WHAT IS THE FIGHT TO WRITE?

This November, the Academic Learning Center is supporting Tarrant County College students through National Novel Writing Month (shortened to NaNoWriMo) by hosting write-ins, sprints, and workshops in the spirit of our 2018 theme, “Fight to Write.” For those unfamiliar with NaNoWriMo, it is an internationally celebrated month of dedicated creative writing. Formal participants declare their goal to write 50,000 words from November 1st to November 30th with the intention of drafting a complete (or nearly complete) novel. The event is lovingly known as a “by the seat of your pants” approach to creative writing as writers forego mid-writing editing and revising to achieve the 50,000 words.

The ALC will encourage students (and participating faculty and staff) to sign up via the NaNoWriMo website, but it is not a requirement. Instead, the ALC will celebrate any progress towards individual writing goals by tracking the word count, not of individuals, but of the entire Northwest Campus. The ALC will also offer weekly write-ins, writing workshops, and community resources for those looking to get their write on.

At the ALC, we believe that everyone has a story and everyone should have the opportunity to express that story without fear of judgement or rejection. We are a diverse community of writers, and the ALC hopes to support this community throughout all facets of their writing journey. All languages, formats, and genres of writing will be welcomed.

Come celebrate storytelling and writing with the staff of the ALC! We look forward to drinking too much coffee and typing furiously alongside you.

For more information, visit the Academic Learning Center on the Third Floor of the WTLO or contact zahmar.rounds@tccd.edu or mia.gonzalez@tccd.edu.
HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Step One. Decide on a Writing Goal
When you decide to participate, begin considering what your writing goal should be. Songs, poetry, short stories, flash fiction, novels, scripts, memoirs, and graphic novels are all acceptable projects. If you have an idea not listed or would like some additional input, feel free to come by the ALC and talk to one of our tutors.

Step Two. Prepare
Before writing, decide on how you can best prepare. Stopping by the ALC to learn about our upcoming events and brainstorm ideas, locating the places that sell coffee and soft drinks around campus, re-reading your favorite books, creating an inspiration board – all of these are ways you can begin preparing for November.

Step Three. Attend the Fight to Write Launch Party on October 30th
Celebrate the beginning of The Fight to Write by visiting the ALC to meet our staff and enjoy snacks. From 2pm to 5pm, we will be hosting writing challenges and games, and helping participants begin their projects.

Step Four. Write and Attend ALC Events
Keep writing, but don’t do it alone! The tutors and staff at the ALC are here to support you. The ALC will host several events throughout the month such as write-ins and word sprints that are meant to support your writing journey. We have resources such as story writing handouts, inspiration suggestions, and tutors ready to answer any questions and encourage you every step of the way.

Step Five. Report Progress
After each writing session, whether that session be five minutes or five hours, record the number of words added to your word count. At the end of the day, write the number of words added on a small slip of paper and drop the paper in our Word Count Box at the ALC. On Fridays, a tutor will gather contributed word counts and calculate a total for that week. The total will then be added to our Word-O-Meter.

Step Six. Drink Coffee and/or Tea
Beginning November 7th, the ALC will host Writing Wednesdays. On these days from 10 am until 2 pm, the ALC will distribute snacks to hard working writers and have coffee available for those needing a mid-day boost in energy and warmth.

Step Seven. Celebrate
On November 30th, the ALC will celebrate all progress students, faculty, and staff have made towards their writing goals. We will allow students to read brief excerpts from their pieces if they so wish, distribute prizes for the highest student word counts, and enjoy snacks and drinks.
I want to participate, but I don’t think I can commit to writing 50,000 words this month.

That’s okay! We understand that November is a very busy time for school, work, and family. You are welcome to participate and work towards any goal you see fit. Please still report your word count and join other writers at any sprints, write-ins, or workshops you can attend.

What does it mean to report my word count?
The ALC wants to celebrate the progress of all its students, faculty, and staff. You can track your word count if you are using a word processor or writing by hand. Our staff is excited to help you with both if need be. Once you know your latest word count, report it by writing the number of words written onto a small sheet of paper and placing it inside the NaNoWriMo Word Count box. Every Friday, a member of the ALC team will add the reported numbers and update our center’s Word-O-Meter. Your words matter, help us contribute one word at a time.

Do I have to write a novel?
No! You are welcome to use this time and the ALC resources to write any creative material. Feel free to speak with a tutor about other writing options such as flash fiction, short stories, plays, poetry, songs, and more. Any words written towards your goal can be reported to our Word-O-Meter.

I want to write a story, but I don’t know where to begin...
Beginning any writing project will always be the hardest part. The Academic Learning Center has many resources you can use such as plot explanation sheets, character diagrams, prompt jars, and more. You are always welcome to discuss your ideas with a tutor as well.

I would like to participate in the formal NaNoWriMo event online. How do I do this?
To sign up to participate in the formal NaNoWriMo event, create an account on this website: https://nanowrimo.org/. Simply complete the information about your novel and start writing. If you choose to do the formal event, please also report your word count to the ALC as well as the online system. If you need any help or have further questions, please let a tutor know.