



## The A-Z of writing C-d

From C to d. Third in the series revisiting John Simmons' book *The Invisible Grail*. Follow it weekly for a workout in writing agility that will influence and improve your words for work. Next – D to e, published on Friday 1 May.

**C**oronavirus is right there at the forefront of our thinking, threatening to dominate everything we do. But can you force yourself to think new thoughts and write new words by plunging yourself into a period, say ten minutes, of automatic writing? That means just writing without thinking too restrictively, allowing your words to emerge unedited in a stream. Who knows what will emerge when you allow one word to follow on from another in a stream you don't attempt to channel through any of the normal ways of being. Being unconstrained is in a strange way a different form of constraint, you can burst free and unlock something surprising, something that had not previously occurred. Sitting on the tube originally, now a forbidden journey in times of isolation, and writing – perhaps the very place for random occurrences to happen along, for unbidden ideas to come whistling through a tunnel. Or perhaps to be held by a signal and sent away back up the track, even if that turns out not to be the track you came down originally. Because you let your pencil write and it keeps moving and the only discipline you impose is a physical one to keep the pencil moving across the paper, not the mental discipline to shape your thoughts into conventional coherence. What emerges might be gibberish but it can help release your mind and allow an essential element of chance and serendipity and metaphor into your words like a bluebell in the woods or a

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candle in the window at night or the joyful call of a song thrush. This is writing just for yourself not for wider publication, but you might just find the glint of gold in among the material you discard. And because that word here might never have been placed next to that word there, our emotions change a little and seize on the brightness that is peeking through, even if in the end all our thinking at the moment returns to that single word Covid.

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With a new chapter released weekly, look out for the next in the series, D-e, arriving with you on Friday 1 May. Follow us on [Linked In](#) or via our [Insights page](#) to find your weekly dose of writing inspiration.

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