



WANDERFUL MINDS[©]

Creative Resources for Writers with ADHD



by **Christin Eve Cato**



How does ADHD affect your creativity?

The ADHD brain fuels creativity through divergent thinking, a leaky mental filter that allows your brain to make broad associations, and a dopamine-driven reward system that responds strongly to stimuli, leading to rapid idea generation and *thinking outside the box* patterns that supports unique problem-solving and unconventional ideas.

Key mechanisms of ADHD activity in the brain include: mind-wandering, simultaneous activation of imagination and executive networks, and a preference for exciting, creative tasks over mundane ones; creating a *unique cognitive profile for innovation*.

The Creative ADHD Brain Cognitive Process

- *Divergent Thinking*: the ADHD brain excels at generating many unusual ideas from a single prompt
- *Leaky Mental Filter*: A less restrictive filter allows more information and ideas to enter consciousness, broadening attention and leading to insightful discoveries.
- *Dopamine Rewards*: A unique dopamine pathway makes individuals with ADHD seek out new, stimulating creative challenges for dopamine hits.
- *Mind Wandering*: Deliberately letting thoughts drift allows for creative exploration, turning a symptom into a strength by activating the brain's imagination network (Default Mode Network) more freely.
- *Hyperfocus*: When a topic aligns with their interests, individuals can intensely focus, diving deep into creative projects for long stretches.
- *Conceptual Expansion*: They can break free from rigid concepts and conventional boundaries.



The Writer's Hood

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Wanderful Minds: Writing with ADHD

(Resources & Exercises)

Designed by Christin Eve Cato, *The Writer's Hood*, Founder & Creative Architect

These pages are designed to help you understand and work with your brain's unique neurological creative pathways. Each template is a tool to explore, structure, and energize your artistic process — whether you're a writer, playwright, poet, or multidisciplinary artist.

Here's how to use them:

1. Go at your own pace.

Some prompts may spark ideas instantly; others may take a few minutes or even a few days. That's normal. There's no "right" speed here.

2. Follow your brain's natural rhythm.

Skip questions, jump between sections, or doodle your answers. These templates are flexible — they work best when you honor your own flow.

3. Write messily, freely.

ADHD creativity often feels nonlinear. Use rough sentences, bullet points, or sketches. The goal is thinking, not perfection.

4. Leave yourself notes.

Each template includes space to capture insights, questions, or follow-up ideas. This is your thinking-out-loud space.

5. Return often.

These templates are living tools. You can revisit them as projects evolve, or use them for entirely new ideas.

6. Combine tools.

Experiment using a mix of these templates at once to find what helps you show up best.



ASSESSMENTS

Section One

This section is designed to serve as a deep dive into your personal creative landscape. The goal is to move beyond mere surface-level productivity tips and assess your core preferences, helping you to connect more intrinsically and instinctively with the true wellspring of your creative flow. We want to understand *when*, *where*, and *how* your unique creative energy works most effectively for you.

By answering the following prompts, you will begin to identify and honor your natural rhythm, a critical step for writers with ADHD who often struggle against conventional, neurotypical-designed writing schedules. This assessment is not about finding the *best* way to write, but rather finding the *best way for you* to write, allowing you to harness your unique neurotype rather than fight it.

This exploration will cover:

- **Pattern-Seeking**- organizing complex information and ideas into coherent story structures
- **Dopamine Settings**- creating a setting that will make your writing process more stimulating
- **Your Writing Energy**- to help you create a writing schedule that works for your unique brain
- **Support Systems**- assess what sustainably supports your writing process and goals
- **Overwhelming Triggers**- identifying what may be overwhelming you during your process
- **Task Sticking Plans**- start your new task around a routine that already works for you!)



EXERCISES

Section two

This section is specifically designed to combat the mental blocks and distractions often associated with ADHD, offering a series of short, highly-focused templates and engaging prompts. The goal is to bypass the internal critic and overwhelming thoughts that can paralyze the writing process, and instead, draw your attention immediately and productively to the physical act of writing. By providing structured starting points and concise frameworks, these exercises help you quickly transition *out of your head* and become *focused on your writing* as a tangible, manageable task. This method encourages immediate action and momentum, making the initial hurdle of starting (or restarting) a writing session much lower and more achievable.

This section includes:

- **Scene Choice (non-linear) Exercise-** write by impulse, use your natural instincts, and write what is exciting to you the most right now! Your writing process doesn't have to start chronologically!
- **The Start Anyway Template-** get something on the page, low key, no pressure...you can always fix it later. Just write something and reward yourself after you're done.
- **Starting Line Warm Up-** Starting is hard, so here's a prompt telling you where to begin so you don't have to do all the thinking by yourself.
- **Ritual Design Worksheet-** design a new ritual for every day of the week! Or once a month. Or weekly. Whatever floats your boat and keeps you organized and focused.
- **The 10-Beat Story Map-** unlike your average beat sheet that is usually plot driven, this one is character driven. You're welcome.



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RESOURCEFUL INFORMATION

Section Three

Activity Sheets:

- **Recognizing Burnout** (preventative/cautionary)
- **Brain Breaks: Rolling Dice** (for energetic reboot)
- **Star Breathing Exercise** (for grounding)
- **Strategies Stress Management** (for hard times and to prevent them from getting overwhelming)
- **Daily Wins Exercise** (for establishing rituals that make you feel good and keep you healthy)
- **Mindfulness Journal Template** (to keep you mindful about your moods and habits so that you can create a balanced lifestyle around your artistic practice)
- **SMART Goal Setting** (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound objectives, that make your goal more attainable)