

AMY'S HINTS FOR WRITERS

Write about people you know. (I always change their names, though!)

Write about places you know. (A lot of my stories take place in New York City, because I live there.)

Write about everyday things. Ordinary things. (Nothing exciting ever happened to me when I was your age. Or so I thought. But the things I write about are about the everyday things of my childhood: wanting a purple coat, walking and singing in the rain, and being the new girl in school.)

You have to be a good spy. (I am an EXCELLENT spy. I spy on everyone, but they never know it.)

Get yourself a big garbage can. (Mine is HUGE! If I don't like what I write, I toss it right in. Mostly I spend my days throwing bad sentences in the garbage.)

Revise, revise, and then revise some more. Don't get lazy! (I COULD be lazy. I could be VERY lazy. But! I want my story to be good. No, I want it to be the VERY BEST story ... and so, I rewrite and revise! EVERYTHING! I hardly EVER like the way I write something the first time around!)

Read your sentences out loud. (I sit at my desk and type. Then I read what I typed out loud. I want it to SOUND right, as well as LOOK right on the page).

Revise, revise, and then revise some more. And don't get lazy! (Yes, I KNOW I've already said that.)

Don't get fancy. (Whenever I write a beautiful fancy sentence, I am very impressed. But just for a minute. Because deep down I know I'm going to change my sentence so it sounds like ME. A SIMPLE sentence is a beautiful thing!)

Write about something you really, truly care about. (I really, truly care about families. And people in families. And how they solve their problems. So, I mostly write about these kinds of things. I really, truly care about, and worry about, the people I write about.)

Write about yourself! (I ALWAYS write about Amy Hest, but never call a character in a story Amy Hest.)

Don't let anyone tell you that you are not a writer. Because you ARE. We all are! We ALL have a story to tell.