

MasterClass



Judy Blume



Teaches Writing



A LETTER FROM JUDY

HI FRIENDS,

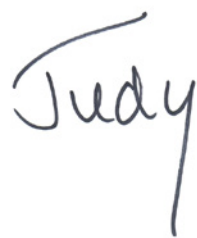
Thanks so much for joining my MasterClass.

Years ago I met a woman in Santa Fe who told me she had read 47 books on how to write fiction but she still wasn't getting anywhere. I've never forgotten that moment. I told her a better use of her time would have been to read 47 good novels. I'm not sure she liked hearing that. But the best way, maybe the only way, to learn to write is to read, read, read. Read the best books you can and then start writing. There are no magic tricks. There are no hard and fast rules. What works for one person doesn't always work for another. The more you write the stronger your inner voice will become. It takes practice. It takes time. The key to the whole business of writing is your individuality. Those of you already writing know this but I find I'm still inspired by reading an original story told in a fresh voice.

When the MasterClass team first contacted me I said, Are you kidding? I can't teach writing! But they encouraged me to give it a try, saying I probably knew more about writing than I thought I did. And they were right. Once I started talking it all came pouring out, and I mean all. Support and encouragement go a long way. And that's what I hope I can offer to you in this class, along with sharing what I know and what I've learned in my 50 years of the writing life.

So here you go! Remember that every writer is a reader first. It's how we've figured out how to tell our own stories, how to write our own books. I'm a big believer in determination. Maybe it's not more important than talent, but it's right up there. If you don't go for it, you'll never find out what might have been.

Good Luck. Hope to see some of you at my bookshop in Key West.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Judy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, thin vertical line extending downwards from the end of the word.



1.

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK

The MasterClass team has created this workbook as a supplement to Judy's class. Each chapter is supported here with a review, resources to learn more, and assignments. The exercises in this workbook are designed to foster brainstorming the first draft of an entire novel project. Consult the back of this workbook for a suggested reading list.

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

To be an active participant in Judy's MasterClass, you'll need a way to commit your ideas to paper or computer.

MASTERCLASS COMMUNITY

Throughout, we'll encourage you to share work and discuss class materials with your classmates in [The Hub](#) to get constructive feedback from your classmates. You can also connect with your peers in the discussion section beneath each lesson video.

ABOUT JUDY BLUME

Judy Blume is a beloved author whose best-selling books for younger readers have maintained relevance and impact for generations. Her best known works include *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*, *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*, *Deenie*, and *Blubber*. *The New Yorker* has called her books "talismans that, for a significant segment of the American female population, marked the passage from childhood to adolescence." Judy has also written four novels for adult readers, each one a *New York Times* bestseller. Judy Blume has won more than 90 literary awards, including the Library of Congress Living Legends Award, the National Book Foundation's Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters' E.B. White Award for Lifetime Achievement.

2.

JUDY'S CHILDHOOD

*"I think that's the big thing,
you know? The imagination
never stopped."*

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Two Judys
- Stories as Company

CHAPTER REVIEW

Judy spent a lot of time nurturing her imagination as she was growing up. She always felt she had two sides: the fearful child, and the performer, who was able to tap into her creativity. One of her fondest memories is creating backstories for her fictive piano students. Though she wanted to be normal, she felt like her imagination made her different. Stories were Judy's company.

3+4.

FINDING IDEAS, PARTS 1 & 2

“Just one little tiny something can spark a whole book.”

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Let Your Imagination Roam
- Observe Everything
- Tune In
- Use Your Own Life
- Write as Catharsis
- Get Away From Your Desk
- Write Them All Down

CHAPTER REVIEW

Judy believes that you never know where an idea will come from. It doesn't take a fully fleshed-out idea, either, to spark an entire book. Once you have an idea, the imagination takes over. Let it. Whatever inspires you deep inside will produce the best stories.

Details are key to creating characters and situations that feel real to you and to your readers. Practice this heightened awareness in your everyday life. From there, consider the difference between life and fiction. A simple transcript of life would be boring. Use real life experience but transform it, make it more important.

Try to remember what you were like as a child. Anything from your life is fair game, including a mood you're in that inspires you to start writing. Sometimes you're using your feelings and personal experiences in your writing without even knowing it. A lot of your best creativity will happen on the back burner, when you're letting your mind roam. Don't be afraid to take a shower or get away from your desk. For instance, Judy likes to go on a morning walk every day.

Some people start writing the second they get an idea. And that's okay. But you don't have to. You can let it live in your head. There is a tremendous sense of security from having an idea simmering. It could simmer for years, but that it still very valuable creative time.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Listen to Judy's experience writing *Deenie* and *It's Not the End of the World*. Read these works and find how the ideas she discusses fit into the larger story. Some have a profound impact on the story, others feature as a scene or small moment. Consider how an idea can translate into a bigger picture novel, especially as you approach the idea that will translate into your project.
- Read *Tiger Eyes* and watch the movie that Judy and her son adapted from the novel. Do you sense Judy's emotions in the film? Think about the moods and emotions behind your own writing. How are they coming through?

3+4.

FINDING IDEAS, PARTS 1 & 2

ASSIGNMENTS

- Ideas are everywhere, so be sure to listen. Some of Judy's best ideas have been inspired by observing. Take a few hours and go to a public space where you're likely to observe people or overhear conversation, especially if you're still casting around for your novel project idea. Listen and observe with a heightened awareness, and jot down a few snippets of what you hear and see. Focus on the things that inspire you or spark a story idea.
- Write a letter as your childhood self. It's up to you who you want to write to—your adult self or someone else in your life. Let them know what you care about, what scares you, and what you yearn for. Post your letter to [The Hub](#) for feedback, and to learn about your fellow writers.

IDEA CASE STUDIES

“Now I’m going to write a book. Forget the rules.”
—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- *Margaret*
- *Fudge*
- *Blubber*

CHAPTER REVIEW

For *Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret*, Judy started writing as soon as she connected with Margaret’s character. Several ideas sparked the novel. One was Judy’s memory of the pain of wanting to grow up like some of her friends. Being like them seemed very attractive. Another inspiration was the question of how to find her place and what she believed in. Judy saw these as universal questions. Finally, Judy was sparked by a visit from her brother’s family. He and his wife came from different religious backgrounds, which led Judy to wonder what it would be like if your parents came from different religious backgrounds.

The main inspiration behind *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* was her son Larry, who has a lot in common with the character Fudge. But it wasn’t until a friend sent her a local news article about a child swallowing a turtle that the idea began to bloom. Without this piece, she never would have imagined that story for the purposes of a novel.

Judy’s own children also inspired *Blubber*. There, Judy learned about the bullying culture of her daughter’s fifth grade class from things her daughter told her. She never would have known about what was really going on otherwise. To make this story more real and relatable, she listened to kids—her own daughter and her daughter’s peers. Having this focus group gathered in her house gave her an important window into what was actually happening in their lives. You don’t have to have kids to write for kids, but being able to talk to kids about their lives can be a valuable resource.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Listen to Judy’s experience in writing the following books. See if you can pinpoint moments where Judy’s personal experiences influenced the story.
 - *Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret*
 - *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*
 - *Blubber*

5.

IDEA CASE STUDIES

ASSIGNMENTS

- Think back to the exercise in which you wrote a letter as your childhood self. What came up that surprised you? Can this younger version of you be the blueprint for a novel protagonist?
- Comb the news for one week and find several articles that spark your imagination. They can be profound stories or “truth is stranger than fiction” stories. Compile your favorites and post them to [The Hub](#) to share ideas with your classmates.
- If you have children in your life, try to eavesdrop on them, with an ear for their concerns, their anxieties, and what excites them. Try to connect to any of these elements. Write down your findings.

6+7.

WRITING FOR DIFFERENT AGES, PARTS 1 & 2

“Here’s the big thing. How do you really learn to write? You learn to write because you’re a reader.”

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Tap Into the Child You Were
- Use Your Childhood Themes
- Deal With the Complications
- The Real Stuff
- Make Them Feel Normal
- Don’t Do Themes
- Don’t Write as an Adult
- Add Nuanced Teenagers to Adult Books
- Energize Your Writing
- Read to Understand

CHAPTER REVIEW

Judy firmly believes that the people who are most compelled to write for children are able to be in touch with the children they once were. The details of childhood never left Judy, and she’s able to use them to transport herself back into that mindset.

Returning to your own childhood doesn’t mean that you’ll need to simplify or “dumb down” anything. Children are much more complex and understand a lot more than they’re sometimes given credit for. Their lives are complicated and they want to deal with reality. Judy desperately wanted to read about real life and about kids who were like her as she was growing up, who were dealing with the same things she was.

Kids on the cusp—11 or 12-year-olds—are fascinating because they are just starting to see the real issues in life. Everything is in front of them and possible. That idea was inspirational to Judy. The teenagers in Judy’s adult novels are also some of her favorite characters. She emphasizes the need for energetic, fast-paced writing. Adult readers may give your story 100 pages to see if they like it, but young readers won’t. They want to be hooked right away.

When Judy writes, she stays away from themes. Themes in books tend to hit readers over the head and not give them enough credit. This can turn readers, especially young ones, off. Present situations and characters instead, and leave your readers to make their own minds up about the story’s meaning.

Judy doesn’t understand how someone who wants to write doesn’t read. Reading good books is the best way to learn to write. Sometimes you’ll read something and figure out what you don’t want to do, as well as what you do want to emulate. Both of these are important. Read not only classic books but contemporary ones that are products of today’s publishing marketplace. Reading helps you learn how to put a book together.

6+7.

WRITING FOR DIFFERENT AGES, PARTS 1 & 2

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Read *Blubber* and see how Judy handles the message of the story. Every novel is “about” something, but the good ones don’t preach or make the theme obvious. How does Judy create moments for the reader to realize this book’s message? How does she stay away from verbalizing it? Think about your own story and how you will convey its meaning without resorting to overt telling.
- If you are writing adult fiction with young people in it, read *Summer Sisters*, *Smart Women*, and *In the Unlikely Event* and notice how Judy handles characters of all ages and interweaves their stories. What can you learn about intergenerational fiction from these works?
- If you aren’t already familiar with Beverly Cleary’s work, read some of her novels to see what Judy is saying about her voice and her way of speaking to young readers. Put together a list of your 10 favorite books, or books you’ve been meaning to read, as you’re considering your own novel project. Add this list to [The Hub](#) and start a reading compendium to be inspired by old favorites and to find new ones.

ASSIGNMENTS

- Judy advises that you reinhabit your childhood. One vivid way to do this is to remember being in school. For example, put yourself back in your third grade classroom. Try to remember your teacher, the students around you, and what you did in a specific moment. Focus on the details. If you’re not able to conjure up your own memories, visit a school (with permission) and observe the environment. Write up a page or two of memories or observations from your school experiences and share them in [The Hub](#). Maybe you will spark an idea from your school days or see something in someone else’s recollection that speaks to you.

6+7.

WRITING FOR DIFFERENT AGES, PARTS 1 & 2

- Judy says that “no kid... grows up without having a lot of problems... the things that you have to come to terms with and go through, and the way you’re treated, and the way you’ve treated other people.” Consider this statement and describe a problem from your own childhood in a freewriting exercise.

- What issue did you face that was so important?
- How did it make you feel?
- What did it make you realize about yourself?

Could this be a jumping-off point for a subplot in your novel? If you feel brave, share your personal essay with your classmates in [The Hub](#) for feedback.

8+9.

IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT CASE STUDY, PARTS 1 & 2

"I try to go deeper, more layers, more complexity, more story... Make it more real."

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Tap Into the Child You Were
- Use Your Childhood Themes
- Deal with the Complications
- The Real Stuff
- Make Them Feel Normal
- Don't Do Themes

CHAPTER REVIEW

In the Unlikely Event was one of Judy's most challenging books to write. It is a very complex novel but based on real events and colored by Judy's own childhood in Elizabeth, New Jersey, where the events took place, so Judy had a lot to manage. She used both personal and factual details to construct the story.

Research was a rabbit hole for Judy with this novel. Since there was so much material, she not only had to put a lot of work in, but also know how to pick through her source material. She learned lessons about the temptation to use everything, and the impossibility of doing so. Her notebooks and idea files brought her a lot of security during this time. By sharing her experience, she imparts some wisdom on how to organize your notebooks and scenes from your idea files.

The biggest takeaways for Judy were that she needed this information to truly care about her characters, and to make her readers care. She also learned how to use her life experiences and apply them to a real story, and where the divide is between fact and fiction. When she found a detail she liked, she would embellish it. This combination was the heart of *In the Unlikely Event*. In the course of writing this novel, she confronted a lot of her writing fears. She discovered that "it's the fearless Judy who writes the books, not the fearful kid."

Judy also uses this book as an example to discuss character names and titles. She advises that you avoid the obvious. Sometimes the perfect thematic inspiration can yield a name, or a small detail can lead to a title.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Read *In the Unlikely Event* and see the character explanation at the beginning of the book. Create something similar for your own novel to see how everyone is interrelated. Are there any opportunities for some research? Is the character list too thin? Start reading about the topic of your novel and maybe you'll find some interesting possibilities and personalities to include.

8+9.

IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT CASE STUDY, PARTS 1 & 2

ASSIGNMENTS

- Start an “idea box” today. Whether it’s a notebook or an old recipe box like Judy describes, start it now. File away anything that inspires you, from thoughts you have to snippets of overheard conversation. Go back to your heightened observation exercises and use these to seed your idea box.
- Similarly, create a character notebook for your novel’s protagonist. In it you will collect ideas for your main character, big or small. That way, you can always reference your “bible” when writing this character. Include traits, attributes, backstory, objectives, motivations, etc.
- Evaluate your story idea and see if there are any holes that can be filled with research. Make a list of things you need to research and any types of people you might want to interview. Post it in [The Hub](#). You never know if one of your classmates might be a valuable resource with their own network or life experience!

10+11.

CREATING MEMORABLE CHARACTERS, PARTS 1 & 2

“There’s nothing more important than characters when you’re writing. It’s the characters that make the story work.”

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Spend Time With Your Characters
- Make Your Characters Real
- Margaret Character Example
- Convey Emotion by Showing, Not Telling
- Work with Conflicting Emotions
- Make Your Characters Outsiders
- Outsider Character: Sally J. Freedman
- Write Letters to Reveal Character
- Explore Voice and Point of View
- Read to Develop a Voice
- Make the Names Fit
- Emphasize With Your Characters

CHAPTER REVIEW

Judy needs to write a character to know them. There is no right or wrong way to discover character, and part of her writing process is to start writing and be surprised. The more you write your character, the more you get to know them and the more they seem like a real person. That is essential to make your reader believe in them. Judy spends a lot of time with her characters, including getting into their points of view and developing empathy for them. This is key, because you want your readers to be able to empathize with them, as well. A lot of Judy’s characters are outsiders—she is naturally drawn to this experience.

A character’s inner life is crucially important, and you create it with specific details. The details can be your framework, and from there, you can play around. Try writing stream of consciousness in first person, or third. Experiment with voice—that’s going to be key. A character’s voice is your voice, in that it comes from you, but it also belongs to your character. Everything contributes to voice. What is your character saying or thinking? What are his or her reactions to something that’s going on? This is an organic process. If something feels wrong, change it or get rid of it. If you’re feeling stuck on a character, use the trick of a letter. People (fictional or not) often tend to be very candid in letters.

It’s okay if you overwrite or generate too much material. As with research, you can always cut. This more organic way of writing helps you access what’s inside of you. Getting it on paper helps you realize things you may not have been able to articulate before. At the same time, leave some room for humor and the unexpected. Leave room to be surprised by specific detail. That is how you will create natural emotion, which will resonate with your readers, especially if you show and don’t tell.

When working with heightened emotion, think of ways to pair it with an ordinary, everyday moment. Emotion is inside of you—you just need to access it and put it on the page. Remember as you’re writing that your characters are on a journey. You are rendering only a small slice of that journey on the page. Nonetheless, your characters will need to grow and change. A

CREATING MEMORABLE CHARACTERS, PARTS 1 & 2

name is an important component of character, but do let naming be organic. Names are one of the things that can change as you get to know your fictional people better.

EXCERPTS

Read the following excerpts from Judy's work and consider how she creates various elements of character on the page, including creating interior life, voice, and emotion in big and small moments.

"She had to stop herself from talking, from asking questions the way she did when she was nervous, because she sensed this boy didn't want to talk. She prayed the palms of her hands wouldn't sweat, that her deodorant was working, that the faint scent of her mother's Arpège would reach his nostrils. His breath was near her ear, making her tingle. Then the song ended and he was gone, like Cinderella racing from the ball, but without a shoe, glass or otherwise, left behind to help her find him. She didn't even know his name. She doubted he knew hers, either. She hoped her blue angora sweater—the one she kept in a garment bag on the top shelf of the fridge—had shed just enough onto his flannel shirt to remind him of her." —*In the Unlikely Event*, p. 30

"Miri felt something roiling inside her. She looked away, angry at Natalie for not eating, angry for acting crazy, angry for throwing away their friendship. But she was scared, too. Scared there was something really wrong with her. Scared that she and Natalie would never be friends again. That they'd never know what the other was thinking, that Natalie would never rest her head in Miri's lap while they watched television. Inseparable. That's what everyone said about them back in seventh grade. *Come back!* she wanted to shout. *Come back and be my friend.*" —*In the Unlikely Event*, p. 269

CREATING MEMORABLE CHARACTERS, PARTS 1 & 2

“Why did he have to go and write to her? Why couldn’t he just leave her alone? But was that what she wanted—for him to leave her alone? She didn’t know. She folded the letter into smaller and smaller squares, then shoved it into a sock. It could have been a piece of lint. Toe jam in the bottom of her sock. Rusty would never bother to unroll a pair of socks.” —*In the Unlikely Event*, p. 260

“‘But it’s pouring, Mrs. Gorsky,’ I called.

‘So? You won’t melt.’

Maybe I will. Then you’ll be in big trouble because my family will come looking for me and you’ll have to tell them how I melted down to nothing right on your front porch.” —*Then Again, Maybe I Won’t*, p. 2

“Sally ran all the way home from school. She had to go to the bathroom in the worst way. She raced up the stairs and past Mom and Ma Fanny, who were waiting at the apartment door, but by then it was too late. Her legs were already wet and as she sat down on the toilet she began to cry. She had never been so ashamed! Maybe God was punishing her for throwing her socks in the trash basket.” —*Starring Sally J. Freedman as Herself*, p. 94

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Look back on your reading of *Starring Sally J. Freedman As Herself*. Now that you know more about Judy biographically (and that this is her most autobiographical book), can you isolate which elements are Judy peeking through? How did these elements inform the character of Sally? How do Judy’s recollections find their way into the story? How do letters function in the story?

CREATING MEMORABLE CHARACTERS, PARTS 1 & 2

ASSIGNMENTS

- Open your notebook or a blank document on the computer and start writing a few pages of stream of consciousness. You are trying to hit upon your character here, but don't concentrate on that objective too much. Instead, play around with voice, first person, third person, or anything in between. What is your character trying to say to you or to the world? Put yourself in their shoes and empathize with them. See where this exercise takes you, and feel free to repeat it anytime you're stuck in laying down the foundation of your character.
- Go back to the list of your favorite books that you created in the assignment for chapters six and seven. Pick your absolute favorite writer (it can be Judy!) and try to imitate their voice. With this exercise, you are looking at what comprises their voice, what makes it tick. Type up an original snippet from the source work, then either rewrite it in a similar style or continue the scene yourself. See what it feels like to "try on" a different voice. Does it help you to slip more easily into your own character? Share your side-by-side exercise in [The Hub](#) for feedback.
- Write a letter as your character. As Judy says, "pour out your feelings... pour out your heart." See what new or surprising things you might uncover or your character might want to say to you or to someone else. Post your letter in [The Hub](#).
- Lively, energetic voice is considered one of Judy's hallmarks as a writer. Yet voice can sometimes be very difficult to develop. Pick a scene in your novel project that lacks energy or voice. Rewrite it, keeping elements of humor, word choice, syntax, and pacing in mind. Refer back to these examples of voice if you need to.

WRITING DIALOGUE

“One of the things that happens when you put people together is they talk to each other. That, for me, is the greatest pleasure of writing.”

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Remove Dialogue That Doesn't Advance the Story
- Capture a Realistic Voice
- Practice Realistic Dialogue
- Keep Word Choice Simple
- Be Wary of Slang
- Experiment With Playlets
- Write What's Right for the Character
- What to Avoid With Dialogue

CHAPTER REVIEW

Dialogue helps to advance story and illuminate characters. It gives characters knowledge they may not have had otherwise. Dialogue can also give you little scenes or moments that form bigger chunks of the story.

Word choice is very important when it comes to dialogue, and Judy prefers the simpler the better. She tries to stay away from slang, which can date a manuscript. As you listen to conversations, stay alert to the fact that people don't talk in grammatically correct ways. That's not real. Real conversation helps a book like *Margaret* be timeless because the most important part of a story—the feelings—“don't change from generation to generation.”

Stay away from making the dialogue too literary. Let your characters interrupt one another! Think also about what the character might be leaving unsaid. This is a wonderful way to reveal character and also build tension. When writing dialogue, try to make it clear who's speaking without using too many dialogue tags or fancy synonyms for “said.” If you get stuck, keep moving on. Don't get bogged down in the temptation to write beautifully. Beautiful writing can certainly be one element of your novel, but it should work in concert with realistic and relatable dialogue.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Look at Jill's dialogue in *Blubber*. With Jill as narrator, note where Judy bends the rules of grammar and makes the dialogue more real. What effect does this achieve? How does it change or enhance your perception of Jill as a reader?
- Read the scene where Miri meets her father for the first time in *In the Unlikely Event*. Consider how Judy uses subtext in this moment. What about the unsaid elements of this scene add to the scene's power and impact?

WRITING DIALOGUE

ASSIGNMENTS

- Get out your notebook or idea box and review the snippets of dialogue you've captured. Notice where people are speaking casually and consider what this brings to the overall impression of the moment. Shape the dialogue into a scene: polish what needs to be polished, leave some idiosyncrasies, and add some material that either illuminates the "story" of this moment or says something about a character involved (or both). Turn it into novel-worthy dialogue. Post your side-by-side comparison between the source material and the finished scene in [The Hub](#).
- As you're crafting your novel, write a scene where the character leaves something unsaid. The other characters in the scene can't know what your character is really going through or what they're after. Post this scene to [The Hub](#) and see if your peers can guess what the unsaid element is. (For your own purposes, you can go back and add the unsaid element into the character's inner monologue if you wish, but don't spoil the guessing game in this particular assignment!)

DIALOGUE CASE STUDIES

SUBCHAPTERS

- What's Left Unsaid: *Tiger Eyes*
- What's Left Unsaid: *Then Again, Maybe I Won't*
- What's Left Unsaid: *In the Unlikely Event*

EXCERPTS

Study the following excerpts from Judy's work and consider how she creates scene and dialogue and voice on the page. You can find further examples of scenes and dialogue in the Plot Examples section.

“‘You have sad eyes, Tiger,’ he says. ‘A bright smile but sad eyes.’

He waits for me to say something. I don’t.

‘You want to talk about it?’ he asks.

‘No.’

‘Okay.’

We sit quietly for a moment.

‘Maybe someday,’ I tell him. ‘Maybe someday I’ll tell you about it.’

‘Okay,’ he says.

‘But not today.’

‘Whatever,’ he says.

I nod.” —*Tiger Eyes*, p. 80

“‘Psst... give me a hand with this mattress,’ Joel whispered. ‘She keeps it under here.’

I held up the mattress while Joel searched. But all he came up with was a note. It said:

too bad, snooper
your sister’s smarter than you think!!!

‘How about that,’ Joel said. ‘She found out and moved it. Well, never mind. We’ll find it. It’s got to be in here some place.’

He started searching her dresser drawers, then went to her desk, dressing table and finally to her closet. But he couldn’t find it anywhere. I could tell he was embarrassed because he promised he’d show it to me and now he couldn’t make good on his promise.

‘I’m really sorry,’ he said.

‘Forget it,’ I told him. I didn’t want him to think I cared much.” —*Then Again, Maybe I Won’t*, pg. 60–61

DIALOGUE CASE STUDIES

“Isn’t that what I said the first time you asked?” Miri thought. But instead of screaming, throwing a temper tantrum, yelling at the waitress, who wore red-framed cat’s-eye glasses turned up at the tops with tiny rhinestones in the corners, Miri said, ‘Yes, thank you.’ Saying it like that, with such authority, made her feel calm, in charge of her feelings.

Mike Monsky said, ‘This is awkward for both of us.’

She knew he was looking at her but she refused to meet his gaze. ‘Maybe for you,’ she said. ‘But it’s not awkward for me. I couldn’t care less.’” —*In the Unlikely Event*, p. 238

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Read the works excerpted here and consider how Judy has created full, rounded characters. Apply these insights to your own novel’s protagonist and secondary characters.

ASSIGNMENT

- Writing dialogue is one of Judy’s greatest joys. She revels in its ability to create surprise, illuminate character, advance plot, and leave things unsaid. Pick an important scene in your story, maybe one where you currently use a lot of description. Transform it into dialogue that really lets your characters shine. Write a draft of this scene. How will you reveal character objectives? What will you expose about your primary and secondary characters? How will you move plot forward? Post your writing sample in [The Hub](#) for constructive feedback from your classmates.



14+15.

CREATING PLOT STRUCTURE, PARTS 1 & 2

“A scene is like a mini book.”

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Start When Something New Happens
- Think One Scene at a Time
- Surprises are Everything
- Establish Character Before Major Plot Twist
- Using Flashbacks
- Write for Places You Know
- Creating Satisfying Endings
- Sensing the Ending

CHAPTER REVIEW

Judy is the first to admit that she struggles with plot. But she does have some concrete advice that helps her rein in her plot anxiety. Her first piece of advice is to start a book on the day something different happens in a character’s life. Judy often writes one scene at a time, though her scenes can come to her out of order. As we’ve already discussed in the Dialogue chapter, scenes illuminate character and plot. By continuing to write scene after scene, you will begin to shape the beginning, middle, and end of your story, as long as your scenes each accomplish something. Judy keeps plot from getting overwhelming by focusing one scene at a time, rather than trying to imagine the entire plot.

Leave room for surprise when you’re thinking about plot. You have your characters, and now you are writing scenes to find out what happens. Welcome any elements that surprise you, there could be real value in these moments that spark your imagination. As you go along, do your best to care about your characters and what happens to them. If you ever feel stuck on plot, go back to what you know about your character, their family, friends, hopes, dreams, etc. Use these to create obstacles for your character to overcome.

As you go along, feel free to use flashbacks and backstory. These elements help you discover your character and let your readers get to know them. Use setting and location as an integral part of the story as well. Specific details create setting and make it real for a reader, so do your research or visit the place you’re writing about.

CREATING PLOT STRUCTURE, PARTS 1 & 2

EXCERPTS

Study the following excerpts from Judy's work and consider how these scenes move plot forward via dialogue and description.

"I know you do, Jason, so why don't you ever say it? And why don't you ever cry?"

'Crying is for babies,' he mumbles.

'No,' I tell him, 'it's for everyone. When you feel sad it's okay to cry.'

'Let me up,' he says.

'Not until you say it. Not until you say you miss Daddy.'

'No!' He struggles to get away from me.

'Okay,' I tell him, 'then I'll say it for you. I miss Daddy. I miss him a lot.' I move aside then and Jason gets up and runs away from me.

'Jason...' I call, 'don't you want to finish our game?'

But he is already upstairs. 'Finish it yourself,' he calls back, and he is crying.

I don't know why I did that. I don't know why I spoiled our game, our evening together. It's just that I have this need to talk about my father, with someone who knew him and loved him the way I did." —*Tiger Eyes*, p. 116

"Why are you telling me?"

'You know why. Because you're my daughter.'

She bristled.

'It would be your last name, too.'

'My last name is Ammerman.'

'You know what I mean.' He reached for her hand. For one second she looked into his eyes and saw her own. Then she pulled her hand away, jumped out of the car and ran for home.

Later, she remembered the way his hand felt, warm and strong. *My father*, she thought. That asshole was my father. She reminded herself not to like him. Reminded herself that he'd abandoned Rusty before *she* was even born. She didn't know if it happened that way, but she assumed it had. ... Frekki had tricked her. And who was this guy who called himself her 'father,' really?

CREATING PLOT STRUCTURE, PARTS 1 & 2

He could be anybody. His stories could all be invented. No, she would not allow herself to like him.” —*In the Unlikely Event*, p. 242

“My mother nodded and took my arm, leading me out of the office. All the way down in the elevator Ma held on to my arm and she didn’t say anything, not one word. When we were on the street she steered me into a lunchroom. We sat opposite each other, in a booth. Ma ordered a cheeseburger for each of us and when the waitress was gone I said, ‘I’m sorry, Ma.’

‘It looked like you slouched on purpose, Deenie.’

‘I didn’t, Ma. Honest. Why would I do that. I tried as hard as I could.’ Tears came to my eyes.

‘Don’t give me that, Deenie. You heard Mrs. Allison say there’s something funny about the way you move.’

‘Please, Ma...please believe me...I didn’t do it on purpose.’

My mother didn’t say anything for a minute. I took a sip of water. Finally Ma said, ‘Deenie, God gave you a beautiful face. Now, he wouldn’t have done that if he hadn’t intended for you to put it to good use.’

‘I know it, Ma.’

‘I hope so. Because I’m not going through this again. Next time we have an appointment you’ll have to try harder.’

‘But Mrs. Allison didn’t say *no* to us, Ma. She said she’d think about me, remember?’

‘That means *no*, Deenie. So we’ll have to try another agency.’

‘Can’t we wait a little while? Maybe until next year?’

‘Don’t be silly,’ Ma said. ‘We don’t want to waste time when you’re ready now.’ She reached out and patted my hand. ‘I know this is hard for you, Deenie, but some day you’ll thank me. You’ll see.’

When the waitress brought our lunch I didn’t feel like eating anything, but one thing that makes Ma really mad is seeing good food go to waste.” —*Deenie*, p. 10–11

14+15.

CREATING PLOT STRUCTURE, PARTS 1 & 2

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Study the beginnings of *Are You There, God? It's Me, Margaret* and *Then Again, Maybe I Won't*. What is the different thing in each of these novels that happens for the character? How does Judy handle conveying this new situation? Why is a new and different situation such fertile ground for beginning a story?
- Pay careful attention to setting in the following novels: *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* (and others in the *Fudge* series), *Summer Sisters*, *Tiger Eyes*, and *Smart Women*. How does setting impact the story? What mood does it convey? How might the story change if it were set elsewhere? What specific elements jump out at you that help the setting feel more real and relatable?

ASSIGNMENTS

- You've already created your character's emotional timeline for your novel idea. Now it's time to create a plot timeline. For *Blubber*, Judy sat down and filled out a calendar to keep the events of the story straight. What does your calendar look like? You can create a visual representation or write an outline of your novel's main events or scenes.
- Consider your novel's ending. Often, writers know the beginning and ending, then later fill in the middle. Think about Judy's endings and the tone they strike of being both open-ended and optimistic. What kind of mood or experience do you want your reader to have at the end of your book? Start to flesh out your ending in your idea notebook. You don't have to commit to it now, but knowing where you want to end up may help guide you through everything else along the way.

16+17.

JUDY'S WRITING PROCESS, PARTS 1 & 2

"I think an old-fashioned work ethic is really essential because writing is your job."
—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Get it all Down in the First Draft
- Keep a Pencil in Your Hand
- Work Through the Murky Middle
- Onto the Second Draft
- Let the Mess Come Out
- Go Deeper Into Character
- Make It Your Job
- Follow Your Life's Rhythms
- Writer's Block

CHAPTER REVIEW

Generating the first draft is an exercise in “getting everything down that you can get down” to Judy. There’s always time later to reassess and comb through what you’ve generated. When you are drafting, don’t edit yourself or criticize your choices. If you hit roadblocks in the murky middle, go back to your notebooks and see if you have ideas for what could happen to your characters. The middle is hard, but don’t let it stop you. Eventually, that middle will crystalize into scenes that carry the action forward and illuminate your characters. Figure out your own way as you write. You can write straight through a draft, jump around, reread the previous day’s pages, or any combination of these methods.

The second draft is all about finding surprises along the way and starting to tease out the shape of your story. Think about the story you want to tell and the age group you’re writing for. What kind of story do you want to tell and to what kind of audience? Use the second draft to go deeper into character. Don’t worry too much about the plot yet.

In further reads of your manuscript, identify what’s not working. That will help you identify where you need to spend more time, especially when it comes to plot. Be careful of falling in love with your story. That will make seeing it objectively difficult, and may get in the way when it’s time to cut or tighten. As you move into the more polished drafts of your work, read the text aloud. This will train your ear to edit and fine tune your own writing. The only caveat here is that you don’t want to do too much at once, or you will stop listening.

Judy is a big advocate of taking yourself seriously as a writer. Treat writing as your job, and make time for it. Judy doesn’t believe in writer’s block. Instead of giving up when you hit an obstacle, write something else or go back to your notebooks to regain your momentum. Get away from your desk. Do the laundry. Go for a walk. Don’t forget to make some space for your personal life, though, too. Remember that real-life events and observations are key to keeping your idea box full.

16+17.

JUDY'S WRITING PROCESS, PARTS 1 & 2

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Read the first few chapters of *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* aloud. It's short and light enough to make this a fun exercise. What do you notice about the text when it's spoken, as opposed to reading it silently in your head?

ASSIGNMENTS

- Figure out your writing flow as you draft. Do you like to work straight through? Jump around? Reread your previous work to gear up for writing the next section? Now is the time in the course to commit to drafting your novel manuscript. Take everything in your idea notebook, everything you've discovered about your character and voice, and all of the ideas you have for scenes and plots. Commit to writing every day (more on this later!) and start to pour out your first draft, avoiding the temptation to edit or self-censor.
- Pick 10 pages from your draft and read them aloud with a pencil in hand. Don't revise during this exercise. Simply put check marks next to passages that are working, an X next to things that don't sound right to your ear, and keep going until you lose your sense of the voice. What did you learn from doing this exercise? To take it to the next level, have someone read your own work back to you. This will help you hear it in a whole new way. Share what you learned doing this—the good, bad, and ugly—with your peers in [The Hub](#).

GETTING READY TO SUBMIT

“They’re looking for something original and fresh. An agent is going to find it, an editor is going to welcome it. And you’ll be on your way.”

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Find an Agent
- Read It Out Loud
- Find Encouraging Feedback

CHAPTER REVIEW

Judy started publishing at a time when literary agents were optional, but this is no longer the case. A query letter is your ticket to capture an agent’s attention. Spend time researching agents. At the same time, make sure you are presenting your absolute strongest work. Don’t get lazy and decide it’s good enough; truly make it your best work. A critique group can help with this, because fresh eyes on your work are always helpful.

Remember that agents and editors are looking for original and fresh stories. Judy shares her experiences of working with her agent and editor here for a glimpse into what’s possible from this type of relationship. She encourages writers to keep an open mind when hearing feedback from an editor, and to not be offended. You don’t have to do a total rewrite for everyone who has an opinion, but stay receptive. Join the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI), an invaluable group if you’re writing for a young audience. Also join the National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC) and, as soon as you qualify, The Author’s Guild. At the end of the day, writing has peaks and valleys. Even tremendously successful writers hit obstacles and receive discouraging news. Take heart and know that even Judy Blume is challenged by the writing and publishing process.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- [Read up](#) on writing a compelling query letter. This will be your calling card for literary agent submissions. Use this resource and [this article](#) to complete this chapter’s assignment.
- As you prepare to submit to literary agents or publishing houses, do your research and try to find agents and houses that might be a good fit for your project. Online databases such as [Agent Query](#) are easily searchable. You can also dive into the Writer’s Digest series of annual *Market* books, including *Writer’s Market* or *Children’s Writer’s and Illustrator’s Market*. To review recent sales by popular literary agents, agencies, or publishing house editors, consider signing up for a monthly paid subscription to

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GETTING READY TO SUBMIT

[Publisher's Marketplace](#). This is the most comprehensive database of what books are sold by whom, and to whom, available today. If you find any great resources in the course of your agent or editor research, share them with your classmates in [The Hub](#).

ASSIGNMENTS

- Draft your query letter. Include a pitch, a sample personalization for an agent you may be targeting, a short and relevant bio paragraph, and all of the necessary logistical information on your novel. Keep it brief; make it uniquely you. In other words, make it irresistible. Share it in [The Hub](#) for constructive feedback from your classmates.
- Connect with others in the class and make potential relationships as critique partners. Having a trusted second set of eyes on your manuscript can be an invaluable resource. You are bound to find some like-minded writers among your classmates for this MasterClass in [The Hub](#).

WORKING WITH EDITORS

"I [am never] offended by what an editor says. By the time you're working with an editor, [he or she] has [already] accepted your book."
—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Find a Dick Jackson
- Remain Open and Willing
- Editing *Summer Sisters*

CHAPTER REVIEW

Judy was discovered by Dick Jackson, an editor at Bradbury Press. He saw Judy's potential in the manuscript for her first book, *Iggie's House*. Judy and Dick became a team, working together to develop characters, the foundation of any story. When Judy isn't sitting across from Dick at his desk, she always asks herself the same questions about her writing that he would raise.

Judy always listens to her editors and tries what they suggest. Each idea might not work, but discovering that is a valuable lesson in and of itself; sometimes by figuring out what's not right, you come up with something that is. After discussing *Iggie's House* with Dick, Judy went home and revised the manuscript. When she sent it back she knew it was much better than the one Dick had read. The most wonderful day of Judy's life was the day Dick called to offer her a contract.

Always listen to your editor. If your editor can discern your willingness and your desire to learn, he or she will be much more invested in helping you write the best book you possibly can. Your openness, however, requires delicate balancing. Your editor will want to see if you can take a suggestion and run with it, but you should always be on the lookout to make sure your changes aren't too drastic, turning your manuscript into a different book.

Judy ran into trouble with *Summer Sisters* because she didn't know where her story was going. She felt lost. Judy contacted her agent to help her. The agent sent what would become *Summer Sisters* to an editor, who rejected it. Distraught, Judy went on a bike ride. A chance encounter with writer Robert Stone restored her faith. The two best-selling authors bonded over how difficult it was to write their respective books.

Judy went back to work on *Summer Sisters*. The story became more interesting, going deeper into the two girls' lives. Still, it was rejected by two more editors. After another revision, allowing the women in the story to have their say, Carole Baron, one of Judy's dearest editors, said, "I know how to make this book work." They talked for an afternoon and Judy went home fired up. It wasn't that Carole told Judy what to do, it was that she believed in Judy's ability to revise. Judy began to work on the book again, only breaking for meals.

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WORKING WITH EDITORS

At this point, the voices of the men and boys in the novel came to life. Judy talked to her children's friends who were the same ages as the summer sisters and steeped herself in the music of the era in which they grew up. Everything began to click. *Summer Sisters* went on to become Judy's best-selling book.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Robert Stone was writing *Damascus Gate* when he ran into Judy that day. Read that book and keep in mind the mindset of the author during its creation. Take solace in the quality of work that can be produced under pressure.

ASSIGNMENT

- Share a story of working with an editor with your classmates in [The Hub](#). Answer the following: What did you learn from the experience? Did you listen well enough? Did you take too many of their suggestions to the point of weakening your original work, as Judy warns against?

REJECTION

“You have to want it so badly and need it so badly that rejection cannot stop you.”

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Learn to Deal With It
- Let Rejection Fuel Determination
- Remember How Far You’ve Come
- Don’t Be Ruled by Fear
- Face the Reviews
- Look for Positive in the Negative

CHAPTER REVIEW

There is rejection at all levels of publishing. You are rejected by agents and editors, and then when you’re published, you have to deal with reviews. In this very personal chapter, Judy shares some of her experiences of dealing with reviews, from the heartbreaking to the bittersweet. Through it all, her fierce determination shows through. She advises you not to let one review or one person stop you from doing what you want. Because the truth is, agents and editors and reviewers are people, too. They have their bad days, just like anyone.

Try to find the positive in the negative. Sometimes a reviewer or agent or editor will be right, which may inspire you to revise your story and make it stronger. Sock away the positive mentions and feedback you’re receiving and use it as fuel to keep going. If nothing else softens the blow, use rejections to show the gatekeeper that you will accomplish your goals despite them. No matter how many people tell you “no,” don’t let them stop you.

Fear is the greatest enemy of achieving your dreams. Don’t let fear keep you from trying. As you have a few more rejections under your belt, the process will get easier.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Did you know that there are actually different types of rejection, and some are much more promising than others? Read [this article](#) and consider the feedback you’ve been receiving. Where does it fit? Depending on the kinds of declines you’re seeing, consider revising your pitch or manuscript accordingly. If you are seeing nothing but form rejections, maybe it’s time to contact a critique partner or outside editor.
- Consider that almost every famous writer has been rejected. Blow off some steam and read [this collection](#) of harsh rejection letters sent to literary icons.

ASSIGNMENT

- Share a rejection you may have received and what you learned from it. How do you motivate yourself to keep going? Ask your peers in [The Hub](#) for words of wisdom. Rather than throwing your typewriter off a cliff, come back to this post for encouragement when you’re having a bad writing day.

MARKETPLACE

“Writing to trends is a mistake always, because by the time your book reaches an editor, that editor may be sick of the trendy whatever it was. ...Always dig deep inside yourself, write what’s there.”

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Search for the Title
- Let Covers Evolve
- Understand the Influence of Covers
- Ignore Categories
- Don’t Write to Trends
- Know How to Market Yourself

CHAPTER REVIEW

A lot of things about the publishing process can be out of your control, including book titles, covers, and the marketplace itself. Here, Judy shares some of her personal experiences with titles and cover decisions. Now that she has opened an independent bookstore, she has a lot of insights into how books are marketed, titled, and covered. Ideally, you will have a lot of titles and covers, including reissues, in your career. Take these in stride.

Judy hates categories, including the age categories that are part of children’s publishing. She believes that many books can be read by anyone, not just the people to whom they’re marketed. You should be aware of your audience, but also the fact that there are children who read adult books and vice versa. In the same vein, don’t write to trends. Not only will the trend be over by the time you publish, since the process takes such a long time, but you limit yourself this way, potentially disregarding who you really are as a writer.

This chapter wraps up with some tips on online marketing and getting yourself ready to promote your book. Tools like Twitter, Facebook, and your own website are indispensable to modern authors. Publishers aren’t doing as much to market novels these days, so you will certainly be asked to use these platforms (if you aren’t already).

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Read Judy’s example of Sherman Alexie’s *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. It was originally published as a Young Adult novel, but has achieved what is called “cross-over” success and reached audiences beyond the traditional YA readers. What audience would you argue this book was written for? Did its publication as a YA novel hinder or help its appeal? What do you think contributed to its boundary-breaking crossover appeal?

MARKETPLACE

ASSIGNMENTS

- Decide how you want to pitch your story: does it belong in a genre category, or does it fit under a more general umbrella? Add this to your query letter and share your reasoning with your peers in [The Hub](#). Discuss how they plan to pitch or categorize their own work, and why.
- Brainstorm a list of free or cheap online promotion and marketing ideas for writers. Submit your ideas or add on to someone else's in [The Hub](#). When the time comes, you can revisit this discussion for a wealth of great ideas that you and your fellow writers can use.

CONTROVERSY AND CENSORSHIP

“As a writer, you have to go into that little room and leave the fear outside, and get that censor off your shoulder so that you don’t self-censor, because all of [the] censors’ wishes to challenge our books has made a lot of writers afraid.”

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Margaret as Controversial
- Find Your People
- Keep Fighting
- Be Brave and True

CHAPTER REVIEW

Difficult or controversial subject matter in a novel should never be gratuitous. If it doesn’t illuminate character or advance the story, it needs to go. But if it is a central part of your story or something you really want to explore, it belongs. Use your own inner guide on whether or not to include controversial material.

In the beginning, Judy didn’t know she was being controversial. Her passion was to tell the best story as honestly as she could. It wasn’t until *In the Unlikely the Event* that she realized: difficult books to write are sometimes difficult books to read. This did not deter her, but she realized that they wouldn’t end up being for everyone. She remained compelled by her conviction to write and tell these stories.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Read the following books and see how Judy tackles difficult subject matter. How does it inform character and plot? How is it handled? Can you see any research on the page? How does the controversial or difficult element contribute to story? How do you think it’s intended to make the reader feel?
 - *Blubber*
 - *Then Again, Maybe I Won’t*
 - *It’s Not the End of the World*
 - *Just as Long as We’re Together*
 - *Here’s to You, Rachel Robinson*
 - *Deenie*
 - *Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret*
 - *In the Unlikely Event*

ASSIGNMENT

- Review your idea, plot, and characters to determine if anything you want to do with your novel is going to be emotionally difficult or controversial. Are you tackling anything real or heavy where you’re inspired to connect with readers who are going through a tough time? List your

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CONTROVERSY AND CENSORSHIP

controversial topics and make an outline of things you can do to flesh it out and do it justice.

For example, if you are writing about divorce, do you have personal experience with it? Could you speak to a family therapist about the issue? Can you interview friends whose parents divorced? Or parents who have divorced? How many different perspectives can you bring to the table? Share your list of action items with your peers in [The Hub](#).

CAREER JOURNEY

I've connected with readers for so many generations now. I couldn't ask for anything else."

—Judy Blume

SUBCHAPTERS

- Connect With Readers
- Find Your Chutzpah
- Celebrate the Milestones
- Cherish the Highlights
- Share the Love

CHAPTER REVIEW

As Judy grew up and graduated from school—and the educational and social aspects of her life evolved—she really started to lack a creative outlet. This eventually led to writing, and the sale of her first project to an established publishing house, which validated her journey up to that point.

Now that Judy has a long history and a body of work, she's more interested than ever in connecting with readers and helping writers find an audience. Her bookstore has brought her closer to both groups and she's thrilled when she gets to present an upcoming writer at a store event.

Her biggest pieces of advice are to keep observing and cultivating your idea file. Tap into your creative energy and imagination. And to stay determined and keep writing.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Judy puts great emphasis on the part creativity has played in her life. Pick up a copy of the evergreen creative guidebook, Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way*, to delve deeper into the idea that you are an artist and creator. Pay special attention to the concept of the "artist date." Consider doing the course outlined in *The Artist's Way* as a companion to this class to develop yourself as a writer as you also develop your writing project.



CLOSING

“Don’t think about it too much. Don’t overanalyze it. Just let it happen. Just sit down, start doing it. And good luck.”

—Judy Blume

CHAPTER REVIEW

Judy wraps up her MasterClass with some truly inspirational words for staying strong and focusing on your creativity. She encourages writers to trust themselves. Judy says that she is an intuitive writer, not an analytical one. But there are no rules. Whatever works for you is right.

You’ve finished your MasterClass with Judy Blume! Congratulations! We hope you feel inspired to complete the first draft of your novel project. We want to make sure that your experience with Judy and your classmates doesn’t stop here. You can stay in touch with your peers by:

- Joining [The Hub](#) to connect with your classmates
- Contributing to lesson discussions at the end of each video
- Uploading your relevant assignments in [The Hub](#) for peer feedback
- Submitting an Office Hours question to Judy

TAKE IT FURTHER

- Judy emphasizes that writers need to take themselves seriously and stay determined. Draft up a writing schedule for yourself and stick to it. Even if it’s for 30 minutes a day between work and home responsibilities, take yourself and your writing seriously and treat it like a job. Share inspiration and tips for staying motivated with your classmates in [The Hub](#).

JUDY’S FINAL ASSIGNMENT

- For your final assignment, complete your novel manuscript. This may take you a while, but if you take Judy’s key messages of trusting yourself and perseverance to heart, there should be no stopping you. Always strive to improve. Persist through rejection and self-doubt. Trust yourself. That’s how Judy wrote her way to mastery, and into the hearts of millions of readers around the world. Good luck, and happy writing!

SUGGESTED READING

Below is Judy's bibliography. Excerpts from Judy's works in this workbook were taken from the following editions.

- Judy Blume, *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2014 reprint (originally published 1970).
- Judy Blume, *Blubber*, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2014 reprint (1974).
- Judy Blume, *Deenie*, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2014 reissue (1973).
- Judy Blume, *Here's to You*, Rachel Robinson, Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2010 reissue (1993).
- Judy Blume, *In the Unlikely Event*, Alfred A. Knopf, 2015.
- Judy Blume, *It's Not the End of the World*, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2014 reissue (1972).
- Judy Blume, *Just as Long as We're Together*, Delacorte Books for Young Readers, 2010 reissue (1987).
- Judy Blume, *Smart Women*, Berkley, 2010 reissue (1983).
- Judy Blume, *Starring Sally J. Freedman as Herself*, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2014 reissue (1977).
- Judy Blume, *Summer Sisters*, Bantam, 2013 reissue (1998).
- Judy Blume, *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* and other books in the *Fudge* series, Puffin Books, 2007 reissue (1972).
- Judy Blume, *Tiger Eyes*, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2014 reissue (1981).
- Judy Blume, *Then Again, Maybe I Won't*, Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2014 reissue (1971).

SUGGESTED READING

Below are books by others who write for young people that Judy suggests you read.

- Sherman Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2009.
- Robin Benway, *Far From the Tree*, HarperTeen, 2017.
- The work of Beverly Cleary
- The work of John Green
- The work of Carolyn Mackler
- The work of Patrick Ness
- RJ Palacio, *Wonder*, Knopf, 2012.
- The work of Richard Peck
- Angie Thomas, *The Hate U Give*, Balzer + Bray, 2017.
- The work of Rachel Vail
- The work of Jesmyn Ward
- The work of Martin Wilson
- The work of Nicola Yoon

MASTERCLASS

