(To listen to this file, click on the audio file **Warm-Up Writing Prompts.m4a**)

1. Warm-Up Writing Prompts

One of the best things you can do as a writer is to write every day, even if it's just for 10 minutes. Use one of these writing prompts to warm-up your creative brain before a writing session or to help you find a new story to write. Attempt several story beginnings, so you can choose the one you like the most to finish during camp.

Quieting the Editor

Spend as much time as you want exploring story ideas here. This is NOT the time to be critical. These writing prompts are to help you create the rough draft of your story. Editing comes later. Your internal editor—the one that says *this won't work* or *this is a silly idea*—needs to be switched off so that you can focus on just being creative and having fun. Imagine that your editor has a mute button—and use it!

The full first draft of your project needs to be finished before the editor gets to play. When you do unmute your internal editor, he or she should remember that part of the job is praising the good writing along with making suggestions for improving some of the rest.

Focus on Creating and Having Fun

For now, your job is to create, to follow wild ideas, strange characters, and confused emotions in magical or real realms until you write *The End*.

Use as many prompts as you like, or even combine a couple. These prompts are strictly for fun and to get your brain into writing gear. There are new ones in each bundle of activities, so you're not likely to run out for a long time. 😊

If your story runs out of steam somewhere in the middle, that's perfectly alright. Not every idea is a winner. Sometimes, when writers revisit these partial stories

they find gems, so keep everything you write, even if it's only a few sentences. You never know when your words might spark a story later or find a spot in a story you are working on.

Opening sentences

1. A puppy was the last thing this house needed.
2. "They can't cancel the dance/game/exam!"
3. Camp was going to be fun, but only if I could avoid Madeline.
4. The poor creature looked half starved. I couldn't leave it in the rain.
5. When Lily had asked if I could keep a secret, I'd said yes. Now that I knew what the secret was, I wasn't too sure.
6. They'd told me that my armor would feel heavy the first time I wore it.
7. Animals aren't supposed to talk.
8. I couldn't wait for the race to start.
9. "What do you mean there's no power?"
10. Jack placed the box carefully on the table.
11. The tower looked a lot bigger up close.
12. My phone chirped. That was weird. I never got texts from Kelly at this hour.
13. I smelled the creature before I saw it.
14. "We've got a new coach."
15. I ducked, but I wasn't fast enough.

Choose one of the groups of words below and use one, some, or all four words in a scene or story.

1. Fire, storm, red, claw
2. Table, coat, photo, ring
3. Climb, sky, wire, light
4. Jeans, box, jar, green
5. Cloak, glass, frame, stone
6. Roof, board, candle, snow

More Writing Ideas

1. What story could you write around these lines of dialogue?
   Character A: It's not like Henry to be late.
   Character B: He's not late. He's run away

2. Think of a story that you could write around these lines of dialogue.
   Character A: I can't fly that thing.
   Character B: If you don't, we'll be caught.

3. Think of a story to go with one of these titles: Target Gold, Last Gasp, Dragon Rites, Clock Tower, Midnight Moon, The Wanderer, Broken Promise, Turning the Corner, The Blue Stone

4. Try the word "step" to create a scene or a story. Here are a few connections to start: step-ladder, step aside, step to the back, watch your step, out of step, step-mother.

5. Put an obstacle in your main character's way by changing the weather. Introduce some high winds into the story. Stop her escape with a fallen tree. Blow sand into his eyes. Have the rain make so much noise she can't sleep. Signal a weather change and send him down with a migraine.

6. Start a story with the sound of sirens.