

Day 4

Instead of writing something new today, or as a prelude to new writing, look over what you have written for the last three days and extract something from each day: a sentence, an image, something small. Put your three small things next to each other on a fresh page. Play with combining, intertwining them somehow. You can trim and select or multiply parts as you need. How do they change each other, or alternately, how does looking at these things in isolated combination give way to a new mood or image or memory? Write into the glimpse you get of that new mood, image, or memory. Otherwise, leave yourself a note for tomorrow's writing to pick up there, and either don't write anything more, or follow your own impulse for what today holds.

Warmup: Your Weather Style

Write three days of weather reports using baroque, preposterous words. Then add one more in a deliberate monotone. Then write one more, splitting the difference, finding a style that pleases you.

Tuning: Contents of Your Mind

Set a timer and write for four minutes, trying to articulate the contents of your mind as you are today—the recurrent questions, habits of understanding, hobby horses, passing detritus, and new points of focus or wonder.

Generator: Map of the Area

Draw a compressed geographic map of the region of your accretion writing so far. Even if it isn't located in a coherent place, treat all the locations as neighboring. Even if your writing is abstract or unlocated, treat it as located in abstract, symbolic places. Your map can be out of scale and selective, like an advertising place-mat or the frontispiece of an old children's book. Then populate the map with newcomers, visitors, ghosts, and legends. Who comes into this space, who lingers, who reacts? How do they pass through, where have they come from, where will they go next, in what kind of vehicle do they travel? You can include other things than people: Is there a flow of goods? A migration of animals? Then write the story of one of those incursions in exactly 100 words.