

13th Annual

101 BEST

Websites for



WRITERS



BY BRIAN A. KLEMS & THE *WRITER'S DIGEST* STAFF



hen you go to the grocery store for apples, there's always a big pile of them stacked together. They're all different shapes, sizes and colors, and it's impossible to tell which ones are going to taste the best. Wouldn't it be great if there were a special section of select apples guaranteed to be delicious?











Introducing our 13th annual 101 Best Websites for Writers, our hand-picked list of the ripest websites guaranteed to quiet the hunger pangs of even the most discerning writers.

The competition for this year's roundup proved to be the toughest yet—a record-setting 4,200 nominations from writers all around the world landed in our inbox. From there, we helped ourselves to a taste of each one, and pared them down to the best of the best online resources covering all the main food groups of writing, from the most popular genres to the most talked-about aspects of the writing life.

For easy reference, you'll find the top sites divided into nine sections—**creativity, everything agents, jobs and markets, writing advice, general resources, publishing/marketing resources, genres/niches, online writing communities and just for fun**—each one alphabetized for easy reference. We've also included symbols (see the key at right) with each listing so you can see at a glance which sites offer the features you're looking for: advice for writers, classes/workshops/conferences, contests, critique sections, e-newsletters/RSS feeds, forums, material specifically for young writers, job listings, markets for your work and a Twitter account.

So get your bookmarks ready. We're confident these links will lead you to plenty of useful information to move your writing career forward. How 'bout them apples?

Key to Symbols & Abbreviations

-  Advice for Writers
-  Classes/Workshops/Conferences
-  Contests
-  Critiques
-  E-Newsletters/RSS
-  Forums
-  For Young Writers
-  Jobs
-  Markets
-  On Twitter

NOMINATING NEXT YEAR'S 101:

Don't see one of your favorite sites here? Wish we'd add a new category? Send your comments and nominations for next year's list to writersdigest@fwmedia.com with "101 Websites" in the subject line between now and Dec. 1, 2011.

1-6 CREATIVITY

1. Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest

bulwer-lytton.com

Not often are you rewarded for being the worst, but craft a terrible opening line to a novel and you could win the Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest. It may not be a résumé builder, but it's definitely a fun challenge.

2. Creativity Portal

creativity-portal.com

Enjoy photo prompts, creative writing exercises and how-to advice to help you generate ideas for your work.

3. Easy Street Prompts

easystreetprompts.blogspot.com

Always a great source of picture prompts, Easy Street also offers video story-starters. Yet another way to get you in the mood to write.



4. Six Sentences

sixsentences.blogspot.com
What can you say in six sentences? Submit a six-sentence story of your own, and you might just find your work published among the top entries.

5. Six-Word Memoirs

smithmag.net/sixwords
Write about a significant time of your life in just six words. It might sound hard at first, but once you decide to give it a try, it's strangely addictive.

6. The Teacher's Corner

theteacherscorner.net/daily-writing-prompts
Not only does this site offer daily writing prompts, but it also includes mini-history lessons with many of them. Let information lead you to inspiration.

7-18 EVERYTHING AGENTS

7. Agent Query

agentquery.com
Need an agent? Find the right one for you by searching this free database.

8. Association of Authors' Representatives

aaronline.org
This not-for-profit organization has a lengthy list of ethical bylaws that agents must abide by to become members. Research prospective agents here before you submit.

9. Babbles From Scott Eagan

scotteagan.blogspot.com
Agent Scott Eagan, founder of Greyhaus Literary, is a blog workhorse, churning out multiple columns each week on just the subjects writers want to read about—query tips, defining your genre, the pros and cons of social media, and more.

10. BookEnds

bookendslitagency.blogspot.com
Run by agents Jessica Faust and Kim Lionetti, this site invites new visitors to make themselves at home with its roundup of the most popular posts (listed conveniently down the right-hand side) on proposals, contracts, pitching, editing, story conflict and so much more. Follow along for free advice every week.

11. Hartline Literary Agency

hartlineliteraryagency.blogspot.com
Four agents blog on this agency site, and their posts—combined with a healthy amount of guest appearances by their authors—make this a great hub of advice for scribes. The agency leans toward Christian and inspirational work, but with so many contributors, there's a lot of diverse material for all writers to peruse.

12. Kidlit.com

kidlit.com
Agent Mary Kole's blog tackles the subject of writing for kids and young adults.

13. Pub Rants

pubrants.blogspot.com
Among the annals of agent Kristin Nelson's blog, you'll find real queries from her clients (several bestsellers among them), as well as an 11-part pitch workshop covering multiple genres—and that's just the tip of the blog-berg.

14. Query Shark

queryshark.blogspot.com
Literary agent Janet Reid dishes out brutally honest advice on the dos and



don'ts of querying your novel, using real-life examples from brave readers.

15. QueryTracker querytracker.net

Track your queries to any of the 1,200-plus agents listed in this free directory.

16. Rants & Ramblings on Life as a Literary Agent

cba-ramblings.blogspot.com

Day after day, agent Rachele Gardner generously shares her expert insights on the craft and—even better—the *business* of writing. Don't miss the four full years of amazing archives.

17. San Francisco Writers Conference – Michael Larsen

sfwriters.info/blog

Agent Michael Larsen is a guru of non-fiction writing who freely shares his

wealth of knowledge on this blog, where he breaks down complicated topics into manageable tips—e.g., “Avoiding Premature Submission: 12 Steps to Writing Success.”

18. SlushPile Hell slushpilehell.tumblr.com

We can't explain this entertaining literary agent website any better than its tag line: “One grumpy literary agent, a sea of query fails, and other publishing nonsense.”

19-29

JOBS & MARKETS FOR WRITERS

19. All Freelance Writing

allfreelancewriting.com/writers-markets

This is a directory of paying freelance markets. You can browse by category or search for something specific.

20. Duotrope's Digest duotrope.com

In the past year alone, this site has added 400 new markets to its database for fiction writers and poets, who are free to browse its more than 3,200 listings.

21. Ed 2010 ed2010.com

These young magazine editors offer excellent writing advice, along with opportunities to meet other magazine pros in your area (if there isn't a regional chapter by you, they'll tell you how to start one). Plus, the WhisperJobs section is a great resource for both freelance and full-time magazine jobs.

22. Editor & Publisher editorandpublisher.com

Need a new gig? Stop by *Editor & Publisher's* classifieds section to find up-to-date writing, editing and publishing job opportunities.

23. Freelance Writing Jobs

freelancewritinggigs.com

This site offers daily freelance assignment updates: Click on “Job leads” to view the most recent listings.

24. Freelance Writing Organization—Int'l fwointl.com

Search thousands of online job offerings and resources, and get great information on how to qualify for writing grants. Just register and download its free writing resource toolbar.

25. FundsforWriters

fundsforwriters.com

Editor C. Hope Clark's site got more nominations than any other on our list this year. Visit for a wealth of information on grants, fellowships, contests, awards and markets.

26. JournalismJobs.com journalismjobs.com

Whether you're a recent college grad looking for your first job or a seasoned editorial veteran seeking a new challenge, this sites offers hundreds of job listings from across the country.



27. The Market List marketlist.com

Genre fiction writers, listen up: The Market List has hundreds of market listings specifically for you.

28. Mediabistro.com mediabistro.com

This site remains a top resource for freelancers, offering industry news, jobs, features, blogs and more.

29. Writer Gazette writergazette.com

Don't miss the *Gazette's* writing-related articles, freelance job postings, tips, contests, resources and classifieds. The site also recently underwent a face-lift and, we must say, it's more appealing and user friendly than ever.

30-45

WRITING ADVICE

30. The Creative Writing MFA Blog

creative-writing-mfa-handbook.blogspot.com

Anyone considering pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in writing should consult this collection of articles and Q&As about what to expect, what not to expect and how to find the best program for you.

31. Donald Miller

donmilleris.com

This bestselling author dishes advice and inspiration aiming to help fellow writers (or “creators,” as he calls them) be more creative than ever.

32. Editorial Anonymous

editorialanonymous.blogspot.com

The names on the manuscripts and queries have been changed to allow this anonymous children’s book editor to offer honest advice on real submissions.

33. Grammar Bytes

chompchomp.com

Get a crash course on grammar, and then put your skills to the test with interactive quizzes.

34. Grammar Girl

grammar.quickanddirtytips.com

Grammar Girl Mignon Fogarty boldly takes on the grammatical issues that even experienced writers grapple with. You can read her explanations or, if you prefer, listen to them via audio files.



35. InkyGirl.com

inkygirl.com

Writer Debbie Ridpath Ohi offers tips, tools, inspiration and links for writers of all kinds. She’s also a social media butterfly and a must-follow on Twitter.

36. Long, Story Short: An E-Zine for Writers

alongstoryshort.net

Celebrating its eighth year on our list, Long, Story Short editors continue to offer excellent writing tips—and personal replies to every author who contacts them for writing and publishing advice.

37. Nathan Bransford

blog.nathanbransford.com

Tired of all the cynicism in publishing? Check out writer (and former agent) Nathan Bransford’s blog for an optimistic take on the industry, along with sensible writing advice.

38. A Newbie’s Guide to Publishing

jakonrath.blogspot.com

Thriller writer J.A. Konrath isn’t shy about sharing his opinions on the best practices for seeking traditional publication as well as for self-publishing digital editions—he’s done both. He also provides a robust roundup of writing-related resources.

39. Novel Journey

noveljourney.blogspot.com

A great-looking blog matched with a wealth of author interviews and advice makes Novel Journey a great destination.

40. Plot Whisperer for Writers & Readers

plotwhisperer.blogspot.com

Swing by Martha Alderson’s site and say so long to plot problems.



Beyond 101: WD’s Family of Sites

WritersDigest.com

For everything writing-related, check out WD’s online hub of free articles. Make it your virtual writing home for useful craft tips, practical career advice, creativity-sparking prompts, manuscript critiques (on the forum) and more.

WritersMarket.com

Along with 8,000-plus market listings updated daily, subscribers receive submission trackers, articles, industry updates and more. Two-year, annual and monthly paid subscriptions are available.

WritersDigestUniversity.com

Get one-on-one instruction from professional authors in the comfort of your own home. WDU classes start year-round and cover everything from grammar to novel writing to marketing.

Community.WritersDigest.com

Join the more than 8,000 writers (and counting) in the Writer’s Digest Community social network, where you can connect with others who care deeply about writing, including WD’s editorial staff.

WritersDigest.com/blogs

From grammar to agent advice to prompts to poetry, our family of WD bloggers has you covered for all of your writing needs.

DigitalBookWorld.com

DBW offers year-round education, networking and resources, online and off, for publishing professionals and their partners.

41. Preditors & Editors

**pred-ed.com**

Preditors & Editors keeps a finger on the pulse of cyberspace to help newbie and seasoned writers alike avoid fraudulent or questionable publishing outfits.

42. StoryFix

**storyfix.com**

“No motivational BS here. Just the truth about what it takes to get published.” And that’s exactly what this site is.

43. Terribleminds

**terribleminds.com/ramble**

Chuck Wendig is a writer with an attitude who dishes what he’s learned to anyone willing to listen. (But note that if you’re easily offended, this isn’t the site for you.)

44. Writer Beware Blog

**accrispin.blogspot.com**

This industry watchdog tracks, exposes and raises awareness of scammers and other questionable activities in and around the publishing business.

45. Writer Unboxed

**writerunboxed.com**

Genre writers especially should check out all the craft and business advice offered by the editors at Writer Unboxed.

46-51

GENERAL RESOURCES

46. Author Tech Tips

**authortechtips.com**

Author Tech Tips explains website basics for authors—often in step-by-step tutorials—so you don’t have to be a Web architect to build yourself a sturdy home online.

47. Coalition of Independent Authors

**coalition-independent-authors.com**

A group of self-published authors has formed this site to gain exposure for their work—and if you’ve self-published, you’re welcome to join!

48. ShawGuides

**writing.shawguides.com**

Looking for a writing conference close by? Or maybe you’re dreaming of a retreat far from home. ShawGuides can help, with information on more than 1,000 domestic and international writing conferences and workshops.

49. Stephanie Smith’s Writers’ Resources

**stephiesmith.com/resources.html**

No articles or essays here, just links to

resources on all things writing, broken down by category. There’s also a list of resources especially valuable to writers of historical fiction.

50. United States Copyright Office



Get the official word on everything you need to know about copyright—including definitions, questions and how to protect your work.

51. Wealthy Web Writer



This site ponders big-picture issues for online writers, like how to boost your earnings and improve your blog’s visibility on search engines.



52-64

PUBLISHING/MARKETING RESOURCES

52. The Book Deal

**alanrinzler.com/blog**

Publishing veteran Alan Rinzler helps writers keep pace with the industry.

53. A Book Inside – How to Write & Publish a Book

**abookinside.blogspot.com**

Carol Denbow’s free marketing and publishing advice makes for a 101 Best staple.

54. BookTour.com

**booktour.com**

Obtain the tools you’ll need to secure contacts, reviews and more to start a media tour in support of your book.

55. BoSacks

**bosacks.com**

Media veteran Bob Sacks continues his mission to keep you up-to-date on

book and magazine publishing. The free e-newsletter delivers a mix of news and editorials on crucial industry topics.

56. Joe Wikert’s Publishing 2020 Blog

**jwikert.typepad.com**

O’Reilly Media General Manager and Publisher Joe Wikert shares views on the future of print, online and other media.

57. Marian Schembari 
marianlibrarian.com

Get social media advice from a maven who successfully used a Facebook ad to get her job in publishing.

58. Mashable 
mashable.com

Stay ahead of the curve on social and digital media, technology and the Web—all cheap, yet immensely valuable tools for writers—by reading Mashable every day.

59. OnceWritten.com 
oncewritten.com

From writing prompts to writing contests, this site gives beginning writers solid information while allowing them a chance to have their books reviewed.

60. Pimp My Novel 
pimpmynovel.blogspot.com

A publishing sales rep gives you the inside scoop on what happens to books after they've been acquired. Don't miss the Profit & Loss (P&L) series—a fascinating read on a little-known aspect of how book publishing really works.

61. Publetariat 
publetariat.com

Self-published authors and small, independent imprints take note: Publetariat is an online community and news channel designed for you. We're big fans of its "Write" section focusing on the craft.

62. Seth Godin's Blog 
sethgodin.typepad.com/seths_blog
Not many have mastered marketing like



this writer has. Learn from one of the best in the business.

63. We Grow Media 
wegrowmedia.com

Dan Blank's excellent blog on platform building is a great addition to any blog-roll. Start with his article "How Should Writers Use Social Media? With Purpose."

64. Winning Writers 
winningwriters.com

Home of the Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest for the best poem that has been sent to a "vanity poetry contest" as a joke, Winning Writers gives you info on 150 poetry contests just for signing up for its free e-newsletter (and paid membership gets you leads on 750 of them).

65-85

GENRES/ NICHES

CHILDREN'S/YA WRITING

65. Resources for Children's Writers 
resourcesforchildrenswriters.com

Rachelle Burk's site links to hundreds of articles for children's writers looking to improve their writing, network with other writers, get published and sell their work. And the comprehensive index makes navigation extra user friendly.

66. Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators


scbwi.org

All writers of books for kids and young adults should bookmark this site. The resources and information are invaluable, and are accessible even to nonmembers.

FANTASY/SCIENCE FICTION

67. Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America


sfwa.org

Get the latest science fiction and fantasy writing news from the organization dedicated to supporting writers in the genre.

FREELANCE

68. The Copywriter Underground 
copywriterunderground.com

Professional freelance copywriter Tom Chandler shares secrets for success. And



his "Weekly Tweetfest" rounds up interesting writing news he's found on Twitter.

69. Freelance Writing 
freelancewriting.com

From article writing to business writing to querying magazines, this site lays out nearly 700 articles on how to be successful and profitable as a freelancer.

70. The Renegade Writer Blog 
therenegadewriter.com

One writing renegade tackles the questions facing freelancers trying to make it in today's difficult market.

HORROR

71. Horror Writers Association 
horror.org/writetips.htm

The Horror Writers Association aims to help writers improve their fiction with its books, articles and writing-related links.

MYSTERY

72. Mystery Writers of America

[mysterywriters.org](#)

Get the latest info on mystery writing, and network with other writers of whodunits.

73. Mystery Writing Is Murder

[mysterywritingismurder.blog](#)

[spot.com](#)

Writer Elizabeth Spann Craig uses her blog for good, not evil—except when she's explaining how to craft antagonists.

POETRY

74. The Best American Poetry

[thebestamericanpoetry.typepad.com](#)

Here, poets gather to exchange, discuss and debate poems and the art of poetry.

75. MoonTownCafé.com

[moontowncafe.com](#)

Post your own poetry for feedback, read the work of others, and more.

the work of others, and more.

76. Poets.org

[poets.org](#)

On the Academy of American Poets' award-winning website, find thousands of poems as well as hundreds of poet biographies, essays, interviews and poetry recordings all in one convenient place.

77. Wild Poetry Forum

[wildpoetryforum.com](#)

Anything goes on this uncensored mes-



SPIRITUAL

81. ChristianStoryTeller

[christianstoryteller.com](#)

There aren't many better sites for Christian writers looking to network.

82. Resources for Muslim Writers

[muslimwriters.blogspot.com](#)

If you're a Muslim writer and not reading this site, you're missing out. Get the inside scoop on faith-based organizations, scholarships, competitions and more.

THRILLER

83. International Thriller Writers

[thrillerwriters.org](#)

Join Steve Berry, James Rollins, Sandra Brown, Lee Child and other bestselling thriller writers in this group dedicated to "thrilling" the world with great books.

84. Murder By 4

[murderby4.blogspot.com](#)

Yet again this year, these four masters of suspense continue to offer more than enough tips on writing in the genre to earn a spot on our list.

WOMEN'S WRITING

85. WOW! Women on Writing

[wow-womenonwriting.com](#)

WOW! is designed to support women's creativity and energy (not to mention blood, sweat and tears) throughout all stages of the writing process. And it does a good job of it.

ROMANCE

78. Romance Junkies

[romancejunkies.com](#)

Browse book reviews, author interviews and more by visiting the Junkies, who offer the latest on up-and-coming writers of romance novels.

79. Romance Writers of America

[rwanational.org](#)

Celebrating its 30th anniversary, RWA is the place for you if you write romance. Join the more than 10,000 other writers who are already members.

SCRIPTWRITING

80. Script Blog

[scriptmag.com/author/chadgervich](#)

Hollywood scriptwriter and occasional WD contributor Chad Gervich maintains this excellent blog on *Script* magazine's website, and offers up answers to some of the most commonly asked questions about the genre.

86-95

ONLINE WRITING COMMUNITIES

86. Absolute Write

[absolutewrite.com](#)

With more than 30,000 members, the popular Absolute Write forum

(known as the Water Cooler) is filled with chatter and advice on most types of writing, including fiction, nonfiction, freelancing, writing for the Web, poetry and more.

87. Backspace

[bksp.org](#)

This writing organization boasts more than 1,100 members, including several *New York Times* bestselling authors.

Check out Steven Hendlin's "Your Write Mind" columns, along with the video book trailers. (Note: All the information here is free except for the forum, which costs \$40 annually to subscribe.)

88. Critique Circle

critiquecircle.com

Be prepared to be an active participant in this online workshop that's home to writers of all genres and includes tools to measure manuscript progress, track submissions, generate characters and more. All ages are welcome.

89. Critters Workshop

critters.org

Founded by Dr. Andrew Burt, a former vice president of the Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America, what started as a critique group for writers in the genre has grown into a set of workshops for almost every form of writing.

90. My Writers Circle

mywriterscircle.com

Garner valuable feedback from My Writers Circle's many review forums. You'll find sections for general advice, resources, job listings and even off-topic conversations.

91. National Novel Writing Month

nanowrimo.org

Dedicate November to writing your novel—at least, that's what NaNoWriMo challenges you to do, with its ambitious collective goal of 50,000 words in 30 days. This site allows you to track your progress and get support from other participants (which, for the first time, topped 200,000 writers in 2010).



92. WritersCafe.org



writerscafe.org

If you're looking for free online writing courses, try this online community, where you can get and give reviews of work, befriend fellow writers and more.

93. The Writer's Chatroom



writerschatroom.com

With dedicated windows for real-time discussions, The Writer's Chatroom pulls in spirited crowds for Celebrity Sundays and Open Chat Wednesdays. Chats are moderated to keep the discourse friendly

and informative. Also, check out the great forum.

94. Writing.com

writing.com

Take advantage of this site's free online writing portfolios. While you're there, you can meet other writers, share your work and enter contests.

95. Young Writers Online



youngwritersonline.net

Run by college-aged writers, this is a forum for teenagers and 20-somethings to post, critique and discuss their work.

96-101

JUST FOR FUN

96. Apostrophe Abuse

apostropheabuse.com

Need a laugh during a quick writing break? Swing by Apostrophe Abuse for a roundup of giggle-inducing signs containing misplaced apostrophes.

97. BookMooch

Bookmooch.com

Why not dust off those books you haven't touched in years and trade them in for titles you really want? This cool book-swapping site makes it easy.

98. The Chicago Manual of Style Online

chicagomanualofstyle.org/CMS_FAQ/new/new_questions01.html

The editors of longtime resource *The Chicago Manual of Style* give amusing answers to writers' questions. You might not learn a lot, but you will laugh a lot.

99. Fake AP Stylebook

twitter.com/fakeapstylebook

While this is strictly a Twitter account rather than a website per se, its hilarious tweets are a guaranteed (and much-



needed) dose of laughter for any overworked journalist.

100. Shakespeare's Den

shakespearesden.com/writing1.html

OK, so the stuff on this site isn't technically free, but it's still filled with eye candy for writers of all types. The literary ducks are a WD staff favorite.

101. Wordsmith

wordsmith.org

Sign up for the A.Word.A.Day e-newsletter to increase your vocabulary (and your Scrabble score). [WD](#)

Brian A. Klems is the online community editor of WD.