



How to Write a 500 Word Story

Inspiration

- Choose an object as the starting point for your story. Focus on the object and write anything that comes into your head about it.
- Step into a photograph. Select an image and think of the story behind it.
- Start with a true to life tale and then add fictional details to make it compelling reading.
- Base your story on a particular song or poem.

Where Do I Start?

In 500 words, you don't have time to start from the beginning of a story arc, so choose to start either at the rising action, or even at the climax.

Planning

- Sketch a storyboard.
- Do a spider diagram of ideas, numbering them so that you know the sequence of your plot.
- Use the traditional 'beginning, middle and end' bullet point approach.
- Focus on one or two characters and their actions in detail. You could start by thinking about how they would talk to each other.
- Mind map your story – let it take you anywhere at first and then refine it.

But Just 500 Words?

Make a first draft of your story without worrying about the word count. Then go through your draft crossing out unnecessary details.

How Do I Know If My Idea Is Any Good?

Basic rule of thumb – if you enjoy writing it, people will enjoy reading it.

If you find yourself getting fed up, change something, such as:

- the gender of your main character or villain;
- the time of year in the story;
- the time period when it is set;
- where the story takes place.

I'm Really Stuck

Try the 'What if...' technique:

What if...

- an object suddenly appears?
- a character does something unexpected?
- something gets stolen?
- something is found?
- a person goes missing?
- a character develops a special power or ability?
- a person turns up with an important message?
- a character finds a letter full of essential details?