

## JULY 2016 BEHIND THE CURTAIN JOURNAL ENTRY

### HOW CREATIVITY TECHNIQUES HELP MY WRITING

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**It's** seems obvious that creative writing would involve creativity. Clearly. But **it's** still easy to get stuck in a rut about how to approach a story. Your brain may keep circling around the same old thoughts and solutions unless you give it permission to think differently. This is where I find that my day job involving teaching and applying creative thinking and innovation comes in very handy.

One of my favorite techniques is called "**seven ways.**" I use it in various aspects of my life. For writing, I use it to brainstorm story ideas, titles, word choices, character traits, problems characters are facing, plot points and settings.

I've posted [handouts](#) on my website with more details and examples. But **here's** a nutshell version:

Clearly identify what needs creative thinking.

Write down as many possibilities as you can no matter how far-fetched the ideas feel. Go fast. **Don't** overthink it. Typically, the first few ideas are the usual solutions you would come up with anyway. Then your brain has to work harder and start coming up with new possibilities.

Generate at least seven ways to address the need but **don't** stop at seven if your brain is really warming up and has even more ideas.

A recent example of how I used this involves a picture book manuscript I was starting. I wanted to challenge my default thinking about where the story should be located. I originally was going to have it in the main **character's** home. But after generating about 15 ideas, I ended up placing the story at the beach and that has opened up many possibilities that **weren't** part of my original idea for this story.

I hope **you'll** give this simple technique a try. Better still, make it a habit. I think **you'll** find that you can boost the level of creativity in your writing!

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