



Rich, Real, and Relevant

Writing Devotions for Kids



Writing Real Devotions

Real Conversations

- Just because our devotions are short, or of few words, or for children . . .
 - does not mean they are fluff
 - does not mean they aren't useful or beneficial (even to adults)
 - does not mean we don't need to take the writing of them seriously

Real Research

- Bible Search Sites
 - BibleGateway.com
 - OpenBible.info
 - BlueLetterBible.org
 - Google, or other search engine

Real Reading

- Read, read, read!

Writing Relevant Devotions

Act Like a Kid

- Observe them in their natural habitat.
 - Go to the park, the zoo, kids' night at a restaurant.
 - Eavesdrop!
 - Volunteer.
- Read what they're reading.



Think Like a Kid

- Remember that kids are more concrete and literal thinkers.
- Use real, kid-world examples.
- Study the concepts kids understand at various ages.
<https://www.lifeway.com/en/special-emphasis/levels-of-biblical-learning>

Feel Like a Kid

- Kids have very real struggles.
- Some common fears and worries of kids . . .

Writing Rich Devotions

Do's and Don'ts of Word Choice and Vocabulary

- Do's . . .
 - Do consider age- and reading-levels.
 - Do use context to introduce new words.
 - Do compare the unknown to the known to aid understanding.
 - Do avoid using “church-speak” and “Christian-ese.”
- Don'ts . . .
 - Don't talk down to kids.
 - Don't preach.
 - Don't tell them what to do.



A Rich Voice

Voice = word choice + rhythm

Word choice = vocabulary

Rhythm = sentence length + punctuation

For playful, lively writing, use devices like . . .

- fun, active words
- alliteration
- repetition
- internal and near rhymes
- onomatopoeia
- questions that directly address the reader
- humor and sass
- shorter sentences
- exclamation points

For more lyrical writing, use devices like:

- soft, soothing words
- a sense of wonder
- alliteration
- repetition
- internal and near rhymes
- similes and metaphors
- longer sentences

To give your words rhythm . . .

- Vary sentence lengths.
- Don't be afraid to use fragments.
- Use repetition—of phrases, ideas, or as synonyms.
- Use action words.
- Repeat consonant or vowels sounds to create rhythm.



WRITING RICH, REAL, AND RELEVANT DEVOTIONS

The “Formula”

- Begin with a hook, a connection to the reader.
 - It can be a question.
 - It can be a common feeling or problem, something we all experience.
 - It can be an interesting fact that snags the reader’s interest.
- Expound on the hook a bit.
- Connect it to the Bible, to the key message.
- Connect the message to the reader’s life.
- Circle back for a wrap-up and takeaway

And the finishing touches . . .

- Title—make it snappy!
- Key Scripture
- Prayer—kid friendly please!
- Activity, extra facts, or application

The “Process”

- Begin with an idea.
- Brainstorm.
- Pick out a main thread to follow.
- Research all the needed details.
- Write it all out in sentences.
- Edit for sense, flow, and word count.
- Read aloud and edit some more.
- Polish—and then polish some more.

