

WRITEGIRL PLANET

Issue No. 8 – The GROOVY FICTION ISSUE!!

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TO KNOW**

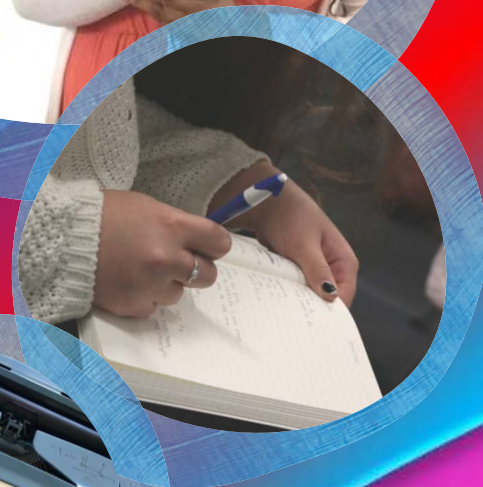
**DRAWING
AS A JUMPING OFF POINT**

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HOW TO USE THIS AT HOME

breathe

Set your eyes on a far away spot on the horizon and take a few calming breaths!



Grab your journal and a pen. (Or any paper at all!)



Take a break to imagine what life might be like on another planet!!



Browse this "WriteGirl Planet" and find something that intrigues you.



When you have written a paragraph, cheer for yourself out loud! Why not?!



RENÉE WATSON



"WHEN WE GIVE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE DIVERSE BOOKS, WHEN WE ASK THEM TO TELL THEIR STORIES, TO WRITE IT DOWN, TO PUT ON RECORD YOUR OWN TRUTH... WHAT WE ARE DOING IS SAYING 'I SEE YOU. YOUR STORY MATTERS. WHERE YOU'RE FROM IS IMPORTANT.'"

- RENÉE WATSON

Renée Watson is a bestselling author, educator and activist. Her “realistic fiction” novels often center around the experiences of Black girls and women and explore the themes of home, identity, and the intersections of race, class and gender.

Renée Watson’s passion for inspiring young people through her writing shines through the refreshing characters she creates in her coming-of-age stories. For budding poets, feminists, and activists, check out her novel *Watch Us Rise* (co-written with Ellen Hagan), which features art, poetry and two best friends on a mission to empower themselves and other women. After starting a Women’s Rights Club at their school, their progressive work goes viral and gets targeted and threatened by internet trolls. What will Jasmine and Chelsea risk for their voices – and those of other young women – to be heard?

To learn more about Renée Watson, go to:

<http://www.reneewatson.net/about>.

OCTAVIA BUTLER

(1947 - 2006)



"WRITING IS ONE OF THE FEW PROFESSIONS IN WHICH YOU CAN PSYCHOANALYSE YOURSELF, GET RID OF HOSTILITIES AND FRUSTRATIONS IN PUBLIC, AND GET PAID FOR IT."

- OCTAVIA BUTLER

Often called the Grande Dame of Science Fiction, Octavia Butler was the first Black woman to be acclaimed as a master of the genre. An expert of reimagining class and ethnicity, Butler's short stories focused on female protagonists of African descent and communities of multi-ethnic and, sometimes, multi-species characters.

Octavia grew up in the racially diverse community of Pasadena, California. Raised by her grandmother and mother, Octavia learned about racial discrimination firsthand as she observed how her family was mistreated by their white employers. Extremely shy as a child, Octavia found her outlet reading fantasy novels and stories at the library. She attended Pasadena City College in the 1960s, witnessing and taking part in the Black Power movement – a movement emphasizing a call for racial pride, social equality, and the need for Black political and cultural institutions.

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OCTAVIA BUTLER (CONTINUED)

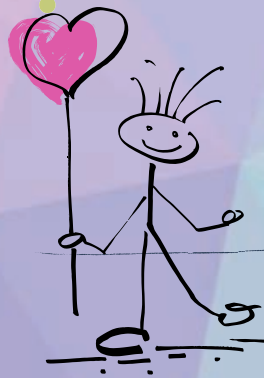
After college, Octavia attended the Clarion Science Fiction Writers' Workshop, a well-known training ground for aspiring writers of science fiction and fantasy. At this workshop, she met her future mentor, Harlan Ellison, and began selling stories. By the late 1970s, writing was her full-time job.

Octavia was a multiple recipient of both the Hugo and Nebula awards, regarded as the most important awards in science fiction and fantasy. In 1995, she became the first science fiction writer to receive a MacArthur Fellowship, sometimes referred to as the "Genius Grant." A Southern California native, Octavia maintained a longstanding relationship with the Huntington Library in San Marino. In her will, she bequeathed to the library her vast collection of correspondence, photographs, early copies of her first editions, report cards from her days at Pasadena City College, and notes to herself about character development.

If you want to read about imaginary pasts and futures that use magic, history and technology to tell a story, then Octavia Butler's powerful and pioneering voice in science fiction will appeal to you.

To learn more about Octavia Butler, go to:
<https://www.octaviabutler.com>.

UNLEASH
YOUR INNER ARTIST!



DRAWING AS A JUMPING OFF POINT

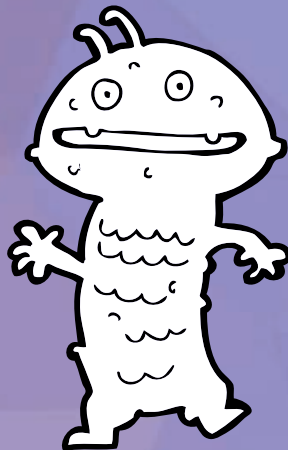
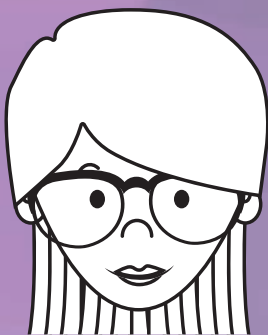
Drawing can be a great way to build a setting or develop a character.

You don't have to be an expert artist, just draw as best as you can!

Try drawing your main character in as much detail as possible. Now, draw their room or the area where a scene takes place.

Then, draw a line out from each object or character in the space and write your character's opinion about each thing.

This can help develop your character's voice and setting!

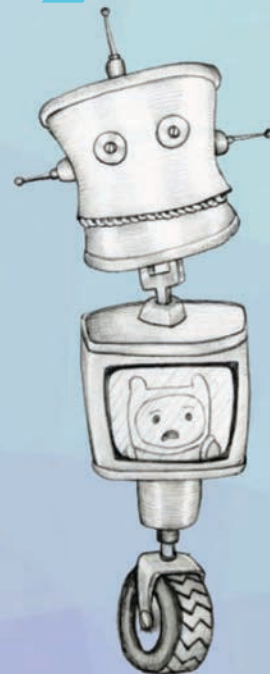
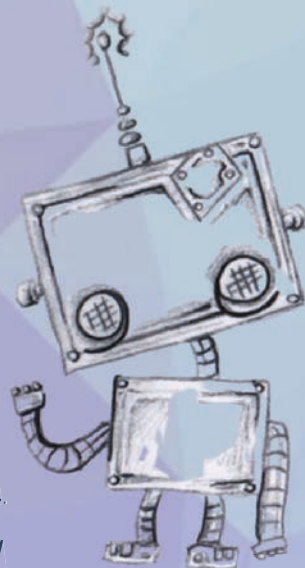
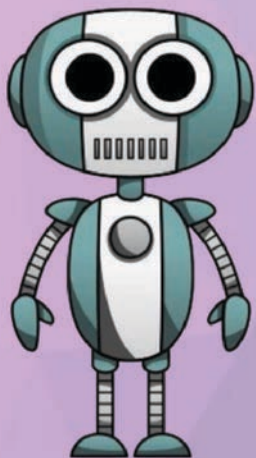


Writer Words of Wisdom

"You cannot step over a mountain, she told me, "but if you step over pebble by pebble, you'll look back and the mountain will be behind you."
- Ann Rule, American true crime writer

TIME FOR SOME SCI-FI!

Maybe the most iconic image that helps us dive right into the world of SCIENCE FICTION is... ROBOTS. Try drawing your very own robot using the images below as inspiration.



Maybe your robot is all metal and square. Maybe it has one eye. Maybe it has many arms or many legs! Once you've created your robot, take a second to think about who this robot is.

What's your robot's name? Does your robot have any special abilities? What are they? Where does your robot live, and what year is it? Use your answers to create a short story revolving around your robot!



Lists, Lists, Lists!



Making lists can help you develop ideas for your characters! **Make a list** of your own sources of knowledge/expertise. Are you an expert on mustard? Can you swim really fast underwater? Are you an expert on the red winged blackbird because of a school project you had to do in 2nd grade? **Try assigning your different areas of knowledge to different characters in your story!**

Now, make a list of things that bug your character. **Think of it as your character's personal Soapbox!**

Everyone has a story about something they feared when they were younger. Broccoli for dinner? Clowns at birthday parties?



Make a list of five fears - imagined or real - that you had when you were a kid. Now choose two of those fears and combine them to create an entirely new fear. **A broccoli covered clown!** Write the story of how your younger self would confront or escape this new fear.



 **Writing Tip!**

"Write for yourself, first and foremost. Your voices matter and your stories matter just as much as your lives."
- Angie Thomas, author of *The Hate U Give*

IMAGINARY INVENTIONS

Pick two of these images of inventions and write down an idea for how to combine them to make a totally new invention.

Then, create a problem for your character that the invention may solve.

OR have your character start the story using the invention and see where it'll go.

Allow your story to go in unexpected directions!



 Writing Tip!

"Writing permits me to be more than I am.
Writing permits me to experience life as any
number of strange creations."
- Alice Walker, author of *The Color Purple*

CAPTURE A STORY

Images can inspire great works of fiction.

Choose one of the images below and ask yourself these questions:

What is this photo all about?

What happened right before this picture was taken? What happened right after?

If you were to write the first line of a novel using this image as inspiration, what would you write?

Is this where your story begins or where your story ends?

Write a short story inspired by your answers!



Writing Tip!

"I write entirely to find out what I'm thinking, what I'm looking at, what I see and what it means. What I want and what I fear."
- Joan Didion, author of *The Year of Magical Thinking*

REMEMBERING JOHN LEWIS

JOHN LEWIS
(1940 - 2020)

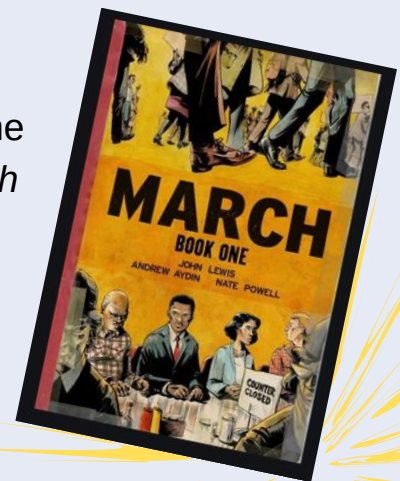


"ORDINARY PEOPLE WITH EXTRAORDINARY VISION CAN REDEEM THE SOUL OF AMERICA BY GETTING IN WHAT I CALL GOOD TROUBLE, NECESSARY TROUBLE."

- JOHN LEWIS

John Lewis was an American politician and civil rights activist. During the Civil Rights Movement, Lewis was integral to ending legalized racial segregation in the United States. He was one of the “Big Six” leaders of groups who organized the 1963 March on Washington and led the first of three marches from Selma to Montgomery on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Lewis went on to be elected to Congress in 1986, serving 17 terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom during the Obama administration.

Did you know? In 2013, Lewis became the first member of congress to write a graphic novel with the release of *Book One* of the *March* trilogy. The *March* trilogy tells the story of the Civil Rights Movement through the perspective of Lewis. Co-written by Andrew Aydin and illustrated and lettered by Nate Powell, Lewis’ trilogy won many of the top comic book awards, and each became a *New York Times* bestseller for graphic novels.



THE WORLD AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

Check out these digital resources and opportunities!

Tell Your Story on a National Podcast!

Public Radio Exchange (distributors of shows like *TED Talks Daily*, *This American Life* and *The Moth*) is seeking young storytellers (ages 10-25) for their new podcast ***Ooh You're in Trouble***. Do you have a story about breaking the rules – whether you were fighting an injustice, stirring up mischief or something else? These can include: social codes, school guidelines, cultural norms or religious rules. They are especially seeking more submissions from voices who are traditionally under-represented in media. Learn more and submit your story [here](#)!



"And She Could Be Next" – Documentary Series

And She Could Be Next tells the story of a defiant movement of women of color, as political candidates and organizers, who are working for a more inclusive and just America. This documentary series explores how democracy can be made stronger by those most marginalized. The series is Executive Produced by Ava DuVernay and follows trailblazers such as Stacey Abrams, Rashida Tlaib, Maria Elena Durazo, and more. Watch for free [here](#)!



THE WORLD AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

MORE STUFF!



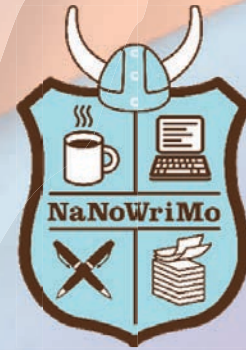
The Decameron Project

Mentee Ilana Drake is an ambassador for The Decameron Project, an online community that empowers young people to share their stories and come together. They accept all forms of writing!

Submit your work at decameronproject.org. Anyone who submits is guaranteed to be published! Every voice is heard!

Glow Up Tech

Glow Up Tech is an online resource designed to inspire teen girls to become tomorrow's tech leaders. Focusing on making tech more approachable and friendly to girls ages 14-19, Glow Up Tech engages participants with virtual "day parties" featuring current female tech leaders who work at companies like Google, Expedia, Disney and Amazon. Find out more [here](#).



Time to Write a Novel?

If you can commit to writing 1,000 words a day (two pages single-spaced) for a couple of months, then you can produce a book-length manuscript by the end of the fall! There's no need to wait for NaNoWriMo in November, as there's a Young Writers program year-round. Find out more [here](#).



Need a Study Buddy?

[Course Hero](#), an online platform with more than 20 million course-specific documents, is the perfect study buddy for college students. Course Hero is full of course notes uploaded by students and educators, study guides, a blog full of advice from current and past students, and tutors available 24/7.

MORE EVENTS & ACTIVITIES
on your very own WriteGirl Clubhouse page:

<https://www.writegirl.org/writegirl-club-house>

SELF-CARE TOOLKIT

Self-Soothing with Pressure Points

Using pressure points is an easy way to self-soothe when you're feeling stressed.

Various ancient cultures believed that there are pressure points all over the body that correspond to organs and ailments, and that these pressure points can be massaged or accessed to aid in healing.

Here are three points we have selected that you can massage to help reduce stress and anxiety:

The pressure point above your nose and between your eyes is called the Hall of Impression, and applying light pressure with a thumb or finger can help relieve stress and anxiety. Try to slow your breathing while you massage this point. If massaging it is too intense, try tapping it instead.

hall of impression point



SELF-CARE TOOLKIT CONTINUED

The Union Valley point is in the web between your thumb and first finger. This is a great place to massage if you have a headache, or have tension. Don't dig in too hard, but gently massage the area, while breathing calmly.

You can find the Inner Frontier Gate point on your arm about three finger widths below your wrist. Massage this area on both arms.

inner frontier



union valley



Bonus: We loved learning about the names of these pressure points, and it sparked us to think about a **writing experiment!** Invent some names for other pressure points that might exist. For example, the tip of your finger could be called, "The Peak of Wisdom."

[Here is an article with more information about pressure points.](#)

If you're looking for additional resources to help you and your family with COVID-19, the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\) website](#) lists a great deal of information and resources.

!!! SUBMIT YOUR WORK!

Share your work with us!

Visit the [WriteGirl Clubhouse Page](#)
to submit your groovy fiction!



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for you!

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