



## Time Management Questionnaire

By Emily Gray Tedrowe



“My goal with writers is always to help them create a sustainable, long-term writing habit. No quick-fix binge writing, up all night, etc. That’s not my thing. I like the slow and steady method because I’ve seen the best long-term results from that, both in my own career and with clients.”

-Emily Gray Tedrowe, WriteByNight Consultant and Coach

## A Few Words About This Tool

**This questionnaire is designed to help you carve out writing time from your busy schedule.** It's appropriate for writers of all experience levels, working in all genres.

**The immediate goal** is to get you thinking honestly about how you spend your minutes so that you can identify time that can be used for writing . . . “free” time you probably didn't even know existed.

**The long-term goal** is to develop this writing time you've identified into a productive, sustainable, habitual routine so that you can write more, produce pages, and achieve your writerly goals whatever they may be.

## The Questionnaire

**Grab some paper and a pen or fire up your computer, and answer as many of the following questions as you like, as fully as you like.** Please consider that “work” here can mean parenting or other family/household obligations as well as a paid job. Ready? Go!

What time do you wake up? What is your morning routine like? How energized are you in the morning?

What is your commute to and from work like?

What are your working hours? Are there any free pockets of time? Do you take a lunch break?

What is your usual routine after work? How tired are you?

When do you eat dinner? Do you usually cook, take out, or eat at a restaurant?

When do you usually run errands?

(The Questionnaire, continued)

What is your evening/nighttime routine like? What time do you go to bed? Are you energized during the evening hours or do you feel tired from the day?

What is your exercise routine? Days/times/type?

When do you see friends or go out? How many evenings a week do you go out?

How much TV do you watch? When do you watch it? With how much attention do you watch it?

Do you travel a lot? What are your major travel plans in the next six months?

Do you have any other major commitments that require significant time (pets, hobbies, volunteer service, family obligations, religious duties, etc.)?

Is there anything else that you devote a significant amount of time to daily and/or weekly? Any special circumstances to take into consideration?

## What To Do with Your Answers

Now that you see clearly where your time goes, you can identify pockets of time that can be used for writing and experiment with your schedule until you find a routine that works for you.

**Step 1:** Using your answers to the questionnaire, identify 2-3 times per week during which you could write. These should each be a minimum of 10 minutes, a maximum of 2 hours.

(Yes, it's okay to write for only 10 minutes! Why? Because it's better than writing for 0 minutes.)

(In a similar vein, we recommend a maximum of 2 hours because after a 120-minute writing session, you deserve a break.)

**Hint:** Look for built-in breaks, like a lunch hour; look to trim activities that monopolize your time but don't give you much satisfaction, like TV watching; look for unused hours of the day, like early mornings and late nights.

(What To Do with Your Answers, continued)

**Step 2:** Choose one of those times you identified in Step 1 and commit to it by entering it into your weekly calendar, setting phone reminders, etc. Whatever you need to do to solidify the intention, by all means, do it.

**Step 3:** When those times roll around, WRITE! Stick to this regimen for three weeks, then reevaluate.

How did you do? If your new writing schedule is working well, choose another weekly writing time from Step 1 and add it to your routine. If your new writing schedule isn't working as well as you'd hoped, try an alternative weekly writing time from Step 1.

**Step 4:** Repeat as needed.

## If You Run Into Trouble ...

**Please know that WriteByNight is here to help.** Via [our signature writers' services](#), we are dedicated to helping writers like you achieve their creative potential and literary goals. ([Coaching](#) is amazing for time management and accountability, by the way!)

Interested? Let's chat.

**[Request a free consultation now!](#)**

We'll discuss your writerly interests and goals, address any problems you've encountered along the way, answer any questions you may have about craft and/or the business of writing, and determine how WriteByNight might be of service to you.

We're looking forward to helping you write better, right now.

## About the Author



**WriteByNight Consultant and Coach Emily Gray Tedrowe** is the author of the forthcoming novel *Blue Stars* (St. Martin's Press) and *Commuters: A Novel* (Harper Perennial), which was named an IndieBound Next Notable Book, an *Entertainment Weekly* "best book of the summer," and a Target Breakout book. Her short stories, one of which received an Illinois Arts Council award, have appeared in the *Chicago Tribune's Printers Row Journal*, *Fifty-Two Stories*, *Crab Orchard Review*, and *Other Voices*, among other journals. Emily has

studied creativity coaching with Eric Maisel, and has taught writing at all levels, from high school to graduate students. She has a particular interest in coaching writers who are parents and/or have busy day jobs, and specializes in how to fit writing into life's constant demands. Originally from New York, Emily now lives in Chicago with her husband and two daughters.

**To inquire about working with Emily or another talented member of our staff, [contact us today!](#)**