

Ann's Historical Fiction #9

08/31/24

Teaching writing

The kids are all write!!

I taught many camps this summer, all of them related to science, through the nonprofit I founded, Science is Elemental. If you would like to receive the SIE newsletter, please let me know.

One of these camps, though, combined my love of writing with my love of science. I taught a virtual writing camp. Four kids signed up, with three of them attending most of the lessons. I am here to tell you that the kids are full of stories waiting to get out. The connection with science was that each participant needed to incorporate science in their story in some way.

The camp consisted of four group lessons, with an individual half-hour lesson for each camper. During the group lessons we talked about each other's writing projects, point of view, characters, plot, and setting. In the last lesson, we also talked about the editing process, and a little bit about magazines and publishers that work with kid authors.

The coolest thing I learned about these young writers is that they are very clear about the stories they want to tell. In the two individual lessons I've held so far, I've been treated to an abundance of imagination and storytelling. Hopefully, the participants have appreciated the suggestions I've made regarding developing characters, spending more time understanding relationships among characters, and making the stories clear to the readers.

Genre: Historical fiction, with a bit of fantasy thrown in for good measure.



NaNo 2024

Which Book?

On the next page, I write about the research I am doing on the next NaNo novel.

Or am I? In addition to my writing historical fiction, I am also writing children's books about what scientists do, and I am overdue for another one.

I plan to make this next one about artificial intelligence (AI). I would like to get going with it. The problem is, as behind as I am on the research for the next novel, I'm even further behind on the research for this children's book.

Please respond to this newsletter via the email at ann@annshistoricalfiction.com and tell me which you would like to see first!!

Researching the Next Novel

Bach's first wife, Maria Barbara Bach, a singer, died at age 36. Bach's second wife, Anna Magdalena Bach, was also a singer, and he predeceased her. Together, incidentally, the two women gave birth to 20 children.

A lot has been written about Anna Magdalena, including her professional life as a singer, her life as Bach's wife, and as a mother. However, very little has been written about the nearly ten years she lived after Bach passed away, on July 28, 1750.

One would like to think that the city of Leipzig, after his death, cared for his widow, or that the three sons of Bach that were working could have provided for her. That didn't happen. Two of those sons did take in siblings, including the youngest, Johann Christian Bach, 15 years old at the time. Anna Magdalena was left with the two youngest, both daughters, to fend for herself.

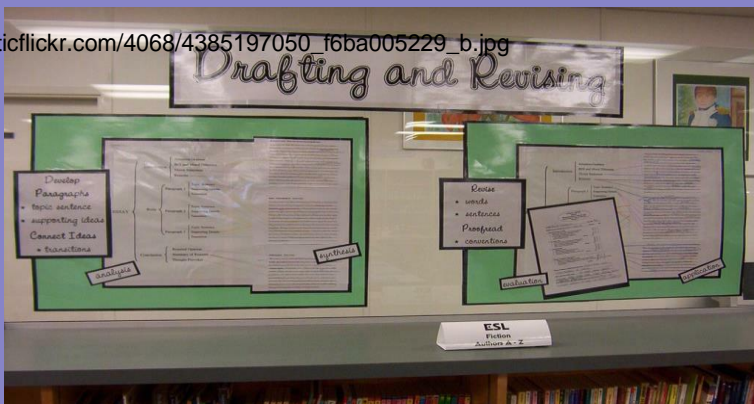
Leipzig did provide minimal assistance to widows, which she received, and she also took in sewing to make ends meet. However, that didn't last. The French and Indian War (1754-1763) in America, also known as the Seven Years' War 1756-63), also took place in Europe as the English, French, Austrians, Russians and others fought over land there and overseas colonies.

The hardships of war [Grab your reader's attention with a great quote from the document or use this space to emphasize a key point. To place this text box anywhere on the page, just drag it.]
r, and especially when Leipzig was under siege by the Austrians near the end of her life greatly affected her already minimal standard of living. I suspect she found very creative ways to manage, and I plan to write that story



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CCE Music and Dance Weekend

Free and easy!

Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann (CCE), an organization devoted to Irish culture, held, through the branch in Washington, DC (www.ccepotomac.org), a Music and Dance Weekend this year. I was thrilled to attend, having missed 2022's whole week event due to contracting COVID.

I have attended several of the MAD weeks, and related events where Irish music experts teach tunes, techniques, history, and culture to the students. Sometimes, though, the teacher focuses on teaching as many tunes as possible.

I know many of the participants appreciate that. However, Irish music is generally taught by ear, and I'm just not very good at learning that way. I grew up playing the piano and learning to sight read music. I'm getting better, but it helps if I can focus on one tune at a time.

Fortunately, both my teachers focused on the same tune this MAD Week: a reel called Free and Easy. I am happy to report that I can now play the whole tune. I suspect one or two more weeks of practice help me nail it completely and be able to play it in a traditional Irish music session.

If you've ever wanted to learn more about traditional Irish music, please let me know.

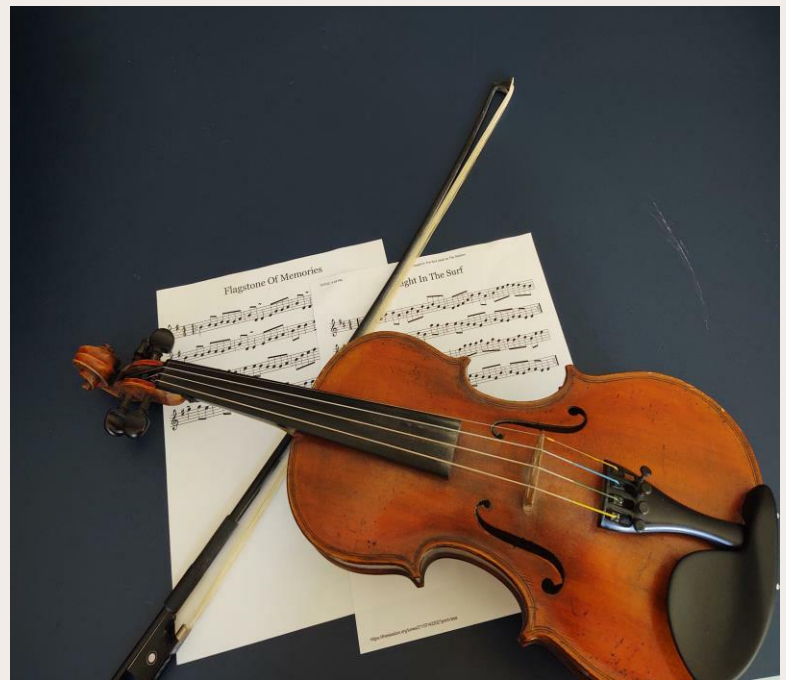


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