodate that growth and to offer more value and benefits for membership. Some of these exciting changes will be discussed in a short discussion prior to our scheduled speaker. Come and see what we are doing at our next regular meeting.

February 21st 2023

7:00 PM

See on location details on page 9.

Every book you pick up has its own lesson or lessons, and quite often the bad books have more to teach than the good ones.

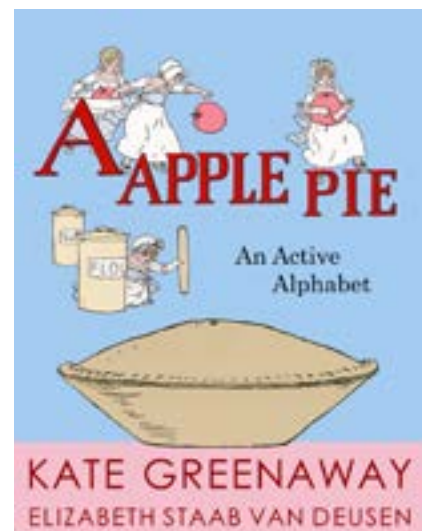
Stephen King

New Release

A Apple Pie: An Active Alphabet

By Elizabeth Staab Van Deusen

Elizabeth Staab Van Deusen's new children's book "A Apple Pie: An Active Alphabet" reimagines a public domain classic. Kate Greenaway's 1886 illustrations--plus some unique extras--are combined with brand-new poetry and accompanied by a historical tour of the apple pie alphabet rhyme. Find it here on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/Apple-Pie-Active-Alphabet/dp/B0BT1ZL-SR9/>.



BULLETIN BOARD



[Available Here on Amazon
https://a.co/d/7De1wBK](https://a.co/d/7De1wBK)

“Imagination is like a muscle. I found out that the more I wrote, the bigger it got.”



Philip José Farmer

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NightScripts Submission Guidelines and Wants

From Members: Currently accepting ads (for books and services) articles, short stories (100 - 200 words), poetry, and event information.

Submit To: editor@tulsanightwriters.org
 Deadline: 5th of the Month
 Specifications: Please format your text as follows:
 Times New Roman, 12 pt
 Single Spaced
 Attach as a doc or pages
 Attach graphics and / or photographs

From Non-Members: Paid Ad Space Available,
 contact editor@tulsanightwriters.org

Down the Rabbit Hole: Sci-Fi, Fantasy, Horror and other Weird Fiction

Virtual

Join us on Zoom for a lively discussion of
 "Recursion" by Blake Crouch. Email Ben.
 Willcox@tulsalibrary.org for Zoom link.
 For adults.

Tuesday, February 21
 7:00pm - 8:00pm

Banned Book Club
 Hardesty Reginal Library

Feb. 13 - The Absolutely True Diary of A
 Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

[Check Here For Other Library Events](#)

Word Search

E	T	B	E	L	E	T	T	E	R
T	Y	N	B	S	C	R	A	W	L
I	D	Q	I	L	L	I	U	Q	E
R	V	P	R	R	P	Z	E	L	C
W	E	H	C	E	P	E	B	Q	O
T	R	Y	S	E	W	B	N	D	M
S	S	P	N	T	I	R	I	C	P
O	E	H	I	R	D	A	I	V	O
H	F	Q	C	W	R	U	I	T	S
G	G	S	E	Y	S	D	D	J	E

COMPOSE
 GHOSTWRITE
 LETTER
 PRINT
 REWRITE
 SCRIBBLE

DIARY
 INSCRIBE
 PEN
 QUILL
 SCRAWL
 VERSE



[Member Group](#)

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2023 TNW Board & Meeting Information

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Tulsa NightWriters will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, February 21, 2023, location information below.

February Speaker Susan Badaracco

on

Are You Serious About Writing a Series?

See page 5 for additional information about this month's topic & speaker.

Directions

Take the I-244 to downtown Tulsa, and exit on Detroit. If you are coming from the west, the exit for the OSU campus is on the LEFT.

From Detroit Ave., turn right onto JH Franklin Road. You will see the Auditorium and Conference Center (North Hall) on the left. You can park in Lot E (first parking lot on left), or across the street in Lot D. We meet in Room 153. Look for signs posted at both entrances.

Parking is free and open to the public. It is a very short walk, and handicapped accessible. Campus security patrols the parking lots regularly.

