

## MARCH 2018 BEHIND THE CURTAIN JOURNAL ENTRY

### *USE CREATIVITY TECHNIQUES TO BOOST YOUR WRITING*

BY CHILDREN'S AUTHOR JENNIFER PHILLIPS

It was exciting to launch a new workshop in February courtesy of the Sno-Isle Library in Monroe, Washington. And I'll deliver it more times this summer in the Kitsap County Library System. The workshop covers important creativity concepts and a few of the techniques that can help us get out of a rut in how we're approaching a story.

I first learned about mental valleys, or auto-pilot ways of thinking, as part of my day job in healthcare improvement. At some point, I realized the concepts and methods were migrating into my home and writing life. They transfer easily to various needs and settings.

It's easy to get stuck in our writing projects. A few examples of where we can use creativity boosts:

- Story titles
- Where/how to start a story
- Character names
- What point of view to use
- Plot points
- Best words
- Settings

And the usual ways of thinking about a story—those auto-pilot mental valleys—are many:

- Story structure have a beginning, middle and end
- You need a plot
- There will be dialogue
- There will be words
- There will be pictures (in picture books)
- Typical settings
- And so on

Focusing on creativity methods does not replace the need for foundational elements. At the end of the day, a compelling story with interesting characters is what rules. But our readers relish a well-executed surprise or unexpected element in a story. And we sometimes need help solving a story problem or thinking differently about it.

I've **uploaded some creativity methods** on my website that can help. Take a look and give them a try!

VISIT MY WEBSITE AT [JENNIFERPHILLIPSAUTHOR.COM](http://JENNIFERPHILLIPSAUTHOR.COM) TO CATCH UP ON OTHER BEHIND THE SCENES JOURNAL ENTRIES, MY BOOK PROJECTS, RESOURCE DOWNLOADS AND MORE.