WOW! SUMMER 2020 CONTEST

JUNE 1ST — AUGUST 31ST

DEADLINE: AUGUST 31, 2020 11:59 PM (PACIFIC TIME)

Prizes

1st Place: $400.00
+ $25 Amazon Gift Certificate, Published on WOW! Women On Writing, Interview on The Muffin.

2nd Place: $300.00
+ $25 Amazon Gift Certificate, Published on WOW! Women On Writing, Interview on The Muffin.

3rd Place: $200.00
+ $25 Amazon Gift Certificate, Published on WOW! Women On Writing, Interview on The Muffin.

7 Runners Up:
+ $25 Amazon Gift Certificate, Published on WOW! Women On Writing, Interview on The Muffin.
10 Honorable Mentions:
+ $20 Amazon Gift Certificate, Name and title of story published on WOW!

*All prizes are sent electronically.*
Cash is sent via PayPal and Amazon Gift Cards are sent via email.

Guest Judge:

Literary Agent Erica Christensen with the Metamorphosis Literary Agency

Erica Christensen has been in the publishing industry since 2014, holding various positions. She was born and raised in the Heartland of America and now resides near the beautiful Emerald Coast with her family of five and her sassy, spunky lab-pit mix named Kali.

In book-length manuscripts, she is seeking: Upper YA/NA and Adult Romance in most subgenres, ranging from Clean/Sweet to High Heat in any pairings. Mysteries and Thrillers (bonus points for Cozy Mysteries and Psychological Thrillers). Picture books with diverse characters that bring valuable lessons to children in an entertaining and lighthearted way. Erica is not a fit for Historical Romances, High Fantasy, or Science Fiction.

Visit the Metamorphosis Literary Agency:
https://www.metamorphosisliteraryagency.com/

Follow her on Twitter: https://twitter.com/LiteraryErica
OPEN PROMPT

This season we leave the contest completely open to you! This means you get to decide the subject matter and story for your flash fiction entry. You have the freedom to be as creative and original as possible. Please make sure that your entry is fiction (not poetry or personal essay) and have fun!

WORD COUNT

Minimum: 250    Maximum: 750
The title is not to be counted in your word count. We use MS Word to determine the submitted entry’s word count.

CONTEST DEADLINE

August 31, 2020 at 11:59 PM, Pacific Standard Time. You can sprint like Cinderella at midnight, but you run the risk of having your story become mouse food. In other words, you worked hard on the story. Safeguard it! Act like the deadline is a day or so *before the deadline*.

LIMITED ENTRIES

To increase your odds at winning but still enable healthy competition, we’ve limited the number of entries to 300 stories for the season. Please enter early to ensure your spot in the competition. If we reach 300 entries, we will disable the PayPal button on the contest page. If the button is still active, it means we haven’t reached 300 stories yet. Please visit our contest page http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php to ensure that the button is active before you send us an e-mail asking us if we’ve reached the limit.
ENTRY FEE: $10.00

The entry fee is not a reading fee. All fees are used solely and purely for award money, prizes, promotion, and administrative costs. To enter this contest, you must pay an entry fee.

To pay by credit card, debit card, or PayPal balance, go to: http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php. Click on the "Buy Now" button. It will take you to PayPal. From there you have two options:

1. Pay with PayPal (If you have an account, choose this option).
2. If you don’t have a PayPal account, click the link that says “Pay with Debit or Credit Card” and follow the instructions by selecting the appropriate tab.

E-MAIL SUBJECT LINE

Type Summer Contest Submission 2020 in your subject line when you e-mail your submission. Please do this to ensure that we do not miss the story that you will have worked so hard on. If you have purchased a critique, please type Summer Contest Submission 2020 with Critique in your subject line. Without the word “critique” in your subject line, our contest manager won’t identify your entry as a critique. So if you purchase a critique, please make sure you mention it in your subject line.

SUBMISSION CONFIRMATION

Our Auto Responder will thank you for submitting. It is not a clock-watcher or calendar reader. If your submission is LATE, we humans will note that fact and your story will be disqualified; but our non-prejudicial Auto Responder will simply say thank you.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR STORY (SIMPLIFIED)

2. Click on the “Buy Now” button. Purchase an entry ($10) or entry plus critique ($20).
3. Copy-past your story in an email (or attach it as a Microsoft Word document if you’re purchasing a critique); type “Summer Contest Submission 2020” or “Summer Contest Submission 2020 with Critique” in your email subject line; include your contact info below your story; and send your story via email to: contest@wow-womenonwriting.com
DISQUALIFIERS

1. Turning in your submission LATE! That means we would have received it AFTER 11:59 PM, PST, August 31, 2020. If you read articles concerning your chances of winning a writing contest, they will always remind you to get entries in early rather than late. Please take the advice, including ours, because we have no desire to disqualify anyone’s entry.
2. We will reject any submission that MS Word counts under 250 words or above 750 words. THIS DOES NOT COUNT THE TITLE OF YOUR STORY OR YOUR PERSONAL CONTACT INFORMATION AT THE END OF YOUR STORY.
3. You didn’t pay for your contest entry.
4. You sent your story to the wrong email or you didn’t send your story in. Please note, the only email to send you story to is: contest@wow-womenonwriting.com.

THE 14 WOW! GUIDELINES

1. Your story must be fiction.
2. Your submission must be Minimum: 250 words; Maximum: 750 words. This does not count your title or personal contact information that you add at the END OF YOUR STORY.
3. You must pay $10.00 for the entry before making your submission.
4. You must type Summer Contest Submission 2020 in the subject line of your e-mail. If you purchased a critique, you must type Summer Contest Submission 2020 With Critique in the subject line of your e-mail. Failure to do so will disqualify your entry.
6. Whet our appetite with a title. It will be the only thing typed above your story in the body of your e-mail. No title means a lower technical score for not following the guidelines.
7. At the END of your story, please type on the left hand side the following information:
   a. Your name.
   b. Your e-mail address; you may submit more than one to be on the safe side.
   c. The city/state or country you’d like listed next to your name if you win.
   d. Telephone number where we will most likely be able to reach you. Just in case you win and we can’t reach you via e-mail.
   e. Word count—this does not include your title, name or your personal contact information. We use MS Word to verify the word count of your story.
   f. Your unique PayPal Transaction ID or receipt number, which is your confirmation number for payment. If you don’t have one, that’s okay. It’s just an extra verification step.
8. WE DO NOT ACCEPT ATTACHMENTS—EXCEPT FOR THOSE THAT PURCHASE A CRITIQUE (See below in the Critique Section). Our Auto responder is polite and may thank you for your e-mail.

9. Use Verdana 12 pt type or Plain text. If your e-mail provider doesn’t have the option of Verdana or plain text, you can use Times New Roman or Courier New. Just make sure the text is black (no fancy colors please) and readable.

10. No html e-mails accepted, except for the aforementioned font. No tables, pictures, etc.

11. The best way to submit your story is to type your story in the body of your e-mail or copy-paste from a plain text document. If you purchased a critique, you may attach your story to the email in a Microsoft Word document (please note: we disqualify PDFs or other types of attachments).

12. We accept only one submission per title. We accept only one submission per e-mail. Rewrites are not accepted—meaning, once you’ve sent your story in, please don’t revise the same story and send it in again under the same payment. Again, our auto responder graciously thanks you and we, on the other hand, disqualify repeats under the same payment. If you revised your story during the time of the contest and would like to submit the new edited and updated version, you must go through the entry process again and submit another payment. Why? Because your story has most likely already been submitted to judges. Remember, we only allow a limited number of stories to be entered in the contest, so each story must be submitted with its own payment. Of course, there are exceptions to this rule. If you just submitted a story a minute ago and saw a typo, you can resubmit it. We typically don’t send to our judges until the day after a story is submitted. If you have any questions, please ask us at contestinfo@wow-womenonwriting.com. We typically respond within a few hours.

13. E-mail your submission to: contest@wow-womenonwriting.com, no later than 11:59 PM, August 31, 2020, Pacific Standard Time.

14. The act of entering this contest constitutes an agreement between you and WOW, that you agree to EVERY ONE OF THE 14 GUIDELINES and that you acknowledge pleading a case for not following these guidelines will not move WOW or our Auto responder to nullify the disqualification.
   a. In case of disqualification, remember the only serious mistakes are the ones from which we don’t learn.
E-mail Subject Line: Summer Contest Submission 2020

Title of your story

Story goes here. Remember, no indents please, and no double-spacing after periods. Use single spacing only with margins flush left. Please do not center your text or title. This is called “block formatting.”

This is a paragraph. Notice the distance between this paragraph and the one above. We are using “single” or “1.0” under line spacing options. Type your story into the body of an e-mail or copy-paste from a plain text document for the best outcome. If you want to use em dashes, please use your hyphen key like this—it will help eliminate odd characters. You can also use asterisks to indicate scene changes. These do not count in the overall word count. Please make sure they are flush left (as below), not centered.

If you have dialogue, please space it like this.

“How should I space dialogue?” she asked.

“Like this,” I said. “Notice the paragraph space between the dialogue. If in doubt, please take a look at any of the published winners’ stories on the website for an example of formatting.”

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At the end of your story, remember to include all the information listed in our 14 guidelines. Hit the return key a couple of times and then enter your information below your story:

Your Name
Your Pen Name (if applicable)
E-mail address(es)
Your city/state that you’d like to be listed under if you win
Telephone number with area code
Word count
PayPal transaction ID# or Receipt# (If you have one—if not, don’t worry about it. We will match up your payment with your story.)

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WOW! Women On Writing Contest: Critiques!

If you purchased the “Contest Entry with Critique” option, you will receive personal editorial feedback from one of our round table judges who is also a professional editor. Upon the close of our contest, and after winners are announced (typically one to two months after the contest closes), you will receive a critique of your story.

- Subject
- Content
- Technical

You will be provided with your scores (1-5) in each category, and personal editorial feedback as well. “Overview” is an additional un-scored category where the editor shares her personal thoughts or comments about your story. Please be patient upon the close of our contest and allow time for our editors to thoroughly critique your piece. **You will not receive your critique until AFTER the Finalists are announced—which is typically one month and a week after the contest closes.**

To purchase a critique with your entry, please visit our contest page: [http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php](http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php) and choose the button that says, “Buy Entry w/Critique.” **Please note: this option must be purchased at the time of entry.** This allows us to verify which piece you are receiving a critique for. Please choose your option carefully. We do not issue refunds.

**You must put Summer Contest Submission 2020 With Critique in your subject line when submitting your entry.** This will help us verify that your particular entry is the one you’ve chosen for critiquing. Please remember this step. Without putting the above subject line in your e-mail, our contest manager won’t know that you purchased a critique and you will not receive one. So, please, put Summer Contest Submission 2020 With Critique in your subject line.

**We WILL accept Microsoft Word documents (.doc or .docx) as attachments for stories that are receiving a critique. (No PDFs or other file types please.)** If you purchased a critique and are worried about the formatting of your story, you may submit your story as a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) attachment. Follow the same guidelines as you would with a regular submission—including your title at the top, single space, no indents, and include your contact information at the bottom along with your PayPal receipt—and attach it to your e-mail when submitting. Remember to include Summer
Contest Submission 2020 with Critique in your email subject line and send to: contest@wow-womenonwriting.com

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why should I enter the contest?
Contests provide writers with challenges, including a deadline, word count limitation, and editing practice. Writing an entry for a contest means more practice with writing, proofing, and editing.

What should I write about?
For open prompt contests, you can write on any topic that you choose, just make sure it’s fiction and within the word count.

To whom should I target my writing? Who is my audience of readers?
Gear your writing toward women readers and our guest judge of the season.

How long should my entry be?
Entries must be a minimum of 250 words to a maximum of 750 words. The word count does NOT include your title.

Who is eligible for the contest?
Any person on the planet who can submit their entry in English, via our online means, is eligible to enter.

How do I get my entry published?
If an entrant wins 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Place, or places as one of the 7 Runners Up, then her story will be published on WOW!. 10 Honorable Mentions will only have the title of their story, their name, and city/state published on WOW!

What are the quarterly periods and deadlines?
FALL: September - November 30th, 11:59 PM (Pacific Time)
WINTER: December - February 28th, 11:59 PM (Pacific Time)
SPRING: March - May 31st, 11:59 PM (Pacific Time)
SUMMER: June - August 31st, 11:59 PM (Pacific Time)

What is the judging schedule of the contest?
First Round Judging results are completed a month and one week after the contest closes. So in the case of the Fall Contest, since it closes December 1, you’d know if your story
made it to final judging by the end of the first week of January. For the Winter Contest, since it closes at midnight March 1, you’d find out if your story made it to the finals by the end of the first week of April. For the Spring Contest, since it closes June 1, you’d find out if your story made it to the finals by the end of the first week of July. For the Summer Contest, since it closes September 1, you’d find out if your story made it to the finals by the end of the first week of October.

**I purchased a critique. When do I receive my critiqued story back?**
We aim to have critiques back one month and one week after the contest closes. Same schedule as the question above.

**How long must I wait before the results are published?**
We officially publish results online two months after the close of the contest, depending on the expedience of our guest judges. At that time, if you were chosen in the top 10, your story will be published in the next newsletter of WOW! We aim to have all the prizes to the contestants within a couple days after the contest winners are announced.

**Can I submit a piece I wrote for another publication that’s posted online?**
Yes, you can submit a piece you wrote for another publication as long as you own the copyrights to the story.

**Can I submit a piece I self-published and is available for sale?**
Yes, you can submit a story you’ve self-published.

**Can I submit a story I previously submitted to a WOW! contest?**
Yes, you may, but only if your story didn’t get published on WOW in a previous contest—meaning, your story didn’t win 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Place, or place as one of the 7 Runners Up. If your story won an Honorable Mention, which means it wasn’t published on WOW (only the title and author’s name) then YES, it is okay to submit the same story in the current contest.

We’ve had contestants who didn’t place in one contest, place in another. It really depends on the guest judge for the season and her preferences. Just make sure you go back and review your story to make sure it is free of typos, spelling mistakes, and construction errors. Identify any problem areas to rewrite. Some contestants who’ve purchased a critique take the suggestions of the editor who critiqued their story and rework it for the next contest.
Do you allow simultaneous submissions? Submitting to other contests at the same time?
Yes, it’s fine with us, but please check with the other contest or market to make sure they also allow for simultaneous submissions. If you end up placing in our contest and placing in another contest, it’s fine with us—just make sure it’s fine with them!

What is the entry fee?
$10.00 per entry, per e-mail.

What is the critique fee?
An additional $10.00 for a critique, per entry, per e-mail. $20 total.

How do I pay for my entry?
Go to the contest page: http://www.wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php. Click on the "Buy Now" button. It will take you to PayPal. From there you have two options: 1. Pay with PayPal (If you have an account, choose this option); 2. If you don’t have a PayPal account, pay by credit or debit card (If you’d rather not create a PayPal account, you can pay by credit card with that option).

What if I don’t have a credit card, debit card, checking account with e-check capabilities, or a PayPal account? Can I send you a check or money order?
No, I’m sorry, but we no longer allow for paper checks or money orders. We used to allow for the option, but only one or two people used it a year, so we had to discontinue the service.

Can I enter more than once?
Yes, but please submit each entry in a new e-mail with a new PayPal Transaction ID or Receipt number at the bottom, to facilitate tracking and organization. You can enter as many times as you like as long as you follow the guidelines.

Is it possible for someone to win more than once for different pieces in the same contest?
Yes, we’ve had writers place twice in the same contest. We judge by the story and remove all contact information before sending stories to the guest judges of the season; so the guest judges may think two (or more) stories are worthy of placing, no matter if they’re written by the same author.

I live outside the United States, can I enter?
We welcome entries from all over the world. But contest entries must be submitted in English and via our online means.
Can you explain the judging process and who judges?
We have a roundtable of 5-8 judges who blindly score submissions based on: Subject, Content, and Technical. If an entrant scores well in the first round, she goes to the second round of judging which averages out scores to narrow down the top 20 entries. Afterward, it’s up to our guest judge to submit her 10 Honorable Mentions and her Top 10. From the Top 10, she ranks the 7 Runners Up, and then the Third, Second, and First Place Winners.

What do you mean by “blind judging”?
Blind judging means we remove all your contact info (name, e-mail address, address, city, state, phone number, etc.) before we send your entry to our guest judge of the season. This is to ensure fairness; so that all stories are judged equally. The only thing we might include on a story is the country where the writer is from. This is so our judges will overlook spelling differences (e.g. color/colour).

How should I submit my entry?
Please submit your entry with “Summer Contest Submission 2020” or “Summer Contest Submission 2020 With Critique” (if you purchased a critique) in the email Subject heading, your story in the body of your e-mail, and your PayPal Transaction ID or PayPal receipt number at the bottom, below your name, address, and contact information.

Submit to: contest@wow-womenonwriting.com after reading our guidelines.

I entered, but I didn’t receive an auto-response: help!
Please check your e-mail and make sure you sent it to the correct e-mail address. The only e-mail address for contest entries is contest@wow-womenonwriting.com. It’s also the only e-mail address that you’ll receive an auto-response from. The most common mistake we see is contestants sending their stories to our PayPal e-mail address. Please make sure you send it to the e-mail address above only. If you are sure you sent your entry to the e-mail address above and didn’t receive an auto-response, you are welcome to send us an e-mail to verify your submission, but please check your bulk mail folder to make sure it didn’t end up there. Also, if you enter more than once in a row, you probably won’t receive an auto-response for each submission. Our auto-responder is set up to only reply once to the same e-mail within a day. This protects our server against the multitude of spam sent to our contest e-mail address. When in question, feel free to contact us: contestinfo@wow-womenonwriting.com. Please put “contest question” in the subject line. Also, please note: if you have a Hotmail/MSN/Live/AOL account, you will probably NOT receive an auto-response. They are blocking our auto-responses.
If I win the contest, can I go ahead and enter the next one?
Yes. Previously, we didn’t allow contestants to enter if they’d placed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd, but now we are opening up each contest to allow previous winners to enter again. Make sure you submit a new story.

What about rights?
You retain all copyrights to your story. If your entry wins and is published on the WOW! website, first electronic rights or reprint rights are used with the right to archive indefinitely. It may be republished. You retain all copyrights, so you may republish it elsewhere.

Can I send my entry to another contest?
That depends. Be sure to check their guidelines. It’s fine with us, but many contests want only original entries.

Do you allow simultaneous submissions?
Yes, it’s fine with us. Even if another publication accepts your story, you are welcome to leave it running in our contest, as long as it’s okay with the other publication.

Is there a particular format I should use to submit my entry?
Please avoid fancy and odd-sized fonts. In the body of your e-mail, use a standard-size font, like Verdana, Times New Roman, Courier, or plain text. Please don’t indent paragraphs and don’t double space after periods, either. Single space your entry beneath your title. Please note: we recommend copy-pasting from a plain text document. This is the best way to ensure that we don’t receive odd characters that occur from copy-pasting from Microsoft Word. (Note: if you purchased a critique, you may submit your story as a Microsoft Word attachment.) No PDFs please.

Can I use a pen name/pseudonym?
Yes, you may. Please make sure you include both your real name and your pseudonym. We will only publish your pseudonym if you win.

Does my entry have to be light-hearted or funny?
No. You may write in any style or genre that you choose to. Please keep in mind our guest judge for the season.

Does the entry have to be a complete story, or can it be a partial/chapter of a larger work?
The story should be a complete flash fiction piece with a beginning, middle, and an end. If your piece is part of a larger work just make sure it can stand on its own.
Can I submit children’s fiction?
It depends...will adults enjoy it too? We get this question all the time and it’s tough to answer. We’ve had writers submit stories that were intended for young adult or middle-grade readers and they’ve placed in the contest, but we had no idea it was written for a specific age group. Use your best judgment. Remember, flash fiction is a genre itself. It’s not just a name for the length of the story. If you want to find out more about the genre and what works, there’s a lot of information in books and online, including some articles on WOW!

Help! When I paid for the contest I entered a title on the payment form, but now I want to change my story’s title. Do I have to pay again?
No, you don’t have to pay again. We have a text box underneath the PayPal button that allows writers to enter their title—this is to help us match stories with payments. You can change the title of your story from the time you pay to the time you e-mail your story as long as you have included your PayPal transaction # underneath your story. That will be enough for us to match up the payment with the story. (Plus your name and other information helps, too.) Make sure you include a note at the top of your story that says you changed your title.

I accidentally forgot to enter the Title of my story on the PayPal payment form! Do I have to pay again?
No, you don’t have to pay again. Same thing as above. The title just helps us match up your payment to your story. If you forget to include your title in your PayPal form, that’s okay. Just make sure you include a title above your story and your PayPal transaction id or receipt number underneath your story.

I accidentally double-spaced/formatted my submission wrong. Do I have to pay and resubmit?
No, you don’t have to pay or resubmit your story. Our contest manager reformats your story to our judging template anyway, so you’re good! 😊

Can I receive feedback on my entry?
We get this question a lot, so we offer an additional critique option when purchasing your entry. Please read above where it says, “WOW! Women On Writing Contest: Critiques!” To receive a critique, you must purchase it at the time of entry.

What style guide do you use for the critique?
We use The Chicago Manual of Style for technical; the same style guide we use for WOW! Women On Writing.
Do you notify me if I don’t win?
No. Unfortunately, we can’t personally respond to contestants that did not place, but you can see the results online on the contest winners’ page. We also post updates like a list of finalists a month and one week after the close of the contest, so you will know right then if you’re moving on or not. There will be a link on our contest page under “Previous Winners and Updates” to the winners’ page as soon as it publishes. You can also sign up for our email newsletter to keep up with the latest updates on the contest or follow us on Facebook and/or Twitter @womenonwriting. We post updates as soon as we find out. We will also send the contest results directly via email to all those who entered the contest, as long as they have not opted out of our email service provider at Constant Contact. (If you opted out, we can’t send emails to you.)

Where can I find out the status of where you are in the judging process?
On the contest page, under “Previous Winners and Updates” we post significant milestones and dates: First Round Judging emails sent; Critiques sent; Top 10; and final link to winners’ page.

How many people enter the contest?
We’ve limited the number of entries to 300. If we receive 300 entries, we will close the contest early. We typically receive around 200 entries, so your odds are pretty great!

Help! I paid for an entry and I saw a note on the contest page that says the contest is closed (before the deadline). What do I do?
That just means we reached 300 entries. We disable the payment buttons and put up a notice to prevent any more people from purchasing entries. If you purchased an entry before the notice went up, you still have until the contest’s deadline to submit your story.

I purchased an entry but never submitted my story. Can I get a refund?
I’m sorry, but no. Please make sure you have a story ready, or near ready, at the time of purchase. We do not issue refunds because PayPal charges us fees to do so. Remember, we only allow for 300 entries, so make sure you can submit a story before the deadline. If you purchase an entry and don’t submit, you may request we roll your payment over to the next contest deadline, but you must email us so we can set this up.

What if I have another question that doesn’t appear here?
If you have a different question, not answered in here or by the Terms and Conditions, feel free to e-mail us at contestinfo@wow-womenonwriting.com. Please put “Contest Question” in the subject line.

Submit to: contest@wow-womenonwriting.com after reading our guidelines.
LET’S HAVE FUN THE WRITE WAY!
ENJOY WRITING AS MUCH AS WE WILL ENJOY READING!
THANKS FOR VISITING WOW! AND ENTERING (Y)OUR CONTEST.

Useful Links:

Make sure you sign up for our e-mail newsletter to receive the latest news and contest updates from WOW! Women On Writing. The sign up box can be easily spotted on any page of the site, upper right hand corner gray box. We also post interviews with contest winners on our blog, The Muffin, every Tuesday. Read the interviews to get tips from previous winners!

The Muffin: https://muffin.wow-womenonwriting.com/

WOW! Women On Writing: https://wow-womenonwriting.com/

Contest Page: https://wow-womenonwriting.com/contest.php

Workshops & Classes: https://wow-womenonwriting.com/WOWclasses.html

Twitter for WOW!: https://twitter.com/womenonwriting

Twitter for Books: https://twitter.com/wowblogtour

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/wowwomenonwriting/

Pinterest: https://www.pinterest.com/womenonwriting/

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/wow_womenonwriting/

We look forward to reading your work!