



Accelerate your career by writing online

An online course by David Perell



Write of Passage

Cohort #5

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Student Manager: Will Mannon

July 1 - August 5, 2020

Course Overview

In Write of Passage, you will learn a step-by-step method for publishing quality content and distributing your ideas to your professional network, leading to unexpected opportunities and increased serendipity in your work and life.

Course Dates and Times

Kickoff: Wednesday, July 1st (8–9:30pm ET)
Session 2: Friday, July 3rd (12–1pm ET)
Session 3: Monday, July 6th (8–9:30pm ET)
Session 4: Wednesday, July 8th (8–9:30pm ET)
Session 5: Friday, July 10th (12–1pm ET)
Session 6: Monday, July 13th (8–9:30pm ET)
Session 7: Wednesday, July 15th (8–9:30pm ET)

Session 8: Friday, July 17th (12-1pm ET)
Session 9: Monday, July 20th (8-9:30pm ET)
Session 10: Wednesday, July 22nd (8-9:30pm ET)
Session 11: Friday, July 24th (12-1pm ET)
Session 12: Monday, July 27th (8-9:30pm ET)
Session 13: Wednesday, July 29th (8-9:30pm ET)
Session 14: Friday, July 31st (12-1pm ET)
Session 15: Monday, August 3rd (8-9:30pm ET)
Session 16: Wednesday, August 5th (8-9:30 ET)

CrossFit for Writing

Crossfit 1: Saturday, July 11 (12-2pm ET)
Crossfit 2: Saturday, July 18 (12-2pm ET)
Crossfit 3: Saturday, July 25 (12-2pm ET)
Crossfit 4: Saturday, August 1 (12-2pm ET)

Lesson Plans

Session 1 (July 1): Welcome to Write of Passage

Themes:

- Course introduction: We're thrilled to have you in the course. It's time to meet your instructors and fellow students, who will join you on your Write of Passage.
- 12 favorite problems: Everybody has a group of favorite problems that drive their intellectual journey. This is a chance to explore yours as an entire group.

Breakout Rooms:

- Why are you in Write of Passage? Here's a chance to introduce yourself, speak up, and meet other students in the course.
- Talk about your 12 favorite problems: Follow Richard Feynman's lead and think through the questions that guide your intellectual life.

Live Exercises:

- 12 favorite problems: A chance to start brainstorming your questions in class, and talk about them with fellow students.

Assignments:

- Information capture module: Building a note-taking system is one of the most important things you do in Write of Passage, and will set you up for success in the rest of the course.

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Session 2 (July 3): POP Writing

Themes:

- Personal writing: Write about stories and experiences.
- Observational writing: Write about things everybody sees, but nobody notices.
- Playful writing: Make your writing fun with puns and jokes.

Live Exercises:

- FAQ article writing time: “What is the definitive answer to the question that people ask you most often?”

Assignments:

- FAQ article: Write an article that answers this question in an accessible, easy to understand way, so that you would feel comfortable sending someone a link to it instead of answering on the spot.
- Watch module 2: Your website is a Serendipity Vehicle. The place where your distinct voice emerges through sharing and receiving feedback on your work.

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Session 3 (July 6): Taking Notes

Themes:

- Information Capture: Until now, you’ve been writing from scarcity. Now it’s time to start writing from abundance.
- CRIBS: The system every Write of Passage student uses to give and receive feedback.

Breakout Rooms:

- Talk about your writing process: Writing is more than putting words on a page. This is a chance to talk about how you write, from coming up with ideas, to talking to people about them, to sharing them with an audience.
- FAQ article feedback: It’s time to turn a good article into a publishable one. Use the CRIBS methodology to give and receive feedback on your first article.

Live Exercises:

- Information capture demo: See how David uses his note-taking system to write fast, start writing when he's 80% done with an article, and turn ideas into an outline.
- Live feedback hot seat: Write of Passage has high feedback standards, both for rigor and kindness.

Assignments:

- Publish FAQ piece: Congratulations! It's time to publish your first article on the topic you know best.
- Personal Monopoly module: The ultimate goal of writing online is to build a Personal Monopoly, so here's your introduction to the idea.

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Session 4 (July 8):

Themes:

- Start Here Pages: This will be the most visited page on your website, where you'll become a tour guide for new visitors who want to learn about you.
- Personal Monopolies: Start thinking about your unique intersection of skills, interests, and experiences.

Breakout Rooms:

- What do you see your Personal Monopoly becoming?

Live Exercises:

- Complete Personal Monopoly PDF: A chance to define your Personal Monopoly so it's narrow enough to be specific, and learn about yourself in the process.

Assignments:

- Finalize your "Start Here" page: Now that you're publishing articles, people will be visiting your website, so make sure you guide them in the right direction.

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Session 5 (July 10): Words

Themes:

- Writing Words: We'll study word choice and the history of the English language, so we can improve the clarity and specificity of our prose.

Assignments:

- Your Unique Perspective article: It's time to talk about an idea you know in-depth, and show how you have a different lens than most people.
- Content Triangle video module: Learn David's process for abundant content creation in the digital age.

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Session 6 (July 13): Compression

Themes:

- Compression: Discover how Picasso's philosophy of drawing can help you with writing

Live Exercises:

- Live article hot seat: The class will critique a student who wants to compress an idea live, and see how the CRIBS feedback methodology works in real-time.
- Paragraph compression demo: A real-time window into David's writing process to see how he shortens long paragraphs to add eloquence and readability.
- Paragraph compression exercise

Breakout Rooms:

- Paragraph compression discussion: Discuss David's compression system, and talk about what surprised you most.

Assignments:

- Publish Unique Perspective article: Build upon the feedback you received from other students to publish your second article.
- Watch module 4: Explore the underrated power of email distribution to share your ideas, stay connected with people, and receive feedback at scale.

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Session 7 (July 15): Abundance

Themes:

- Abundance in Conversation and Curation: Writing is much easier when you draw from a well-spring of notes and surround yourself with a group of curious people who share your intellectual passions.

Live Exercises:

- David & Will conversation: Goals vs. Systems: See how a short discussion can turn into an article outline.

- Start working on curation assignment: A chance to work on your next article during class and talk about it with peers before you work on it over the weekend.

Breakout Rooms:

- Share & discuss curation assignment: Talk about the upcoming curation assignment, and explore what you're going to write about.

Assignments:

- Distribution Strategy video: Use your email newsletter to create a distribution channel that you own. A highlight reel for your best work that leads to new ideas, connections and opportunities.
- Curation assignment: A chance to curate and summarize one of your favorite writer's ideas.

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Session 8 (July 17): Sentences

Themes:

- Writing Sentences: Explore the shape, form, and rhythm of clear sentences, and see how they fit together in an essay

Live Exercises:

- Sentence compression demo: Watch David's process for compressing long sentences and changing specific words to increase clarity.
- Sentence compression exercise: A chance to follow David's lead, compress your own sentences, and see what levels you can pull to improve the readability of your prose.

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Session 9 (July 20): Where to Write

Themes:

- David's Writing Environment: See how David curates a writing environment designed for focus and flow.

Breakout Rooms:

- Describe your writing environment: Talk to peers about your own writing environment, and find ways to borrow ideas from your peers.
- Live curation article feedback: Use the CRIBS methodology to improve the quality, clarity, and flow of your curation article

Assignments:

- Watch Module 5: David demonstrates his process for outlining an article. You'll see how he takes an article from casual conversation to finished product — outlining, source gathering, writing, refining, and sharing. You'll see why modern pieces of writing aren't merely written, but assembled.
- Publish curation assignment: It's time to share your expertise with the world, and share what you've learned from one of your favorite writers.

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Session 10 (July 22): Process

Themes:

- David's Writing Process: Explore the similarities and differences between writing and cooking, and see why writing is so much more than what happens on the page.

Live Exercises:

- Write your writing one-sheet: Start working on your writing one-sheet while the ideas are still fresh.

Breakout Rooms:

- Describe your writing process: Talk about your process for taking an idea from conception to a first draft to publishing.
- Share writing one-sheet: Talk to your peers about your writing one-sheet and look for ways to learn from each other, and improve your writing process together.

Assignments:

- Make writing one-sheet: Your one-sheet is a piece of paper that you keep next to you when you write. Use this one-sheet to guide your writing process. It's not set in stone. Think of it like an evolving document. You should constantly revise it as you improve your writing.

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Session 11 (July 24): Structures

Themes:

- Writing Structure: See how good writing is organized, from introductions to transitions to conclusions.

Breakout Rooms:

- Discuss your summary of WOP Writing Method: Now that you've seen the entire Write of Passage writing method, talk to your peers about what you've learned about how you plan to change your writing.

Live Exercises:

- Summarize WOP Writing Method: Share what you've learned about writing in your own words.

Assignments:

- Summary assignment: Explain an important topic of your choice in an article you're going to publish on your website.

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Session 12 (July 27): Psychology of Writing

Themes:

- Originality is a Scam: See how transformative ideas build upon each other, and why LEGO blocks are a good metaphor for developing ideas.
- Psychological Barriers: The emotional barriers to writing online are higher than the physical ones, so let's explore them together.

Breakout Rooms:

- What's your #1 psychological barrier? A chance to talk about the roadblocks in your writing process.
- Article feedback: Use the CRIBS methodology to talk about the article you're working on with your peers

Live Exercises:

- Live article feedback demo: David will give feedback on an article in front of the entire class, and build upon the advanced writing concepts discussing the Friday live sessions.

Assignments:

- Watch Module 6: David shares the concept of a "third door" for building real relationships with industry leaders. He tells the story of his worst networking mistakes so you don't repeat them.

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Session 13 (July 29): Cold Emails

Themes:

- Cold Email Examples: Study the qualities of excellent cold emails and see the strategies that have worked for David in the past.

Breakout Rooms:

- How have you seen networking change in the age of Information Abundance?: Networking has flipped in the digital age, so talk about David's method for connecting with people he admires.
- Share & receive feedback on your cold email: Work together to improve the density and quality of your cold emails, so you can create some Internet serendipity.

Live Exercises:

- Send one cold email: Type your first cold email and break through the barrier of fear by sending it to somebody you respect and admire.

Assignments:

- Send 3 cold emails: It's time to create some Internet serendipity! Something amazing happens during this assignment in every cohort, so who will it be this time?

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Session 14 (July 31): Office Hours

Theme:

- Office Hours: An ask-me-anything session where you can talk to David about your writing process and share open questions about Write of Passage.

Assignment:

- Catch-up on assignments: Nothing new today, so here's your chance to catch up and work on open projects.

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Session 15 (August 3): Personal Monopoly

Themes:

- Go-For-It Window: Large gaps between accelerating technologies and stagnating social norms create lucrative new business opportunities. But they are only available for a short time when people can capitalize on the difference between the real and perceived state of the world.

- Personal Monopoly: Corporations reward conformity. The Internet rewards people who are unique. If you work in a creative field, strive to be the only person who does what you do. Find your own style, then run with it. Create intellectual real estate for yourself.

Live Exercises:

- Personal Monopoly hot seat: One student will share their Personal Monopoly with the group and receive feedback on it, with help from the entire class

Breakout Rooms:

- How do you define your Personal Monopoly? Let's return to this idea after a few weeks away from it and define it with our peers.
- Live feedback session: Receive feedback on your Personal

Assignments:

- Publish summary assignment: Share your article summary on your website, so people can learn about the articles you know best

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Session 16 (August 5th): Reflection

Themes:

- Personal Monopoly: Put a ribbon on the course by talking about your Personal Monopoly with your peers.
- Course Reflection: A chance to celebrate five weeks of creativity, publishing, and a number of friendships you'll carry with you after this final live session.

Breakout Rooms:

- Describe your Personal Monopoly to your group and ask for feedback: A chance to present your Personal Monopoly, and use the CRIBS methodology one last time to see how you can improve yours.
- Write down your biggest WOP takeaway and share with your group: Talk to your peers about what you learned in the past five weeks.

Additional Information

Writing Groups:

Writing groups are designed to help you stay consistent with your writing. Students who attend weekly writing group meetings will have a circle of accountability to help them stay consistent in their work. In your writing group you'll exchange feedback, share encouragement, and learn from an alumni mentor who has built a consistent writing habit of their own. There are seven writing groups that meet on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays.

Writing group schedule:

Sunday

11am CEST (5am ET): Viktor Tabori

11am ET: Charlie Bleecker

2pm ET: Pranav Mutatkar

Tuesday

12pm ET: Matt Tillotson

8pm ET: Lev Naginsky

Thursday

12pm ET: Andrew Barry

7pm ET: Jackie Williams

Software to Use:

- Teachable: [Website](#)
- Evernote: [Download](#)
- Zoom: [Download](#)
- Circle: [Website](#)
- Google Docs: [Website](#)

Live Session Etiquette:

- Turn your video on.
- Raise your hand if you'd like to speak (in "Participants" tab on Zoom)
- Tune in from a quiet place with fast WiFi.
- Keep your comments short and get to the point.
- Show up on time. We will begin right at the top of the hour.

Chat Etiquette:

- We want you to be active in the chat
- Make your comments active and productive
- Write comments that are worthwhile for the entire community
- Share links, ideas, questions, and epiphanies