

tell your story

writing for a healthy brain

This is how you do it. You sit down at the keyboard and you put one word after another until it is done. It's that easy, and that hard.

—Neil Gaiman

Reasoning and planning happen in the frontal cortex as the writer attempts to create sentences that flow and make sense, or to plan a storyline, describe, convince, or explain.

Physical responses such as smell, taste, hunger, muscle reactions, heart rate, and sexual arousal happen as we narrate various experiences, making writing a whole-person act that improves brain-to-body neural connections and awareness.

Sensory and motor areas coordinate with the frontal cortex and to create a whole-brain connection that improves memory, longevity, and overall brain health.

The amygdala responds to writing by lowering stress hormone levels. It also responds positively to the social interaction that writing as a means of communication offers.

Use a pen and paper. The act of physical writing has been shown to correlate with brain longevity and may help prevent dementia.

Language centers for speaking and understanding speech are activated as the writer both narrates (produces) words and perceives (consumes) them visually.

Professional writers' brains end up looking a lot like others who achieve mastery at their craft, such as athletes or musicians. **More writing = more neural connections.**

Any kind of writing will do—journaling, poetry, essays, books, plans, academic or technical papers, a tweet, a letter—the benefits are the same!

Some purposes of writing for others: **Explain, persuade, entertain, evaluate, record, inquire.**

Some purposes of writing for yourself: **Reflect, memorialize, plan, express, explore, achieve flow.**

Simply writing down your plans for the day can help **close “mental tabs” and free up brain space for more creativity and better relationships.**