

Day 5

In the planetary accretion metaphor, one of the early questions is: What kinds of dusts and gasses are in the cloud from which this small, slowly growing solid object is forming? In our own solar system's development, lighter elements were pushed away from the center of the solar nebula, leaving heavier materials closer in to form the rocky planets, including ours. So the useful question from this analogy is, what are the predominant elements that are joining up as you build your now 5-day-old object?

Choose an image or object or presence that has occurred in your writing so far and give it a category name—make it a type. Find other instances of this type to introduce into your writing. Multiply it.

To clarify in a workable way what “image or object or presence” multiplication means, some examples: someone's turquoise car figures appears in something I've written, and for whatever reason this appearance feels central, critical. So I could look for other cars (type: cars), or alternately other jewelry-colored things (type: gem-colored things). The car appears in the middle of the night, so maybe I could look for another middle-night scene (type: middle night events). Or I might introduce another person of a similar temperament or influence to the driver of the turquoise car (type: beautiful, morose people). Those are all different ways I could choose to categorize or “type” the appearance of the car.

(I should also shout out here to the literary-theological practice of *typology*, though here I am interested not in one turquoise car prefiguring the coming of the great turquoise car but in the way a nose for similitudes can usher us into a patterned scatter or help weave an imagistic rhyme scheme.)

Warmup: Minute Lists

Choose four or five categories for minute lists, at least a few of them related to what you've been writing in ways that you understand. Or use these: names of car parts, words descriptive of times of day, graffiti tags real or invented, words of four syllables.

Tuning: The Social Yesterday

Set a timer for five minutes and try to record all the thoughts you had about your own experience while navigating any social, communal situation you were in yesterday.

Generator: Lynda Barry Memory Recall X Page

This is a memory recall exercise from Lynda Barry, and can be applied directly to today's type-multiplier prompt. Take the image/object type you want to work with. Make a quick list of ten instances in your own life of that thing. Choose one of them, preferably one that sprung to mind as you made

your list—LB always encourages us to go after anything that surfaces without overdetermination on our part.

Draw a big X across a whole page. Visualize yourself in the presence of your chosen object so that it's a scene in your mind. (If you chose, for example, your best friend's car, visualize yourself in it on a particular day in a particular place instead of all the times you were ever in that car.)

On your X-page, with a four-minute timer going, record sensory, present-tense details of the scene. You can either write indiscriminately across the page, ignoring the X, or you can use the quadrants the X provides to locate you in space, so that you record what is ahead, to the sides, and behind you, as if you are positioned at the intersection of the two lines.

Then set a timer for seven minutes and, on a fresh page, write a description of the scene in the present tense.