

---



# FLIGHT SCHOOL



WITH JENNIFER LAUCK

---

A summary of assignments given from 2/20 to 4/10/22.

## **1) Post 2/20/22: Getting to Know Each Other**

Free write on the “moment” you decided to tell the tale of your own life, your desired outcome in writing from life, and what you’ve done up to this point toward growing a practice.

## **2) Post 2/24/22: Healing at a Slant**

Is there an earnest desire within you to know the Truth with a capital T, meaning the truth that might be beyond what you know now, or can even bear when it arises? If no, that’s fine. If you say, “Yeah. No. I’m interested in writing only about this and nothing else,” that’s totally understandable and good to know. You have limits. You are clear about those limits. Jump over the rest of this exercise and move to the next. If yes, well, okay. Now you know this about yourself. You know that you are something like Percival, the knight-in-training, and that you are going to make a lot of stupid but necessary mistakes, including misunderstanding the truth when it’s right there looking you in the eye. Good. Okay. Now...to get yourself started, can you write down the question, “What ails me?” and let the answer come over time? Can you watch, and note your quick answer to the question and still allow the question to go unanswered for a while?

## **3) Post 2/27/22: This Little Thing Called the Arc**

Can you go into posting #2, read [The Fisher King](#), and note the outer and inner arcs, and then where the two collide?

## **4) Post 3/3/22: Sustainability**

Creating ritual to include the setting of intention through to the dedication of merit can help a memoir writer—that brave warrior diving into the past—sustain herself over the long haul. (FYI: You can expect it to take at least eighteen months to several years to write a full length memoir). An example ritual was provided in this post. Let it inspire you to follow the steps or build on them in order to create a system that is more like “you” and follows your particular faith. Taking this a step further, note when you wrote in this space of intention and ritual, and when you didn’t. Was there a difference in your mood that day? Can you journal about that difference?

## 5) Post 3/6/22: Stages and Phases Pt. 1 ~ Organized Chaos

Getting two journals, try the following:

- **Report:** the first journal is to hold the story as it starts to reveal itself to you from the “What ails me?” exercise or that you already know. Just the facts ma’am, is what you use this journal for. You also make note of the research you need to do, the people you might need to call and interview, and the docs you need from official sources (police reports, medical records, wills, personal papers and journals kept by members of your family, photo graphs).
- **Emote:** the second journal is where you have it out emotionally. That is, let it all out. RAGE ON THE PAGE. Write and cry and scream. Feel. Feel. Feel. We are all afraid to feel, especially in the “pull yourself up by your boot straps,” US of A because well, it’s not very profitable. Feeling leads to your natural capacity for spaciousness and peace, and a true appreciation for the complexity of a human life. Feeling leads to humility and compassion—for yourself and for others. Now, how do we do that in a way that feels safe for us? Well, this journal is a start. And if you want to help yourself with a small ritual that holds an intention and dedication (#4 above), try this: [The Welcoming Prayer](#). This can open and close your emoting sessions. It’s simple and helpful and well, gracious.

## 6) Post 3/10/22: Stages and Phases Pt. 2 ~ Form

Once you have a sense you want to write about your life, and have a picture of what you might be writing about, it’s natural to move in the direction of form. Is it a poem? Short story? Lyric? Essay? Memoir? Novel based on events from your life?

I didn’t get into fictional options in this post, and I won’t get there for a long while to come, but I *am* writing a novel based on true events. I’ll call it Mem-iction, or Fict-oire. Who knows? So, we will get there.

The point of this post on stages and phases and definitions of form was to nudge you toward the form that suits you best right now. Yes, this will change over time. That’s okay. Let it. But just like you started with an apartment when you first set out on your own, or a trailer, or your car, or a tent...and then progressed to a duplex, or a tree house, or whatever...the point is your form is like a container to hold your story. Think about what you like to read most, and that’s likely what you are writing. Or not. Bottom line: Let a form take shape.

## 7) Post 3/17/22: Memoir Audaciously Re-defined

Have you told anyone you are writing about your life? If yes, use the list in this posting to draw the story out by answering a few of the questions offered, or by coming up with a few that suit you better. The bottom line in this exercise is that you take a moment to gauge the reaction of that person and your own in response to theirs. The person who you first tell is often a mirror of your own internal state at this point in the process. You are getting to know your antagonistic forces too, those outer influences that put pressure on you as you try to press forward in your personal evolution. So, in the end, this is a telling and a getting to know exercise.

### **8) Posts 3/20, 3/22, 3/24: Bread Crumbs on a Starvation Trail**

Here you are invited to make a list of ten things that happened to you and write quickly. Don't ponder. Don't think. Don't mess around. Ten things. Go.

Circle three from your list that you **do not** want to write about.

Write a story about one of those three things.

Another part of this exercise is to examine your reaction to the exercise itself. What came up for you? What did you resist and why? What surprised you the most? The least? Journal a bit about all of this and see what shows up on the page.

### **9) Posts 3/27, 3/31, 4/3: Flying Lesson #1~ Pts. 1-3**

This was the first big teaching where you were provided with an essay to read and, while you did, invited to pay attention to the outer and inner arcs.

Next you were provided with a breakdown of the arc lines as well as a teaching on "what the story was about" at the deepest level of interior motivations.

And last came a teaching on endings and how to create a dissonance that reflects lived experience, called Book Ending. The assignments break down as follows:

- Find two events in your own life that can be laid next to each other and that have a common pivot point. My example had to do with life and death and then the pivot point was going to a hospital.
- Look at one of your own stories, perhaps already written and simmering on the back burner, and find the most powerful images and symbols, the ones that lift out of the pages. Can you then move them to the ending of the story and incorporate them in a new way that echoes the way they were used in the beginning?

### **10) Post 4/7: Flying Lesson #1~ Pt. 4**

This was a return to the work that started our time together at Flight School, which has to do with what ails you, at the deepest level, but now nudges you toward flipping the perspective.

The offering here was a free write where you are with a wise guide and anticipating a life you might live in the future. You are excited to be born and have a human experience, but before you go, you speak with a wise presence and together, lay out what it is you need to learn in this life to come. Can you write this, as a free write, and see what arises? And might you even imagine that this is the conversation you had before embarking on this life? See what comes up.

## 11) Post 4/10: Flying Lesson #1~ Pt. 5

Finally we arrive at the last (most recent lesson) on circular structures (chiasm) and how they can align with the circular pattern of another chart on antagonistic forces in the book *Story* by Robert McKee.

- The first assignment was to print out McKee's chart, and then draw your own circular chart on another sheet of paper. Place your core wound (or the core issue of the story) in the center of the second chart and then looking at McKee's chart, list the antagonistic forces that challenge your progress as you move through the experience. I've provided my own chart which correlates to *Show Me The Way* as an example. Perhaps free write about how it feels to see your story in a circular way. Are you getting a sense of the sheer number and force of the obstacles working against you? And if yes, can you develop some compassion for what you are able to achieve and overcome in every challenge you face?
- The second assignment invited you to imagine that you are writing a story to a particular reader who is the community that harmed you. Examples included the nurses, doctors, and insurance company executives who harmed me in the story *Show Me the Way*. And Meredith Hall, who wrote to her small home town when creating *Without a Map*.



📖 As you can see, we've done a lot! 📝

You may not have done any of these exercises, but don't fret. They are here for you, in one easy location and you can return to them any time. Like my mentor once said, "You can only get a tablespoon in this lifetime." Bottom line: There is no shortage of inspiration here, and I hope that something of this bounty of offerings and opportunities inspires you.

See you in a few days.

~ Jennifer ❤️

### **Blackbird Studio**

*Where good writers become great*

[www.blackbirdstudiopdx.com](http://www.blackbirdstudiopdx.com)

[www.jenniferlauck.com](http://www.jenniferlauck.com)

[Flight School Newsletter](#)

