

## Busting Through the Block

- If you are blocked on what a character should do next or how they would react to a story event/plot turner go back and work on characterization. Chances are you need to flesh out more details on who she is- what are her goals, values, motivations, beliefs, etc. It might help to get to know her again. Most often hitting this kind of brick wall means you need to do more work on your character(s).
- If you are blocked on what will happen next in your story (plotting), go back and review your story outline or do one if you were writing by the seat of your pants. What story questions must be answered? What are the internal and external conflicts? What are the character motivations? What are the character goals? What is the dark moment when all seems lost? What is the climax (main characters must make a decision and take action)? What is the resolution? How are the main characters changed by this journey at the end?

## Writing Exercises To Kick Start Your Brain

1. Start a scene with your protagonist arriving or leaving some place in your story setting. Describe this setting through her eyes, including emotional reactions. Describe how secondary (or other major character) view the setting and the arrival of the main character using facial expressions, body language and dialogue. How does this affect the scene where you hit a block?
2. Write a character's worst moment, something that changed her or him in a basic way. Now write a scene where the effects of that event color how the character lives, views the world now in a way that affects your plot.
3. Write a scene in which your character is arguing her viewpoint, some subject that she feels strongly about. This could be high concept (e.g. testifying before Congress, talking to a kidnapper) or discussing some subject with another character (relationship problem, family problem). Either way make the stakes high, in other words something terrible will happen if she doesn't prevail. Throw in some barriers that might keep her from prevailing. How does she overcome these?