

How to Discover and Hone Your Voice As a Creative Writer

by Mercy A. Ananeh-Frempong



Creative writing is a search for self, even if you are writing about others, situations which do not apply to you, or inanimate things.

Some writers find their voices early. Some find theirs midway through their lifespan, or when their lives are coming to an end. Sometimes you meet writers who are echoes of other voices. Some writers may never find their voice(s). Also in this list are writers who have never had to seek; and people who transfer their voice(s) to others, be it their readers or listeners... And yes, it is possible to have more than one voice. See, voice is energy too, and it can have an extraordinary effect on those who come into contact with it.

To find your voice as a writer, you first need to find yourself. The 'inner you' which communes with silence, noise, melody, harmony, colours, monochrome, all or part of nature, atmospheres, and the various human and non-human conditions.

You may have to seek yourself in the abstract and in the factual, as well as the grey areas in-between. You will have to live the life you have, explore whatever options are open to you, go after the things you want and need, or learn to avoid or suffer the things you do not want.

You may succeed, fail, or get entangled in the grey areas in-between. Everything you're conscious of is fodder for creative writing. For the writer, writing is a journey of a lifetime. A lifetime of responding to the urge to write before, during, or after an experience. A lifetime of consciously or unconsciously choosing to write. A lifetime of working on your craft. A lifetime of trial and error.

Your voice is how you speak when talking to yourself. The way you talk to other people when you're being formal, or when you're happy or angry is also your voice. Incorporate your different tones in your writing. Let your creative writing show your moods.



Observe the world around you. Note people's mannerisms and idiosyncrasies. Pay attention to the things people say with the intent to learn something from them. Read about different types of plants and animals. Study the landscapes. Study your neighbourhood or another one which interests you. Travel when the opportunity presents itself. Explore your country. Explore cultures which are different from yours. Ask questions. When people share their opinions on any issue, choose to ask questions so you can learn more. Pay attention to moods and atmospheres. Observe yourself.

Feed your mind with books, the best you can find. Watch movies which make you think. Spend time watching short films. Many of them contain mind-growing information. Watch documentaries. Keep a journal. Write your thoughts down. Write down ideas. Explore topics in science, history, culture, politics, and spirituality. Be curious about ideas and philosophies which are different from yours. Put yourself out there every now and then. Be an observer and a partaker of life. The more you feed your mind with information, the more you develop your own ideas about life.



Your voice develops when your mind generates ideas about life. Your voice is that intangible sound people hear when they read your words. Your voice is like raw gold birthed at the core of an exploding star. What you do with it is entirely up to you and the workings of the universe in your life. If you're a writer you will write. If you find yourself writing all the time you're a writer. Keep searching for ways to master your craft. Keep writing.

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Mercy shares insights on the writing process every week. Visit her blog at The Griffin's Inkpot (<https://thegriffinsinkpot.tumblr.com>) for more writing and editing tips.

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