

THE RULES*

1. Always decide the day before what you will write and when you will write, one key sentence and 27 minutes at a time.
2. Never write about something you just learned this week. Always write about something you knew last week at the latest.
3. Always write a single paragraph of at least six sentences and at most 200 words in support, elaboration or defense of a single well-defined claim expressed in the key sentence.
4. Never write a paragraph that you have not planned the day before. Never write at a time you did not plan to.
5. Start on time and finish on time. If you start late, still finish on time.
6. Always take a three-minute break after writing the paragraph. In this break you must do something that is not related to either your writing or the rest of your day's tasks.
7. Do not write from your sources. Write from your notes or from your memory.
8. Do not leave "chores" like proofreading and referencing "for later". They are part of the activity of writing the paragraph for 27 minutes.
9. Read your paragraph out loud sometime in the last five minutes of each 27-minute writing moment.
10. Do not write more than six paragraphs per day. That is, do not write for more than three hours each day.
11. Do not render any absolute judgment on your paragraphs. At most once a week, simply rank them from best to worst.

*To be followed by the scholar seeking to become a better prose writer during eight weeks (40 days) of deliberate effort directed to that end.