

WRITING, EDITING, AND SELF-PUBLISHING YOUR STORIES

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Course Description:

Discover the joy of turning life experiences into a compelling story. This crash course guides you through storytelling, formatting, proofing, editing, and self-publishing—whether preserving family history or sharing personal reflections. No writing experience needed, just a desire to tell your story! Learn some new tricks on the process of writing and publishing -- quickly and inexpensively. Learn how you can use AI to proof and edit for free. Needed: Microsoft Word or a similar word processor and Internet connection.

Class Outline:

1. **Gathering Ideas & Structuring Your Story**
 - Explore methods for collecting ideas and selecting a structure that fits your narrative. Each class includes dedicated writing time.
2. **Proofreading & Editing**
 - Learn essential editing techniques to refine your story, ensuring clarity, coherence, and readability.
3. **Designing the Cover & Organizing Content**
 - Create an engaging cover and develop a well-structured table of contents and index for easy navigation.
4. **Final Touches & Forward Steps**
 - Understand the self-publishing process, from formatting to ordering a proof copy for final review. (We'll walk through publishing on Lulu.com.)



Contents

Lesson 1 – Gathering Ideas & Structuring Your Story.....	4
Part 1 – Unearthing Your Story – Compiling Your Ideas.....	4
Part 2 – Choose Your Narrative Structure: Chronological or Thematic	10
Part 3—Tips for Getting Started Writing Your Story.....	11
Part 4 – Using Pacemaker Planner to Set Writing Goals.....	11
Lesson 2 – Proofreading and Editing	13
Part 1—Meet Your Editor-in-Residence: Microsoft Copilot	13
Part 2: Preparing Your Document for Publishing in Microsoft Word.....	15
Part 3: The Prep Steps for LibreOffice Writer	18
Lesson 3: Designing the Cover & Organizing Content.....	21
Part 1: Creating a Table of Contents (TOC) in Word	21
Part 2: Creating an Index in Word	21
Part 3: Saving a Print-Ready PDF (With TOC and Fonts)	22
Part 4: Setting Up a Lulu Account & Uploading Your Book.....	22
Part 5: Creating a Cover with Lulu’s Cover Designer.....	23
Lesson 4: Final Touches & Forward Steps.....	24
Part 1: The Writer’s Mindset.....	24
Part 2: Back Matter: Making the Last Page Count	24
Part 3: Thoughtful Use of Images.....	25
Part 4: Gifting & Sharing	25
Part 5: Reviews & Feedback.....	25
Troubleshooting Tips.....	26



Lesson 1 – Gathering Ideas & Structuring Your Story

Part 1 – Unearthing Your Story – Compiling Your Ideas

Our lives are filled with moments—some grand, some quiet—that shape who we are. Writing your story begins with remembering these experiences and choosing the ones that carry meaning. But storytelling doesn't stop at memory—it invites imagination. Whether you're recounting a real event or crafting something entirely fictional, every story begins with a spark: a moment, an emotion, a question worth exploring.

Getting Started

1. ***Settle Into the Classroom Environment*** – Take a moment to get comfortable. While we're in a group setting, this activity is personal, so try to focus inward as you reflect on your memories. If helpful, close your eyes for a few seconds and let your thoughts drift back in time.
2. ***If You're Writing a Personal Non-fiction Story, Focus on the Memory Joggers List*** – Use the prompts below as inspiration. Don't worry about writing full stories yet—just jot down moments that come to mind.
3. ***If You're Writing Fiction, Fill in the Story Development Worksheet*** – What comes to you instantly? Write those down first.
4. ***Dig Deeper*** – Think beyond the obvious: What ideas are connected to items in the list and worksheet?
5. ***Use Sensory Triggers*** – Use scents, sounds, and sights that transport you to a specific time.
6. ***Write Freely and Without Judgment*** – There are no wrong choices. Every idea has potential.
7. ***Expand on Key Moments*** – Once you have a list of ideas, choose a few to describe in detail.



Memory Joggers for Personal Story Writing

Life Events & Milestones

First childhood memory

Family traditions & gatherings

School days—favorite teacher, best friend

First job—what it taught you

Falling in love—first crush, first date

Marriage or partnership

Becoming a parent or grandparent

Special memories with grandchildren

A major life challenge, how you overcame it

Personal Reflections & Sensory Triggers

*A song that brings back a specific
moment*

A scent that reminds you of home

A meal that evokes strong emotions

A piece of advice that shaped your life

A place that holds deep significance

A time you felt truly proud

A moment of unexpected kindness

A fear you conquered

A book or movie that influenced you



Life Events & Milestones

A turning point that changed your path

A memorable trip or adventure

A funny or embarrassing moment

A friendship that shaped you

Something lost and later found

A family heirloom or keepsake

Personal Reflections & Sensory Triggers

A childhood game or pastime

A holiday or celebration that stands out

A letter or note that meant a lot

A time you felt completely at peace

A lesson learned the hard way

A moment of pure joy

Final Thought: This exercise is meant to be engaging and reflective. Your personal story is uniquely yours, and these prompts will help you uncover the moments that define it. Write freely, embrace nostalgia, and celebrate your journey.

Fiction Story Development Worksheet

Story Title (Working): _____

Theme or Central Idea: _____

Date Started: _____

1. What is this story really about beneath the surface plot?

→



2. *Why must this story be told?*

→

3. *What emotional or philosophical truths are you exploring?*

→

4. *Who is the protagonist, and what do they deeply want—versus what they actually need?*

→

5. *How do the protagonist's fears or flaws shape their choices?*

→

6. *What relationships will change them, and how?*

→

7. *Where and when does the story take place?*

→

8. *What sensory details (sights, sounds, textures, smells) make this world feel real or enchanted?*

→

9. *What systems—social, magical, political, historical—need to be coherent and evocative?*

→

10. *What kicks the story into motion (the inciting incident)?*

→

11. *What internal and external obstacles does the protagonist face?*

→

12. *What is the climax—the moment of irreversible change?*

→

13. *Who's telling the story, and why are they the right voice?*

→

14. *What tone fits: lyrical, wry, stark, playful, meditative, etc.?*

→



15. Is there a motif or visual metaphor that threads through the story?
→

16. How does the protagonist evolve—or fail to?
→

17. What will the reader think about differently by the end?
→

18. Does the ending echo or subvert the beginning—and how?
→

The Snowflake Method Story Development Worksheets (Simplified)

A step-by-step guide to building your story from a single idea into a compelling narrative.

STEP 1: ONE-SENTENCE SUMMARY

Goal: Craft a single sentence (≤15 words) capturing the essence of your story.

Prompt:

“A _____ must _____ in order to _____.”

Example: A reclusive artist must forge a masterpiece to save his crumbling reality.

STEP 2: ONE-PARAGRAPH SUMMARY

Goal: Expand your one sentence into a paragraph covering:

- The setup
- Major turning points (at least three)
- The ending resolution



STEP 3: CHARACTER PROFILES

Goal: Write a one-page summary for each major character. Include these sections:

- *Name & Role*
 - *Primary Goal / Motivation*
 - *Internal & External Conflict*
 - *Key Change / Epiphany*
 - *One-Sentence Arc Summary*
-

STEP 4: FULL-PAGE PLOT SYNOPSIS

Goal: Expand your paragraph from Step 2 into a full-page overview. Focus on:

- *Key scenes*
 - *Character interplay*
 - *Themes and tone*
 - *Major revelations or twists*
-

STEP 5: CHARACTER JOURNEY SYNOPSSES

Goal: Write a half-page summary for each character's path through the story. Include:

- *Personal growth*
 - *Crucial relationships*
 - *Turning points*
-

STEP 6: SCENE LIST

Goal: Outline the core scenes that build your story. Use this table:



Scene # Location POV Character Purpose Conflict / Change

STEP 7: SCENE EXPANSIONS

Goal: Write 1–2 paragraphs per scene to describe:

- What happens
 - Why it matters
 - What changes
-

For a deeper dive into the Snowflake Method, visit Randy Ingermanson’s official guide at

www.advancedfictionwriting.com/articles/snowflake-method

Explore each step in detail and discover tools to help you plan and build your story.

Part 2 – Choose Your Narrative Structure: Chronological or Thematic

Before you begin drafting, decide how your story will unfold for the reader. There are two common approaches:

- **Chronological Structure:** This follows the arc of your life or a specific period from beginning to end—ideal for tracing a personal evolution, career, or journey over time.
- **Topical or Thematic Structure:** This groups memories and events by central themes (e.g., “resilience,” “mentors,” or “defining moments”), allowing for a more reflective or conceptual approach. Example: a story that uses multiple flashbacks.

Ask yourself: *Do I want to tell what happened in the order it happened, or do I want to explore events regardless of timeline?* Whichever structure you choose will shape the emotional rhythm and storytelling cadence of your story.



Part 3—Tips for Getting Started Writing Your Story

1. Start Small—Begin Anywhere

You don't need to start at the beginning. Write a vivid memory that's been tugging at you—a conversation, a turning point, a place. You can shape the timeline later.

2. Write First, Edit Later

Silence your inner critic. This isn't about perfect sentences—it's about capturing truth. There will be plenty of time to refine.

3. Use Prompts to Spark Memories

Try questions like:

- What moment changed the course of my life?
- Who taught me something I've never forgotten?
- What did I learn the hard way?
- What kinds of stories have always intrigued me?

4. Keep a Idea Notebook (or Voice Memo)

Ideas often arrive uninvited—in the car, on a walk, mid-dishwashing. Keep a notepad or use a recording app to catch them before they vanish.

5. Focus on Sensory Detail

What did the air smell like? What color was the hallway tile? Specifics bring stories to life and invite the reader into your world.

6. Don't Worry About Scope (Yet)

Your job is to gather. Whether you write three pages or thirty, you're collecting pieces of a mosaic. Organization comes later.

7. Trust Your Voice

This is your story. Let it sound like you. Don't worry about literary flourishes—honesty carries more weight than polish.

Part 4 – Using Pacemaker Planner to Set Writing Goals

Pacemaker is a flexible, intuitive online tool that helps writers create personalized writing schedules. Whether you're working on a story, novel, or blog series, Pacemaker lets you set a goal (like word count, hours, or pages), choose a timeline, and customize how your workload is distributed. It's like having a GPS for your writing journey—guiding you day by day toward your destination.



How It Works

1. **Set Your Goal:** Choose what you want to track—words, pages, hours, chapters, etc.
2. **Choose a Timeframe:** Select your start and end dates.
3. **Pick a Strategy:**
 - *Steady:* Same amount each day
 - *Rising to the Challenge:* Start small and increase
 - *Falling Ease:* Start strong and taper off
 - *Oscillating:* Vary your workload
 - *Random:* Let Pacemaker surprise you!
4. **Customize Your Plan:**
 - Mark days off (vacations, holidays)
 - Set “Do More” or “Do Less” days
 - Adjust intensity based on your availability

Tips for Getting the Most Out of Pacemaker

- **Be Honest About Your Schedule:** If Sundays are your quiet days, make them “Push” days. If Tuesdays are hectic, mark them “Do Less.”
- **Use Visual Motivation:** Pacemaker generates graphs, calendars, and heatmaps to show your progress. Watching the chart fill in can be incredibly satisfying.
- **Adjust as You Go:** Life happens. You can update your plan midstream and Pacemaker will recalculate your targets.
- **Try Different Strategies:** Not every project needs the same rhythm. Experiment with rising or falling intensity to match your energy curve.
- **Use It for Editing Too:** Track hours or pages revised—not just new words written.

Where to Find It

Visit pacemaker.press to create a free account and start planning your writing journey.



Lesson 2

Proofreading & Editing

Part 1—Meet Your Editor-in-Residence: Microsoft Copilot

As you write your story, you don't have to go it alone. You now have access to an ever-available collaborator—**Microsoft Copilot**, an AI companion trained to help you write clearly, organize ideas, and polish your prose with precision and style.

💡 What Can Copilot Do for You?

Think of Copilot as part editor, part writing coach:

- Suggest alternate wordings and improve phrasing for clarity or impact
- Catch grammar, punctuation, or formatting hiccups
- Help you brainstorm story ideas, structure your chapters, or build strong openings
- Offer guidance on tone, pacing, or point of view
- Ask helpful questions to deepen your reflections
- Provide encouragement when you're stuck (even a bit of dry wit to keep things moving)

✂ How to Use It

- Copilot is available in apps like **Word**, **Edge**, and **Windows**, depending on your setup.
- In **Microsoft Word** on your computer or online, look for the **Copilot icon** (a circular sparkle-like swirl) and click it to start chatting about your document. You can highlight text and ask for feedback or improvements directly.
- You can also visit copilot.microsoft.com to chat in a more open-ended way—like asking for ideas, rewriting a passage, or organizing chapters.

🌟 Why Use Copilot?

You're the author. Copilot is here to support your voice—not replace it. It's like having the world's fastest, most tireless editor by your side, offering helpful suggestions while respecting your intent and style.



Pinning Copilot to Your Taskbar

A quick way to keep your editor just one click away!

Whether you're drafting, editing, or stuck mid-sentence, Microsoft Copilot can be by your side—all you have to do is pin it for quick access.

If You're Using Microsoft Edge

1. Visit copilot.microsoft.com
 2. Click the **three dots** in the top-right corner
 3. Select **Apps > Install this site as an app**
 4. Name it "Copilot" and click **Install**
 5. Right-click the new icon on your taskbar and choose **Pin to taskbar**
-

If You're Using Google Chrome

1. Go to copilot.microsoft.com
 2. Click the **three dots** in the top-right corner
 3. Choose **More tools > Create shortcut**
 4. Check "**Open as window**" and click **Create**
 5. Right-click the new icon and choose **Pin to taskbar**
-

If You're Using Firefox

Firefox doesn't yet support installing websites as standalone apps like Edge or Chrome, but there's a great workaround:

1. Visit copilot.microsoft.com
2. Install the [Copilot Launcher Button Firefox extension](#)
– This adds a Copilot icon to your browser toolbar
3. To keep it handy, **right-click the icon** and choose **Pin to Overflow Menu** or **Move to Toolbar**
4. For taskbar access, you can also create a shortcut:
 - Open the site, then **drag the padlock icon** (next to the URL) to your desktop



- Right-click the new shortcut and choose **Pin to taskbar**

🌟 Why It's Helpful

- Quick access to your writing helper anytime
- Keeps your desktop organized and your editor close at hand
- Great for juggling Word documents, browser research, and Copilot all at once

✂️ Part 2: Preparing Your Document for Publishing in Microsoft Word

Setting the Stage for a Professional-Looking Story

Before diving into line edits and polishing your paragraphs, let's get the document itself in shape. Proper formatting early on saves time later—and helps ensure your story is ready for self-publishing.

📏 1. Set Your Page Size (6 x 9 inches)

A 6" × 9" trim size is common for stories and trade paperbacks. Here's how to set it:

Windows/Desktop Version:

1. Open your Word document
2. Go to the **Layout** tab
3. Click **Size > More Paper Sizes**
4. In the dialog box:
 - Set **Width** to 6 inches
 - Set **Height** to 9 inches
 - Click **OK**

Tip:

If you plan to upload your file to Lulu later, double-check that their templates support this trim size and margin requirements. We'll format for print later—but this gives you a good starting canvas.



2. Adjust Margins

For printed books, slightly wider inside margins prevent text from being lost near the spine.

Go to **Layout > Margins > Custom Margins** and try:

Margin Suggested Setting

Top 0.75"

Bottom 0.75"

Inside 1.0"


Outside 0.75"

Gutter 0.25" (optional)

Select **Mirror Margins** under "Multiple Pages" if you're prepping a two-sided interior.

3. Set Up Headers & Footers

- Double-click the top or bottom of any page to open the header/footer area.
- Use the **Header & Footer Tools > Design** tab to:
 - Add your **name** or **book title** in the header (left page) and **chapter title** in the right.
 - Insert **page numbers** at the bottom center or outer corners.

 **Pro Tip:** Use **Different Odd & Even Pages** (in the Design tab) to mirror formatting across spreads.

4. Use Word's Heading Styles (for Auto TOC)

To generate a clickable or printed Table of Contents later, use Word's built-in Heading styles:

- Select your chapter title or section heading
- Go to the **Home** tab
- Click **Heading 1** for major chapters, **Heading 2** for sub-sections
- Customize font, size, and spacing as needed (Word will remember your edits)



Example:

Heading 1 – Chapter Title (e.g., “Chapter 2: Editing and Proofreading”)

Heading 2 – Section Title (e.g., “Using Microsoft Word Effectively”)

Word Document Setup Checklist


Use this list to prepare your story file for editing, formatting, and self-publishing.

Page & Layout Setup

☐ Set paper size to 6" × 9"

 *Layout > Size > More Paper Sizes > Custom Width & Height*

☐ Adjust margins for book layout

 *Top: 0.75" | Bottom: 0.75" | Inside: 1.0" | Outside: 0.75"*

☐ Add optional **Gutter** margin of 0.25" for spine binding

☐ Select **Mirror Margins** under Layout > Margins

Header & Footer Formatting

☐ Open the header/footer (double-click top or bottom of the page)

☐ Add **book title/author name** in the header (left page)

☐ Add **chapter title** in the header (right page)

☐ Insert **page numbers** at bottom center or outer corners

☐ Check these layout options:

☐ *Different Odd & Even Pages*

☐ *Different First Page* (optional)



Heading Styles for Navigation & TOC

- ☐ Apply **Heading 1** to chapter titles (for Table of Contents)
 - ☐ Apply **Heading 2** to section or topic headings
 - ☐ Customize font/size of each heading for a consistent look
 - ☐ Check **View > Navigation Pane** to confirm headings appear in document map
-

Saving & File Organization

- ☐ Save document with clear file name (e.g., *MyStory_Draft1.docx*)
 - ☐ Back up your file (OneDrive, USB, or email copy to yourself)
 - ☐ Optional: Turn on **Track Changes** for editing or feedback
-

Part 3: The Prep Steps for LibreOffice Writer

Page & Layout Setup

Set Paper Size to 6" × 9"

- Go to **Format > Page Style...**
- Under the **Page** tab:
 - Set **Width** to 6.00" and **Height** to 9.00"
- Click **OK**

Adjust Margins

- Still in **Format > Page Style...**, under the **Page** tab:
 - Set:
 - **Top** = 0.75"
 - **Bottom** = 0.75"
 - **Inner** = 1.00" (used when mirror margins are on)
 - **Outer** = 0.75"



✓ Add Gutter (Optional)

- LibreOffice doesn't have a "gutter" margin per se, but you can increase the **Inner** margin by 0.25" to accommodate binding.

✓ Enable Mirror Margins

- In the same Page Style window:
 - Under **Page Layout**, choose **Mirrored**
-

Header & Footer Formatting

✓ Add Headers & Footers

- Double-click the top (header) or bottom (footer) of any page
- Insert your content (title, author, chapter name) as desired

✓ Page-Specific Header/Footer Content

- Go to Format > Title Page to customize the **first page**
- For **Different Odd/Even Pages**:
 - Go to Format > Page Style...
 - Under **Header** and **Footer** tabs, check **Same content left/right OFF**

✓ Insert Page Numbers

- Click in the footer
 - Go to Insert > Field > Page Number
 - You can center or align them left/right using the ruler or tab markers
-

Heading Styles & TOC Navigation

✓ Apply Heading Styles

- Highlight your chapter titles → Apply **Heading 1** from the Styles dropdown
- Section titles → Apply **Heading 2**, and so on

✓ Customize Appearance



- Press F11 to open the **Styles pane**
- Right-click Heading 1, choose *Modify...*, and adjust font/size/etc.

✓ Confirm Navigation Pane

- Go to View > Navigator (or press F5)
 - You'll see a list of headings if styles are applied correctly
-

Saving & File Organization

✓ Save with Clear Filename

- Use File > Save As... and name your file clearly, like *MyStory_Draft1.odt*

✓ Backup Your File

- Copy it to OneDrive, external drive, USB, or even email it to yourself

✓ Optional: Enable Track Changes

- Go to Edit > Track Changes > Record
 - You can also enable Show to see edits in the doc
-

Looking Ahead to Lesson 3

Whether you've completed your manuscript or are still gathering stories, you're right where you need to be. In next week's lesson, we'll explore the step-by-step process of preparing your manuscript for self-publishing—demystifying formatting, layout, and how to bring your book into the world through platforms like Lulu.com.

You don't need a finished draft to participate. You'll gain the tools and knowledge to confidently publish when you're ready



Lesson 3: Designing the Cover & Organizing Content

Turning Your Writing into a Published Book


Whether your draft is complete or still in progress, this chapter will guide you through the final stages: formatting your story for print, creating a professional PDF, and publishing it using Lulu.com's print-on-demand platform. The goal isn't perfection—it's momentum.

Part 1: Creating a Table of Contents (TOC) in Word

Let Word build your TOC automatically—saving time and keeping it up to date as your story evolves.

Steps:

- Apply **Heading 1** to each chapter title and **Heading 2** to sub-sections
- Place your cursor where you want the TOC to appear
- Go to **References > Table of Contents**, and choose a style
- To update later: click in the TOC > **Update Table**

 Use **View > Navigation Pane** to see your heading structure at a glance

Part 2: Creating an Index in Word

Indexes help readers locate key people, places, or themes.

Steps:

- Highlight a word or name > go to **References > Mark Entry**
- Choose options: e.g., bold page numbers, cross-references
- Continue marking entries throughout the document
- Place your cursor where the index will go
- Click **Insert Index** and choose a style

 **Shortcut:** Press **Ctrl + Shift + X** to mark entries quickly



Part 3: Saving a Print-Ready PDF (With TOC and Fonts)

When you're ready to publish, save your Word document as a PDF—complete with clickable Table of Contents and embedded fonts.

✓ Steps:

1. In Word, go to **File > Options > Save**
2. Under **Preserve fidelity**, check:
 - ✓ **“Embed fonts in the file”**
 - ✓ (Optional) Uncheck **“Embed only the characters used”**
3. Click **OK**
4. Go to **File > Save As**, select **PDF**
5. Click **Options**
 - ✓ Check **“Create bookmarks using headings”**
6. Click **Save**

💡 *This ensures your fonts and TOC structure are preserved exactly for print*

Part 4: Setting Up a Lulu Account & Uploading Your Book

Lulu lets you publish your story for free—then print copies for yourself or sell them online.

✓ Steps:

1. Go to lulu.com, click **Register**
2. After login: **Create > Print Book > Start Your Print Book**
3. Choose **Publish Your Book** (not private project)
4. Set up your details:
 - **Trim size:** 5" × 9"
 - **Binding:** Paperback
 - **Paper:** Cream or white
5. Upload your **PDF file**
6. Enter metadata:
 - Title, author, subtitle, description
 - Categories & keywords
 - **ISBN:** Use Lulu's free one unless you have your own
7. Save & continue to **cover design**




Part 5: Creating a Cover with Lulu's Cover Designer

You don't need fancy software—Lulu's Cover Creator makes it simple.

Steps:

1. Click **Create Your Cover**
2. Choose a template (full-wrap, image-based, or color-based)
3. Add elements:
 - **Front:** Book title, your name
 - **Back:** Description or “About the Author”
 - **Spine:** Title and author (Lulu auto-calculates spine width)
4. Upload images (e.g., your subtle background of a person reading)
5. Drag, align, and format using Lulu's on-screen tools
6. Click **Preview Cover** to check layout
7. Click **Generate Cover** when it looks right

 *Lulu lets you edit or redesign later—no need to get it perfect the first time*

Print-Ready Checklist

- ☐ TOC generated using heading styles
 - ☐ Index created and inserted
 - ☐ Fonts embedded in Word settings
 - ☐ PDF saved with clickable TOC
 - ☐ Lulu account created
 - ☐ Book uploaded with metadata
 - ☐ Cover designed and generated
 - ☐ Proof copy ordered
-



Lesson 4: Final Touches & Forward Steps

Refining your story, honoring your journey, and preparing it to share

Whether your manuscript is fully polished or still evolving, this chapter is about thoughtful completion—not just technically, but emotionally too. We'll explore how to write with heart, prepare meaningful finishing touches, and feel empowered to share your story in whatever form feels right.

Part 1: The Writer's Mindset

How to stay centered and steady when the finish line feels near

Every writer hits patches of doubt. As you wrap up, remember:

- **Your story is enough.** Clarity and sincerity carry more weight than cleverness.
- **Done is better than perfect.** Most books improve *after* they're printed—with notes, edits, or even sequels.
- **You're allowed to rest.** Celebrate how far you've come.

💬 *"The beautiful part of writing is that you don't have to get it right the first time... just get it down."*—Anne Lamott

Part 2: Back Matter: Making the Last Page Count

The end of your story can offer deeper context and emotional resonance. Consider including:

Section	Why It Matters
Acknowledgments	Thank those who supported your journey
About the Author	Share your voice, purpose, and passions
Photo Pages	Enrich memory with faces, places, or artifacts
Timeline/Family Tree	Ground the reader in key relationships or history

✍ *Tip: Let these pages reflect your tone—formal, funny, nostalgic, or poetic.*



Part 3: Thoughtful Use of Images

Images add richness—but print demands care. Here's a quick guide.

Before You Insert

- ☒ Go to **File > Options > Advanced > Image Size and Quality**
- ☒ Check **“Do not compress images in file”** (applies document-wide)

Insert with Care

- Use high-res scans (300 DPI recommended)
- Avoid copying directly from web/email
- Use **Insert > Picture > This Device** instead of drag-and-drop
- Add concise captions and consider grayscale if printing


Avoid:

- Using Word’s “Compress Pictures” unless you're sure it won't affect layout
- Low-resolution files that blur when printed

Part 4: Gifting & Sharing

Publishing your story is just one option—you can also:

Option	Use Case
Private Printing	Order copies for family or small gatherings
Public Listing	Make it available on Lulu or Amazon with an ISBN
Personal Distribution	Great for birthdays, holidays, reunions

 Lulu lets you order as few or as many as you like—no big print runs needed.

Part 5: Reviews & Feedback



Want to grow as a writer? Invite thoughtful input:

- Ask **what resonated** most—what made readers reflect or connect
- Welcome constructive feedback for future revisions
- Collect brief blurbs as *testimonials*—even from friends or students

💡 Feedback builds confidence—not just craft.

Troubleshooting Tips

Common issues and how to solve them—because we’ve all been there.

My Table of Contents isn’t updating.

- Click inside the TOC
 - Go to **References > Update Table**
 - Select **Update entire table**
 - Check that your chapter titles use **Heading 1**
-

My headings don’t show in the Navigation Pane.

- Select the text and apply **Heading 1** or **Heading 2** (Home > Styles)
 - Don’t just change the font size—use Word’s official heading styles
 - Then go to **View > Navigation Pane** to confirm
-

My images look blurry or low-res.

- Use high-resolution images (300 DPI)
 - Go to **File > Options > Advanced > check ☒ “Do not compress images in file”**
 - Reinsert the image using **Insert > Pictures > This Device** for best results
-

My PDF doesn’t preserve formatting or fonts.



- Go to **File > Options > Save** > check ☒ **“Embed fonts in the file”**
 - When saving as PDF, click **Options**
 - ☒ **Create bookmarks using headings**
 - ☒ (Optional) ISO 19005-1 (PDF/A) for archiving
-

I uploaded my book to Lulu and the layout looks wrong.

- Confirm your trim size is 5" × 9"
 - Double-check your margins and mirror layout
 - Open your PDF on your computer to confirm images and fonts embedded
 - Use Lulu’s previewer before approving your proof copy
-

I’m feeling stuck or overwhelmed.

That’s normal. Take a breath and remember: your story is already worth telling.

- Flip back to your original goals or reflection prompts
 - Revisit the feedback section in Lesson 4
 - And don’t forget—you have two helpers:
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Need More Help? Reach Out Anytime.

Contact Jim: jim@riverflow.com

Ask Copilot for Help:

If you’re stuck with Word formatting, organizing pages, or brainstorming chapter flow, open Copilot and simply type a question like:

“How do I set up mirrored margins for a 5x9 book?”

“Can you help me revise the opening paragraph of my story?”

Copilot will be right there—no appointment necessary.