

NOTES ON THE PROMPTS

A message from Rachel...

These prompts are written with love for you.

For each prompt, set a timer for yourself and then commit to keeping your pen on the page for the full time.

You could choose to write from your point of view, the point of view of someone you know, or the point of view of a character you've been working with in your writing.

As always, you know what's best for you and your writing, so change them up in any way that better suits your voice, project, and writing goals. In addition, you know your experience with the senses and if any of the prompts are inaccessible to you change them up or write about the absence of sense if that feels right to you.



I hope you enjoy the prompts! xo

SENSE OF HEARING

“SEMANTIC SATIATION”

1. Write a list of your favourite words today.
2. Pick one word and write it over and over.
3. Say it aloud if you can in the space you're in right now.
4. Write a new definition of the word.
5. Now use this new definition as a prompt for your writing. Continue writing about what this new word means to you.

Use this space to start your list of favourite words, if you'd like...



SENSE OF HEARING

“SOUNDS AROUND YOU”

1. Take a moment to listen, really listen, to the sounds around you. Write a list of all the sounds you hear.
2. Choose one of the things you hear and write for two minutes about everything you know about this item.
3. Choose another item on your list and repeat.
4. Now write using both of those images in a scene or snippet where the first item (person, place, thing making the sound) from your list is visible at the beginning and the other is hidden.
5. As you write, switch them so the other one is visible or hidden.

Use this space to start your list of things you hear, if you'd like...



SENSE OF SMELL

“SCENT OF AN EMOTION”

1. Write a list of all of the emotions you experienced in the past week—good, bad, neutral. You could also add all of the emotions you witnessed in the past week. Let the list be long.
2. For each emotion, write about the smells that might evoke that emotion. *What is the scent of anger, joy, frustration?*
3. Once you have filled in those scents, write a scene or snippet where someone experiences one or more of those emotions and do not name the emotion. Use the scents to show the emotion.

Use this space to start your list of emotions, if you'd like...



SENSE OF SMELL

“EARLY AROMAS”

1. Write a list of your earliest memories.
2. What did each of these memories smell like? What scents were around?
3. Choose the smell that most resonates with you and write a story or poem where this smell is present. Imbue your writing with your memories or create an entirely new scenario.

Use this space to write a list of your earliest memories, if you'd like...



SENSE OF TASTE

“TASTE AND CHARACTER”

1. Write a list of people you have prepared a beverage for—a beverage of any kind, cocktails, tea. (If the list is short, add people who prepared a beverage for you.)
2. For each of the people on your list, write in the following construction (this part of the exercise comes from Matthew Salesses’ book, *Craft in the Real World*).

[Insert name] was the type of person who_____.

Example:

Emy was the type of person who went “out for coffee” frequently, but disliked the taste of caffeine.

3. Choose one of the sentences to build upon. Describe a scene, image, event that shows why they are “the type of person who_____.” Evoke the senses, in particular flavours, but all senses in this scene or snippet.

Use this space to start your list of people you’ve prepared beverages for, if you’d like...

SENSE OF TASTE

“MEAL PREPARATION”

1. Write a list of home-cooked meals— food you enjoy cooking with others, or on your own, or to have cooked for you.
2. Choose one meal and write instructions on how to prepare a it. Include who you (or your narrator) are instructing how to cook and why. Describe all of the flavours of the ingredients as you prepare your instructions.

Use this space to start your list of home-cooked meals, if you'd like...



SENSE OF TOUCH

“MISSING TOUCH”

Write about a character of your choice who misses something they cannot touch. What is it this character longs to touch and why can they not touch it?

Use this space to begin writing, if you'd like...

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin orange border, intended for the student to write their response to the prompt.

SENSE OF TOUCH

“TOUCHED POV”

1. Write a list of things you touched this week: objects, plants and animals, elements.
2. Choose one item on your list to write about in more detail. Write everything you know about this item. Write everything you do not know about this item. Where did it come from? Who else touched it?
3. Now writing a scene, story, snippet, verse from the perspective of this item.

Use this space to start your list of things you touched, if you'd like...




SENSE OF SIGHT

“EKPHRASIS”

1. Write a list of memorable works of art you have seen, including sculptures, paintings, mixed media work, performance art, sidewalk chalk, graffiti, fashion, and any other visual creations you have witnessed.
2. Write about this work of art and really let the visual senses go wild.

Use this space to start your list of artwork, if you'd like...



SENSE OF SIGHT

“PICTURING CHARACTERS”

1. Write a list of people you have been photographed with—anyone at all.
2. Write a list of daily routines (e.g. a morning cup of coffee, an evening toothbrushing), but make it specific (e.g. morning battle to get socks on a child, evening dark chocolate).
3. Choose one person from your list and one routine from your list and write about them going through this routine.

Use this space to start your lists, if you'd like...



SIXTH SENSE

“VESTIBULAR AND PROPRIOCEPTIVE SYSTEMS”

1. Write a list of movements you made this week, including all the times you may have used your sense of balance and awareness of your body in space—coordinating movements, jumping over things, standing, and picking things up.
2. Choose a movement from your list and write a poem, story, scene, snippet about a character (or character you) using making these movements. Slow it down to the most minute parts of the movement.

Use this space to start your list of movements, if you'd like...



SIXTH SENSE

“YOUR INNER VOICE”

1. Write a list of what your sixth sense, your intuition, has been telling you this week.
2. Write a letter to yourself from that inner voice that knows the truth.

Use this space to start your list, if you'd like...



Stay with it!

Bring this sensory approach to all of your writing in order to invite your reader to more deeply understand and connect with you and your characters.



RACHEL THOMPSON

Writing Courses