



September 2018

Suburban Scribe

Newsletter of the Sacramento Suburban Writers' Club

Don't miss Jennifer Provenza!

Jennifer Provenza is an actor, writer, and professor of theater. She has her BFA from NYU and her MFA from Brooklyn College. Jennifer's novel, *Life Is But A Dream*, was featured on Insight with Beth Ruyak and in articles in the Sacramento Bee and The Davis Enterprise. Her plays have been performed at NYU, Barnyard Theatre, The Strawberry One-Act Festival, and *Gone in 60* in Brooklyn, and in Leeds, England. The screenplay she wrote, *Princess Daisy*, was produced and is available to view on Amazon Prime. She lives in Sacramento with her husband, two daughters, and their fluffy black cat, Mrs. Sparkles.



Perhaps Jennifer will discuss her captivating debut novel, "Life is But a Dream" at the September 10 meeting.

"Life is But a Dream" tells the story of Angela. Angela is a narcoleptic. Or at least, that's what she tells people. The truth is . . . somewhat more complicated. Angela has two lives, existing in parallel universes. When she sleeps in one life, she is awake in her other life. In one reality she is single and successful in New York City. In her other reality, she is a loving wife and mother in suburban Sacramento. But which life is real? And can she be happy in both of them? When, in one of her realities, she meets Tony, a handsome poet, she begins to think that perhaps she can find love and have the family she always dreamed of. But, as things go well in one life, they begin to fall apart in another, and Angela has to navigate complicated questions of family, loyalty, and love.

check out her website

<http://www.jenniferprovenza.com/>

All of the meetings of the Sacramento Suburban Writers' Club are held
on the 2nd Monday of each month. 7 - 9 p.m.

at the Crossroads Community Fellowship Church's meeting hall,
5501 Dewey Drive, Carmichael (just north of the Madison/Dewey intersection)

All writers are encouraged to attend. Membership is not mandatory but brings privileges.

Say it Again, Only Better

Instead of

FEEL

- ✓ Sense
- ✓ Discern
- ✓ Tone
- ✓ Taste
- ✓ Spirit
- ✓ Effect
- ✓ Vibe

Instead of

ALMOST

- ✓ Practically
- ✓ Nearly
- ✓ Verging on
- ✓ Virtually
- ✓ Relatively
- ✓ Generally

A Helpful Hint

by Mort Rumberg



Keep Writing!

HOW TO IMPROVE
YOUR WRITING

For better writing, try to use words that provide a more accurate description. Although obvious, many words, by themselves, can also use a more descriptive and specific substitution. Being more specific may help your *riting* to be more *gooder* and more *akurate*.

FREE BLOG TITLE
GENERATOR

Here's another interesting site - this one can be used to generate a title, often a very difficult thing to create.

More than that, use it for brainstorming report and article ideas – even what to include in your book.

<https://seopressor.com/blog-title-generator/>

The Art of Self-Editing Part 2

I. Are the characters' motivations clear and consistent, or mysterious, confusing and unbelievable?

J. Dialog: is it natural sounding, sincere, and easy to follow? Check for cryptic comments that do not add to the forward momentum of the plot. Watch also for too much or too convoluted dialect spelling that can confuse or distance the reader.

K. Check to make sure the dialog matches each character's personality. Does the character's speech illuminate motives and characteristics?

L. Monitor the pacing. Does the story lag, or go too fast in places?

M. Is there balanced variation in short and long sentences? Does the story flow easily, ebbing and flowing with the tension? Or does it feel awkward and/or jerky?

N. Who is the narrator/narrators? Is each narrator's voice consistent?

O. Look for unintentional changes in POV. These can be very subtle or totally blatant, but they all will pull readers from the flow and distance them from the story.

P. Setting: is it described vividly enough to be pictured clearly? Is it consistent throughout, or does the door on the west side of the building move to the north side halfway through? How does the setting affect the development and flow of the story? How does it affect the characters?

Q. Are all five senses included in each scene? Can the reader taste, smell, see, hear and feel the setting, or are visuals only given?

R. Watch for info dumps—these are usually the back story that may or may not be important to the immediate story. Ask yourself, Is the info really necessary at that point in the story? At any point in the story? Are there other ways to weave necessary back story info in as part of the action?

S. Watch for 'purple prose'—overdone descriptions written for the sake of writing, not to further the story. (Ex: three paragraphs on the sunset in the middle of the villains chasing the good guys).

T. Watch for ideas and/or images that have been repeated too many times.

U. Is there enough suspense to keep the reader turning pages? Or is there too much suspense so readers don't have any space to breathe?

V. Do the chapters end on mini-cliff hangers (a great way to get pages turned)? If so, are the endings generic to the story, or do they feel contrived and/or tacked on?

W. Are the protagonists, and even the antagonists, interesting and sympathetic enough to engage the reader?

X. Does the first sentence/paragraph/scene grab the reader and not let go?

Y. Considering your writing style: can the writing be shortened/tightened for easier reading? Is there a better or shorter way to say the same thing? Better word choices? More vivid phrasing? More effective descriptions? More creative plot twists that can be substituted?

Z. Is the tone consistent throughout the work or is the reader left with conflicting feelings about the author's attitude toward the story, events and characters?

Self-editing is the step that many writers skip. It's tedious and boring and keeps the manuscript "at home" for another couple of months. But taking the time to carefully self-edit your work will lift it above a lot of the other manuscripts that the agent/editor/publisher is considering. You will be rated a professional who produces professional quality work, not just a talented amateur. And that will increase your chances of securing the best agent/editor/publisher, and a larger reading public.

Susan Tuttle www-Writ@rWithinPubs.com
www:SusanTuttleWrites.com

Get busy on your submission for SSWC's 2019 anthology.

The theme and title for this anthology is

Other People, Other Places, Other Times.

We look forward to seeing your best work.

If you have any questions, please contact any of the committee members: Eva Wise, Ron Smith, Cathy McGreevy, Mort Rumberg, Wes Turner, or Mary Lou Anderson.

Social Media Workshop

The second installment of the Social Media class is scheduled for the evening of Monday, September 24. Brittany Lord will expand the participants' knowledge of blogs, websites, and other social media techniques. It will again be held at Mary Lou's house in Citrus Heights.

This time, we are limiting the attendance, asking for "reservations" to avoid overcrowding, and asking for a \$10 fee for SSWC members and \$20 for non-members. This will help cover the cost of a projector since we saw the dire need for better visuals at the first session. Everyone was trying to jockey for position to see what Brittany was entering and clicking on.

If you want to participate in this September 24 session, please call or email Mary Lou Anderson.
mledsonanderson@yahoo.com Phone number and address are listed on the SSWC club roster.

Really Bad Writing Rules

By the *Evil Twin* of the *Grammar Guardian*

Mary Lou

If you end a sentence in an abbreviation, use two (2) periods — one for the abbreviation and one for the end of the sentence, etc..

Use the number instead of writing it out. That way you'll save \$1,000,000s in ink and paper.

Go ahead and end your sentence with a preposition, especially "at": "Where's it at?" instead of "Where is it?" Need an excuse? It's called an "adverb of placement."

Double negatives are fine; they emphasize that you really mean it. That phrase, "Two negatives make a positive," relates to algebra, not English grammar. So, don't never forget it.

British and American spelling, grammar, and punctuation rules are the same.

Don't make a separate paragraph for each person talking; save paper by putting them all together.

Don't trust the computer to know the end of the line. Hit the *Enter* key at the end of each line.

Hit the *Tab* key to indent every paragraph. Better yet, use the space bar to indent or center something on the page.

Don't bother to learn the shortcuts on your computer program. No need to save time. We're all going to live forever, right?

Eliminate commas semicolons hyphens periods they just confuse people.

Use a lot of exclamation points to make sure the reader knows how excited your character is. The same goes for the question mark. Use a string of them to show it's REALLY questionable.

"There" is always singular, so always use a singular verb. Example: Even if there's two or three things, use "there's." Besides, "there's are" just sounds wrong.

If you find a great word to use in the perfect place, use it again and again. And again. And again.

Capitalize every Noun, like File Cabinet, Table, Chair. They're all important, right?

Put a coma in, whenever you pause, because using more comas, just, you know, makes it sound better.



OFFICERS

Elected Officers:

President	Cathy McGreevy
Vice President	Wes Turner
Secretary	Mary Lou Anderson
Treasurer	Chris & David Stein

Chairs:

Achievement	Mary Lou Anderson
Anthology	Eva Wise
Chairs Chair	Wes Turner
Coffee/Treats	[open]
Conference Coord.	John Powell
Critique Groups	Brittany Lord
Directory	Jeannie Turner
Historian	Pat Biasotti
Librarian	Ron Smith
Membership	Jeannie Turner
Newsletter	[open]
Nominations	[open]
Publicity	[open]
Raffle	Mort Rumberg
Scholarship	David Stein
Speakers	David Stein
Sunshine	[open]
Website	Westley Turner
Workshops	[open]

Advertise your writing related services in the
Suburban Scribe!

\$3 a month (3-month minimum) for members
\$5 a month (3-month minimum) for non-members

Send your request to newsletter@sactowriters.org

COPY AND DEADLINES

Please submit original written material such as: poems, letters, book excerpts, articles, book reviews, humor, web sites to visit, general information, fun stuff to share—almost anything ***by the 20th of each month***. Also, share info about other meetings, contests, books, book signings, classes, etc.

Please keep the submission relatively short and submit electronically. There is no pay but byline credit is given—and that looks good to agents and publishers.

This is one of the many benefits of being a member of SSWC.

Send your submissions to
newsletter@sactowriters.org

MEMBERSHIP is paid on a yearly basis. If joining after March, dues are prorated by quarter.

Individual \$40.00/year

Couple \$55.00/year

Full-Time Student \$30.00/year

Platinum Senior (70+) \$30.00/year

Membership is not required for attending meetings but it does provide benefits including

1) Publication in newsletter

3) Participation in critique groups

2) Participation in club author events

4) Grants for conferences ... & more

More information is on our website: sactowriters.org.

Name: _____ Genres: _____ Published? Y/N

Email: _____ Phone: _____