



# 30-Day Book Writing Bookcamp!

Week 2: Creating Your Magnetic "Signature Book" Outline



### Table of Contents

30-Day Book Writing Bookcamp – Week 2.....	3
Step One: Identifying Your Signature Topic—and Stance .....	3
Step Two: Identify and Target Your Ideal Reader.....	6
Step Three: How to Make Sure Your Outline Helps—not Hurts—Your Branding ..	8
Step Four: Outline Components .....	10
1. Determine your book length .....	11
2. Define Your Chapters.....	12
APPENDIX A: ACTION PLAN - PROFILING YOUR IDEAL READER .....	16
Finding YOUR Reader: .....	17
APPENDIX B: CHECKLIST .....	26



### 30-Day Book Writing Bookcamp – Week 2

We talked in week one about “signature books”. In the expert world, these are often based on your actual signature program. But what if you don’t have one? Or, what if you are not a coach but have some expertise that you want to share?

Your book can actually help you create a program for your industry! Consider this, before you choose to write a different type of book.

How can a book help you create a program others can follow? When you use a strong, pared-down outline dealing with one single method, topic or goal, you are creating the roots of a signature program.

Or perhaps you are ready to launch a new signature program that has only recently crystallized and come together for you after a few years of working in your industry. In which case, your book can help you successfully and effectively brand and launch your new program.

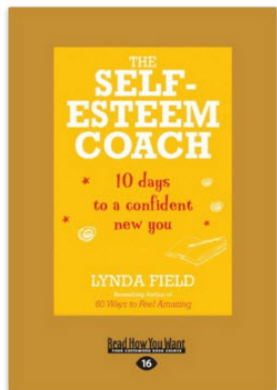
#### Step One: Identifying Your Signature Topic—and Stance

While it’s a great branding tool, your signature book does not *have* to deal with a signature program or be a mini-rehash of one. You can also take other approaches—particularly when you want to become known quickly in a specific area.

For example, U.K. coach, Lynda Field, propelled herself to prominence with her “how-to”, goal-oriented book: [The Self Esteem Coach: 10 Days to a Confident New You](#)







### The Self-Esteem Coach: 10 Days to a Confident New You (Large Print 16pt)

Paperback – May 27 2013

by Lynda Field (Author)

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Notice that her title is absolutely straightforward, simple—and represents what she wishes to be known as (“The Self-Esteem Coach”). She follows this with the promise of:

- a) Transformation
- b) Quick results

Specific results in a specific number of days is a wonderful book formula, if you want to build up **testimonials** and **reviews**—and give people a fast introduction to what you can do. But do note that Field does make sure her actual title **creates an identity** (for the book and for herself).

Because she is promising quick results, her Kindle edition is priced relatively low in the world of coaching books. In this instance, her pricing strategy is a smart move, because this is the sort of book someone will buy on impulse, confident they can get through it quickly and easily—and come out the other side, all the better for reading it.

If you are intimidated by writing books or you are still not sure of your signature product (but absolutely sure what you wish to be known as) this is a great book formula to start with.



## Week 2: Creating Your Magnetic “Signature Book” Outline

Page 5

One more example, before we get onto the topic of your ideal reader—something we haven’t really touched on so far: Tara Mohr’s [Playing Big](#).

WHAT’S IN THE BOOK?

**Introduction: My Story**

How I got so passionate about brilliant women like you playing bigger. And an introduction to the kind of playing big this book is about – not “big” external markers of success, but playing big with your real dreams for your life and career.

---

**Chapter 1: The Inner Critic**

How to recognize your inner critic and practical tools you can use each day to quiet its voice.

---

**Chapter 2: The Inner Mentor**

What if you really did have the answers to many of your biggest challenges within yourself? This chapter is about how how to access and utilize your unfailing (yep, unfailing) inner wisdom.

---

**Chapter 3: A Very Old New Way of Looking at Fear.**

We go back 3000 years to an ancient teaching about the two types of fear because it has such profound relevance for women today. Learn the two types of fear and how to skillfully respond to each.



As an author, Mohr does some Amazon marketing things wrong and many other things right. Her book listing on Amazon lacks a “Look Inside” invitation, and there is (inexplicably) no description – but she has the book on more than one platform. A wise move considering some of Amazon’s new rules and restrictions.

And it is beautifully represented and promoted on her actual website.

*Playing Big* is available at all your favorite retailers. **Click below to order today!**



This is a perfect example of a “My Story” type book, where one identifies with the ideal reader and shows how changing one’s game is truly attainable *because you have already done it.*



Again, she has a short, memorable, “signature” title (“Playing Big”) and her subtitle lets the reader know what she is promising to share (“Find Your Voice, Your Mission, Your Message”).

So every good outline starts with two fundamental truths:

- A **stance** (what you want to be known for)
- Targeting the **ideal reader** you want to attract

And the first way you target your ideal reader is with your all-important title and subtitle.

***TIP: If your title and subtitle don’t reflect a strong identity and a specific promise, it’s proof that you haven’t finished researching and refining your signature book topic!***

### Step Two: Identify and Target Your Ideal Reader

When brainstorming your book, you can start with the right reader—or the right topic.

**How will you know you’ve got the right reader?** She is attracted to your topic like a moth to a flame, buys the book without a blink—and becomes your client. Or puts everything in the book to use and achieves a degree of transformative success she is really excited about—and shares.

**How do you know you’ve got the right topic?** It attracts the sort of reader you want, with the goals you are writing about and the income to invest in your book—and your coaching.





What you *don't* want is a book that attracts a strong readership—but none of them turn into clients (unless you've already got enough clients, and the book is specifically for a lower income or do-it-yourself segment of your audience). Or one that is not aimed at ANY specific reader and you fuzzily hope it will appeal to “everyone”, which it won't!

You have to know what you want readers to do and who you want to buy it, if you want your book to have maximum impact and sales.

You have to know not only that your reader will enjoy and value your book, but that she comes from:

- **The right income demographic** you are aiming to attract
- **The right action-taking mindset** you are aiming to attract

There's no magic formula to this. It's just straight research.

1. Identify **primary keyword phrases** that this reader uses, when searching book platforms like Amazon and Barnes and Noble
2. Study other books in the "Self-help" category and in the sub-category where books about your specialty are found. Note:
  - Repeating **keywords**
  - Which books are **best sellers**
  - **What reviewers say** about these books

*Especially pay attention to reviewer comments.* If a book on your exact topic has no reviews, try to analyze why. Is it very new? Did the author forget to publicize it on her website. (You'd be amazed how many authors have done this!) Is there no “Look Inside” invitation? Is there a Facebook page for it? No? No promotions? Then you have a chance with your similar topic. If the author



has done everything right, however, you might want to rethink either the topic or your approach if there is zero reaction.

When there are reviews, pay attention to:

- What each reviewer specifically liked about the book
- Repeating keywords in these reviews
- What the reviewer felt was missing or disappointing
- Recommendations reviewers made

These are ideas to take note of, not just for your book topic, but also for your outline! (Make notes, under the heading “outline”, as you read reviews.) And finally, contract a fantastic, professional piece of **cover art** that shows your ideal reader at a glance this book is for her—don’t skimp on this, your cover is everything! And, of course, your magnetic, powerful, and focused **title** and **subtitle**. That is how you attract and please your ideal reader.

### Step Three: How to Make Sure Your Outline Helps—not Hurts—Your Branding

If you have followed the above principles in brainstorming, researching and targeting your book, you will be ninety-percent there, as far as branding goes.

It is one thing, however, to know clearly what you want to be known for and what you can promise, and put these into your title. It is entirely another to maintain this position all throughout a book. As you no doubt know from blog posts, it is very easy to veer off topic, go on a tangent, and tell anecdotes that carry you away from your post’s main focus. If you write your book without an outline, you will do this with a vengeance! The result? Your branding will be weakened.





The best way to avoid this is to **write an outline**, make sure every sentence stays on topic and on goal—and tighten the outline even further, once it is finished.

You may need to tweak it, but always measure your tweaks by quantifying them carefully, asking yourself questions like:

- “Will adding this chapter point increase focus on this chapter’s problem or goal... or distract?”
- “Will adding this section help keep the focus on my main promise... or detract from it?”
- “Will adding this anecdote make things clearer for my reader, as well as entertain her?”
- “Is this new point a tangent? Would it be better taken out and reserved for another book or blog post?”
- “Is there a whole new book in the section/point I am about to add/remove?”
- “If I remove this point, is my message still strong? Are things still clear for my reader?”

Before you finalize your outline, make sure you have carefully defined your core audience—the people who will love your book; who are looking for your exact message and promise; who will become your over-the-top fans. Once you’ve done this, just keep every point or chapter in your outline focused on your book’s **identity** and **promise**, and you will be able to keep it tight. (**FAILING** looks like this: Writing a book called “The Dessert Queen: 50 Mouth-Watering Desserts”—then mixing up twelve desserts with two or three dozen recipes for main courses, quick breads and salads, plus throwing in a chapter on swimming. That is the sort of thing that will happen, if you aren’t ruthless in your outline focus.)



### Step Four: Outline Components

If you are putting a signature program into print, first write down, in point form, all the steps of that program. Write down the ultimate book goal—the big take-away for your reader.

Now cross out everything you’ve written that is not absolutely necessary to reach this goal—and transcribe anything that is great stuff, but doesn’t further the book promise/goal elsewhere, to be used in another book.

If your book is less “how-to” and more inspirational, run searches on your title and keywords, and get ideas from Google’s suggestions.

But writing an outline becomes much easier when you start with the essentials...

Your book must have:

- A beginning
- A middle
- An end

The first chapter (or even just first few paragraphs) should set out the “what, where, why, when and who” stuff:

- What the book is going to be about/do
- Who you are (and where you’ve been)
- What it promises to do
- Why you are writing it



Yes, it has to catch the reader’s attention right from the beginning—but let’s not talk about hooks and openers just yet (you’ll no doubt revise your first paragraph anyway). Right now we are concentrating on your outline

Should you include a Prologue or Introduction?

- *Only if you are presenting material that does not fit into the main message of the book.* If you can avoid prologues or introductions, do so! They have their place, but only add them if you feel you must.

Here’s how to write an outline:

### **1. Determine your book length**

The average self-help book clocks in between 50,000 words to 75,000 words. You can make it shorter or longer—but make sure you are not just trying to fill a word count. If you can say everything your reader needs to know in 30,000 words, so much the better. (But if your book becomes too short, consider using it as a sign-up freebie for your site!)

Break the total number of words you have decided on down into daily writing modules. This doesn’t include research time. It includes *only the actual time per day you plan to be glued to the computer, writing.*

For example, if you want to finish writing your book in ninety days, divide your final projected word count (let’s say 45,000 words) by ninety.

You need to commit yourself to writing 500 words a day. (Beef that up to 1,500 words a day, and you can have the writing portion done in a month.)

You may want to adjust this, but creating your outline—including everything in it you think you’ll need to write about in order to fulfil the book’s promise—will help you more accurately guesstimate the final length of your book... which will help





you more accurately schedule your writing time to reach your writing goal to a particular deadline.

### **2. Define Your Chapters**

It doesn't matter if this is a virtual notebook or a pad and paper (or even a mind map)—just use whatever tool you feel most comfortable and relaxed with, for brainstorming.

- Write down your book title
- Jot down every step or separate sub-topic on the way to reaching your book/goal/promise
- Write down your conclusion (hint: It should closely or exactly resemble your promise!)

Each of these “steps” or sub-topics is a chapter. Now go back over your chapters and, one by one, add under these headings individual points on the way to that particular chapter's ultimate end.

Add in necessary pages—the “legals”, you may have heard them called.

This includes:

- Title Page
- Copyright page
- Acknowledgments or dedication page
- Disclaimer Page
- TOC (Table of Contents)



If you want to add any extra pages (like “How to Join My Affiliate Program” or a list of resources or sources cited) these are usually best put at the end of the book.

Once you have done this, you can better estimate the overall length of your book.

Again, go over this outline and ruthlessly weed out any points that don’t directly move your reader towards your book’s goal/promise.

Add in any points you forgot on the first go round. (E.g., “Anecdote—my diet failure”.)

Don’t ignore the necessary pages such as a copyright page and (if you need one) a disclaimer page. It’s best to contact a copyright lawyer to vet your disclaimer page, if you need one—though you can study disclaimer pages of competitors to get an idea of what you need to include (or ignore) for your unique book.

Above all, focus on **delivering what you promise**. That’s everything, in a nutshell.

### **Taking your professionally-developed outline one Olympic step further:**

Another great way to write a tight outline: Purchase PLR for your book. Don’t use the PLR. Just use the outline that is included (or TOC). Then use it only as a rough guide—cut out everything that doesn’t apply to your unique message and substitute your own methods, points and chapters.

Or even just use this outline as a roadmap to refer to, without actually utilizing a single point. (Think of it as a “sample outline”.)

Step Five: Finding Your Voice and Getting Your Message Across



## Week 2: Creating Your Magnetic “Signature Book” Outline

Page 14

The last ingredient a top-level, professional-author quality book has to possess is a strong voice.

What is “voice”, in this particular context?

It means:

- Standing out from all the generic voices
- Sounding like yourself
- Having a distinct character and flavor

Think of a room full of average-looking men in identical grey suits. They are all wearing bowler hats. All are pale with thin lips. They are all 5'9". Not even a different-colored tie makes any single one of them stand out. And they are all sitting absolutely still, like statues. Would you remember the fourth man from the left, six rows back, one day later? No. He was identical to his peers: *He didn't do, say or wear anything to make him stick in your memory.*

The literary equivalent of that is what new authors erroneously do all the time. They deliberately try to sound exactly like their peer-authors. Then they over-edit until every drop of personality is erased from their manuscripts.

That won't be you.

Unless you are trying to impress an academic body, you want the reverse: You *want to sound in print exactly the same way you sound in life*. Example: If you swear all the time, keep swearing (modified discreetly) in your book. If you never swear, don't start swearing now. But above all, **be conversational**. And if you find yourself going all “writerly” (using flowery phrases or lots of adjectives and adverbs) give yourself a slap on the wrist, and go back to saying exactly what you mean to say, exactly the way you would speak this to a client, face to face. Be direct.





Pay attention also to **pacing** and **flow**.

- **The best way to get your pacing right** (that's the rhythm of your prose) is to speak the way you do in life. If you normally chatter talkatively, chatter talkatively in your book (don't start using short, terse sentences if it just doesn't feel like you). If you are normally minimalist and thoughtful in your speech style, be minimalist and thoughtful in your writing.
- **The best way to get your flow right**—the VERY best way—is never, ever to edit yourself as you write.
- Try to get your thoughts out all in one go. Rush through the writing in one single “first draft”, picking up every day where you left off and resisting the urge to re-read yesterday's writing.

Don't rewrite or edit anything until you have completely finished writing your book. (We'll cover editing in “**Week 4: Writing, Editing and Formatting Your Book like a Pro**”.)

Enjoy the process. Have fun! Have one particular reader in mind, and convince yourself you're writing a letter to her or coaching her through a session, if that helps.

When it comes to finding your voice, above all—be yourself!



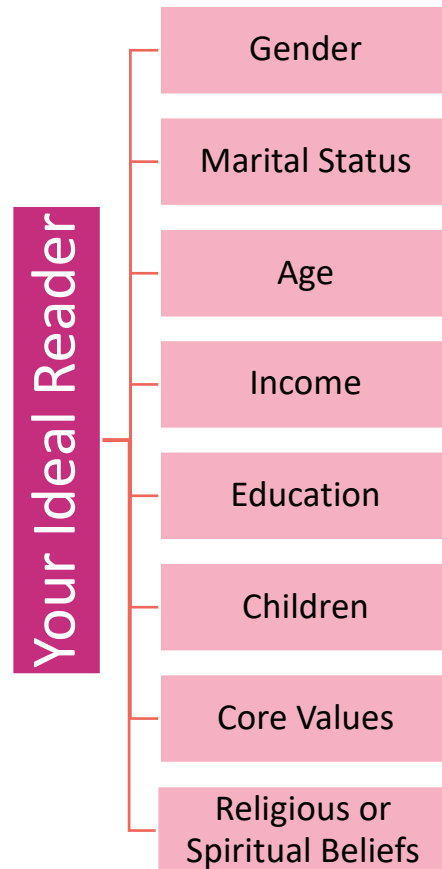
### APPENDIX A: ACTION PLAN - PROFILING YOUR IDEAL READER

Your Company Name/Title \_\_\_\_\_

Tagline: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Complete this action plan to ensure you have an accurate picture of the reader you are targeting:*



## Week 2: Creating Your Magnetic "Signature Book" Outline

Page 17

### **Finding YOUR Reader:**

- **Visit the book's/author's Facebook Page** of similar books and reading the comments
- **Read testimonials** on the author's website
- **Read the book's reviews** on multiple platforms (e.g. Barnes and Noble, Amazon, Goodreads, etc.)

1. Who is excited about similar books and recommends/shares their titles?

*(Enter actual names/URLs to the right, if you have them)*

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_





2. List the most common, repeating **keywords** that fans of the book use in reviews, comments, etc.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Week 2: Creating Your Magnetic “Signature Book” Outline

Page 19

**What is this reader’s most well-represented:**

Educational Status	Gender	Age range	Income Range	Family or single?

**What Is Her GOAL?**



3. What other common data have you noted about her?

*(E.g. religion, food preferences, etc.)*

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_



4. Which topics does she talk about most:

- In reviews?
- In comments?
- In social media?

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_

■ \_\_\_\_\_



## Week 2: Creating Your Magnetic "Signature Book" Outline

Page 22

**Create a fictional "biography" for your ideal reader, based on the preceding data/statistics:**

Avatar Name: \_\_\_\_\_

is a \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_

She most urgently wants/needs \_\_\_\_\_

In her spare time, she \_\_\_\_\_

Her core values are \_\_\_\_\_

She likes \_\_\_\_\_

She dislikes \_\_\_\_\_



### EXERCISES: FINDING YOUR UNIQUE VOICE

*Do each exercise separately, on different occasions, so you can devote your whole attention to the exercise you are engaging in—instead of rushing to get to the next exercise.*

1. Take your outline and jot down points you want to cover in your first chapter. Just do this without stopping to think. Write down whatever comes into your head.

Read over your list and cross out anything that is a tangent or off-topic.

Now start writing your first chapter—but **preface your writing with “Dear [Your ideal client-bio avatar name]”**

Write as if you are **writing a letter** or sending a letter.

Do this until your brain gets tired.

*YOU WILL MOST LIKELY SCRAP THIS VERSION, so be totally relaxed about it. Have some fun with it!*

2. Choose 3-6 of your favorite self-help books whose authors' voices really resonate and connect with you.

**Type out at least 1-3 pages of each author's work.**

(This exercise lets you feel what it's like to write with a strong voice, without having to worry about creating one.)

Using these 3-6 favorite self-help books, study how each author has separated information into different types of prose (e.g., story and action steps).



Example:

<b>Story</b> →	<p>When I was a child, we used to drive to Montana every spring. There were no CD players in cars, so my brother and I would bring a collection of hand-held travel games, action figures and puzzle books. We called it our “survival kit” and my mother gave each of us a different-colored canvas bag to keep our individual survival items in. (The deal was, we could each have only one item out of the bag at a time.)</p> <p>These brightly-colored bags delighted me in a tactile way, and I learned early to color-code when organizing.</p>
<b>Action Steps</b> →	<p><b>Step 1: Decide whether or not you are most predominantly a:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Visual thinker</li><li>➤ Auditory learner</li><li>➤ Textual learner</li></ul>

Decide which author’s style resonates with you the most—and take a moment to note down what type of worksheets or written aids your own clients most enthusiastically and easily respond to.

**Choose one style** and stick to it through your book—not necessarily copying any particular author’s, but with a new awareness of how information layout affects readability for your unique reader in mind.

**TIP:** If you plan to format your book for a particular online platform such as Amazon, complex graphic layouts can cause more problems in viewing (depending on different devices) and either cost you much more time in formatting or more money, having a specialist format for you.

**KEEP YOUR FORMATTING CHOICES SIMPLE.**

3. Re-read any exercises you have written. Does your writing:

- **Stand out** from all the generic voices you’ve ever read in your self-help category?
- Sound like **you**?





- Possess a **distinct character, tone and flavor?**

4. Read the exercise you like most, **aloud**.

- Does your tongue tangle up over any particular words or phrases?
- Does it feel fun and natural or do you feel like you are reading a legal document?

If you answered “yes” to either of these two questions, it's a sure sign you need to go back and do more writing. Start by removing or changing “tangled” spots, reading them aloud as you re-write.

5. Are you remembering these tips as you write:

- Always finish your thoughts all the way through—no matter how incoherent you feel you are being.
- Get your book (or at least chapter) out in one draft. **Never** edit in the middle of writing
- Write as you speak in real life. Write until it seems to flow!
- Be authentic. Share your failures and weaknesses—don't try to be a Superhero!



### APPENDIX B: CHECKLIST

- I want my book to:
  - Reinforce a signature program I have already created
  - Familiarize people with a signature method I have put together
  - Convince people that if I can do it, they can too
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- My title gives me and my book with a strong, clear identity:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I want to be known for:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I have identified my ideal, target reader
- I have ensured my book is targeting:
  - The right income demographic
  - Readers with an action-taking mindset—and motivation
- I have identified primary keyword searches this reader uses on book-selling platforms:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- I have studied similar books to mine in Amazon’s “self-help” category, and



## Week 2: Creating Your Magnetic “Signature Book” Outline

Page 27

I have particularly taken note of:

- Those with “best seller” status
- Keywords that reappear frequently in book descriptions and reviews
- The reviews and ratings
- When it comes to reviews on the books I am studying and comparing, I am paying particular attention to:
  - What each reviewer specifically liked about the book
  - Repeating keywords in these reviews
  - What the reviewer felt was missing or disappointing
  - Recommendations reviewers made
  - Other\_\_\_\_\_
- As soon as I have finalized my topic and angle, I will commission professional book cover art
- I understand that the book’s cover will be vitally important in hooking my ideal reader, and I will give it my fullest attention
- I have created a tight outline for my book (before ever writing a word)
- I have weeded out tangents from my outline
- I have ensured every outline chapter and point:
  - Stays on topic
  - Leads to fulfilling my book’s promise and goal



## Week 2: Creating Your Magnetic “Signature Book” Outline

Page 28

My book has:

- ☐ A beginning
- ☐ A middle
- ☐ An end
- ☐ My first chapter lays the groundwork for and states:
  - ☐ What the book is going to be about/do
  - ☐ Who I am (and where I've been)
  - ☐ What it promises to do
  - ☐ Why I am writing it
- ☐ I have determined an estimate of my book's final length:  
\_\_\_\_\_ words
- ☐ I have decided how many words per day or hours per day I will commit
- ☐ I have calculated how long writing my \_\_\_\_\_ word book at \_\_ words per day/hours per day will take me:
- ☐ Total: \_\_\_\_\_ days
- ☐ I have defined my chapters
- ☐ I have decided on and allowed for other necessary “housekeeping” pages (the “legals”):
  - ☐ Title Page
  - ☐ Copyright page





## Week 2: Creating Your Magnetic “Signature Book” Outline

Page 29

- ☐ Acknowledgments or dedication page
- ☐ Disclaimer Page
- ☐ TOC (Table of Contents)
- ☐ Appendices
- ☐ Citations
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I am using professional outline samples or examples
- ☐ I am studying other similar authors' TOCs to see how their books are laid out
- ☐ I am working on speaking in my book with my unique, authentic voice
- ☐ My voice:
  - ☐ Stands out from all the generic voices
  - ☐ Sounds like myself
  - ☐ Has a distinct character and flavor
- ☐ I am paying attention to:
  - ☐ Pacing
  - ☐ Flow
- ☐ I am resisting the urge to edit as I write
- ☐ I am having fun writing my book and being myself

