

**Carol Tice:**

We are ready to take more story ideas today. Now chat has disappeared on me, hang on. The reason I have the presentation window open and I'm sharing my screen is that I want to give you guys a little bit of a tour because I'm getting a bunch of questions about how to navigate the site and the forums, so I want to give you a little quick tour in case people have not read the FAQs and gone to the orientation guide.

So if you have a question about how to watch or subscribe to a topic or how to make your photo the right size that's all in this orientation guide up here. That will tell you everything you need to know, to know when you replies, and I love to see put up their headshots. A lot of people have not yet, and look at how nice that is. Look at those people who have. We love them. It really helps us to just relate and connect, so please do that.

The other thing that I want to just show people is kind of a quick tour of our class dashboard and what's on it, and how to find things on it. You'll know you're in the right place when it says Pitch Clinic Fall 2015 like that. And so if you want to see the course schedule, what day will what happen? You just click on this bar and everything is written out here. This Friday you'll see we'll be releasing Anatomy of a Killer Query, our second training.

Then down here is your course materials. Right now module one is up and that is all that's up and we would so love for everyone to read and to consume all of these elements, especially all the details of the pitch clinic refund offer. Please read that before you start asking us about the fine points of it.

How to get started in Pitch Clinic, and how to get the most from Pitch Clinic, and then we've got the recording of our call from Tuesday and we will put up the call from this. Then there are two bonus podcasts that I super, super want you to read and listen to, one or the other. And we have an idea critique handout from a previous year's Let's Make Your Story Ideas Not Suck, that has tons and tons of critique in it. So that's also a useful just handout you can grab and that's...I don't know what this pitch brainstorming session is. I'll have to take a look.

If you don't remember what the homework is, there is a module for homework. I'm going to check out what unit 9 is, I don't know. Let's find out. You can click on any of these and they'll open up on a page. I guess it's just another bonus pitching session that we have left up for you guys from a previous class. So lots of good stuff here, and always help at [usefulwritingcourses.com](http://usefulwritingcourses.com) is the place to get help the fastest. Or you can also put it in the Report Problems forum, but what usually happens is I read it on the Report Problems forum and then I tell that help at [usefulwritingcourses.com](http://usefulwritingcourses.com) people. So you can cut me out of the loop if you just email them yourself. So there's really nothing-extra special to telling us directly.

Anyway that's all I had on that, so I'm going to make the chat box wider. I just want to really encourage everyone to kind of go through all those basic materials on the class.

You will get so much more out of it. I promise. If you do that. So that's all the introductory stuff we have and other than that we are just going to be chatting and taking questions, and there are a bunch of them that were left for us on the page I was just on, and we're going to go back and dig into them. Some of them have been reviewed on the forums but we're happy to go over them live as well.

This first one from Kaitlyn about the Endocrine Society doesn't have a headline here and I'd like her to tell me what the headline is, and I think I did review this is the forum, too. I feel like there were a lot of ideas packed inside of this. She needs to kind of decide which one she's doing.

**Linda:**

Yeah. It's kind of a book topic. I mean hormones. That's huge, huge. There are lots of books on that and I think like Carol was saying if you can focus on one thing and pull it out, and you mention that there's a new study on how BPA affects your hormones, but I know there have been studies on that before. So unless this one says something super different or counter intuitive or something that we didn't see in all the other studies then there might not be enough of a news hook, but if you can think of one aspect this whole hormone issue that people haven't really been talking about but that's important, that could be really interesting.

**Carol Tice:**

Right on. Leslie's pitch is about the Wyoming Midwinter Eagle Survey, 30 years of data from the Cowboy State. She wants to pitch it to National Wildlife Magazine, and for 30 years volunteers have been doing this eagle survey, and she has apparently talked to a wildlife biologist who is involved in it. Apparently this particular area is considered notable for doing eagle surveys. It's got the most roots that they can track and she is a volunteer who does this, is what I saw in the forums.

What she says is I'll provide a history of it. Why the data is important and how the data is used and none of those three things are the thing I want to know about the survey. I think the general interest question is what does the survey show? What are we finding out? Are they recovering? Are they dying? What we want to know is what the impact is. What has it told us and how has it may be influenced policy? So I'm not sure people are interested in the inner workings of it. That's stuff you could cover in a sentence. Considered the most valuable eagle-dense area to survey this survey has been going on for years, and the data is used by municipalities around the US.

That's a sentence and then the story is what do we find out in the survey and what happens? Does it influence? Does it affect the world? What is its impact on what we know and what we do regarding helping eagles survive? That, to me, I think would be an interesting story. It just needs to be evolved a hair to I think what readers would want to do. Linda?

**Linda:**

Yes. I think you got that. I'd like to move on to Linda's, top ten steps for staying safe down on the farm. It says the local food movement in the US has spawned not only great eats for our plates but expanded opportunities to actually set foot on a real working farm. Many family farms welcome visits from their customers especially during the slower winter months when life is less hectic, but make sure you end the day recounting the fun of petting a cow, not sitting in the Emergency Room. I'll interview small farmers who have hosted tours as well as agricultural safety experts about the safety concerns for city folk visiting farms. Target market is Modern Farmer.

I think that is a really cool idea, however you would need some sort of statistic saying that this is a common thing that people get hurt on the farm, when they're visiting a local farm. Because if it really doesn't happen that often then it's not going to be as much interest to editors and readers. So if you can get some and I hate to sound so staticialistic but if you can get a stat saying like such and such percentage of people have this happen to them. Maybe write out the story of some guy who was gored by a bull or something. I'm sorry. That's terrible.

But also I was thinking if you wanted to change this around a little bit you could also pitch it to some of the farming trade magazines providing that they also target the kinds of farms that let consumers come on in and do tours, because it could be a safety and liability issue for them and that could be a really interesting take on it. What do you think, Carol?

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. Absolutely. I've been pawing through the forums here. Yes to people who are also den members I apologize that there is a den event at the exact same time as this event. We didn't do that on purpose and won't do it again, and you will be able to listen to the replay of the den event, which is a good event an Ask the Editor.

Frank's pitch was foraging is hot but is it safe for your kids.

**Linda:**

Oh I wanted to talk about this one.

**Carol Tice:**

Okay. Go.

**Linda:**

All right. So he's a local dude. So as anyway it's a pitch for Family Fun, Parenting, Family Circle or Parents going by his 2011 Writer's Market. Top forager Alan Muskat of Asheville, North Carolina found that the only problem for teaching public school kids and their teachers how to forage for wild edible plants and mushrooms. There's a lot of information about this guy. I have to mention that the title is Foraging is Hot but is it Safe for Your Kids? And you have a lot of information here about the foraging and I'm wondering if the real story or some other stories might be a profile of the foraging movement in North Carolina for one of the local magazines? Or just on foraging with

your kids and then over a sidebar would be is it safe? Because I think it's not enough of a big trend that's happening now that a lot of parents are worrying about if it's safe because they're not doing it.

So I think a better angle for these magazines might be hey, there's this new trend coming on. It's foraging with your kids. Let's talk all about it and how you can do it, and then you could have maybe a sidebar of safety tips? So that's just my idea for something like that.

I also want to let you know on a different note, I was at the café downtown and a woman approached me and she just started a magazine called Peak City Living here in Apex, and I forwarded her to Don at TAF and she's looking for writers but I don't know if she pays or how much. So just so you know. So I hope that helps.

**Carol Tice:**

Nice. Yeah. I thought that was an interesting topic and everyone's been talking about this Modern Farmer magazine that's for all the people who grow and have backyard chickens and pigs and everything.

**Linda:**

Yeah. That would be a good topic for them. There's a lot of those backyard farmer magazines.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. Or one of the edible magazines even. Yeah. I think that could be fun. There's a lot written about foraging but not bringing your kids foraging. That would work.

**Linda:**

For kids. I think that's really cool. I think that's a story.

**Carol Tice:**

You know sometimes finding the news hook in an idea is just peeling off this slice of it that this audience for it, this specific situation for it that no one has talked about yet. It's just that simple.

Susan, I took this in I think in the print. Or I saw it. I thought I had done it.

**Linda:**

I think Monkey critiqued it and he liked it, I think. I think he had a couple of tips and wanted her to repost but he did like it.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. I have some questions on it because it sounds like it's going to be all about medium and I think not a lot of articles get commissioned about one add methodology. I also wondered if Ad week, Adage, Forbes, if these were really the right markets for it? There's some online marketing hubs that I think might be better. I think there's Direct

Marketing News. I just wondered if these are right? On the add trades I'm sure they have been talking about this already. I'd want you to research and know what they've already said about it.

Then she says that the pitch for consumer magazines would be written with general business readers in mind. The question is what about this would be relevant to them? I'd like to hear you answer that. I mean I think it's kind of a marketer conversation. Rather than things like Forbes you might look for trades that are for maybe online business or online marketing managers. You might to niche it down a little so it sort of hits the people who would be right on that. Because the thing is lots and lots of us don't have ink businesses. So for Forbes it's not...it might be for Wired. Forbes is more broad spectrum. It's not so techie. So those are just some thoughts I had about it.

I'd like to see you research what's already been said about the Google, Apple blocking Google adds. It's been written about a lot so what's the new thing to say about it? And likely the answer that would get assigned is that there are multiple workarounds, not media is the answer. The problem is then you have sort of a one-tip story. It's like is Google blocking...are your Google adds getting blocked? You should use Media. The problem is that's only two sentences and not a whole article. You need a lot more.

And you say I hope to interview experts on online advertising. I'd like to challenge you to go out and start identifying some that you think would be a fit for this particular topic, and you may find them in what's already been written as you do that research. Linda?

**Linda:**

Okay. Thanks. Sorry. I'm in the chat.

**Carol Tice:**

It's okay. I have to take this next one from Anna because it's about my sister island, Ometepe in Nicaragua. Happens to be the sister island of the island I live on and that Abel lives on and so we know a good bit about Ometepe and lots of delegations from our island go visit there. We sell their stuff here and so we know a lot about Ometepe.

I guess I worry that this is sort of a sort what thing. It's like okay. There's a big island in Nicaragua and it's the biggest island in the middle of a lake in the world, and they have dilapidated infrastructure and they still struggle to have fresh water on parts of the island. But I would put to you that the infrastructure of most of Nicaragua has the exact same problem. Maybe they're not in a fresh water lake gives it kind of a twist.

I'm just not sure that that's the most interesting thing about Ometepe Island to say. Maybe if this were broadened to talk about the challenges of fresh water in Nicaragua or on islands. Because Catalina Island has big fresh water problems. Lots of islands have fresh water problems. Maybe if we were looking at it a little bit more broadly and if it's a roundup of maybe solutions that are going on in several places that help solve it?

Because the thing we're seeing a lot of in a lot of these pitches is sort of problem exists. But the stories that sell have something useful for the reader, some practical information, something useful they take into their lives and can use. So like if this became innovative programs that bring fresh water to Ometepe Island that could be for maybe a trade publication of water managers and they could get some takeaways from it of innovative ways to get fresh water to people on a shoestring budget in difficult conditions. That's totally useful to them.

The magazines you have, Discovery, Natural Resources on Earth, I don't know. I just think it's going to be really a tough sell. I think you need to think about the angle and think about the market match on it. I think there's something interesting here but kind of needs to develop a little bit.

I responded to Lorrette's pitch on the forums, but maybe you want to have other thoughts to add?

**Linda:**

Oh no. Actually I was going to ask her because I didn't see it on the forums but when she mentioned Seattle Magazine said they use seasoned reporters I knew you were going to have something to say about this because this is like one of those huge investigative talk it tops that are really hard to land, but I think maybe she could take a different aspect of it and pitch it to a different type of magazine so it's not investigative journalism that's so hard to crack when you're new.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. So her headline is young, homeless, drug addicts who commit crimes are filling our neighborhoods, why? And she had pitched it to Seattle magazine. They said they only use seasoned reporters and really anyone is going to say that about...her idea was that she was going to examine homeless people policy in five different areas of the country regarding prosecution of drug addicts who have committed crimes. This is the kind of the article that takes six months to create and the I-team, the investigative team, at a daily paper undertakes or at The Atlantic or something. It's like a multi-reporter trying to win a Pulitzer. This is a huge, huge project.

**Linda:**

Could she shave that down and do just one area. We have a lot of homeless youth in this area let's pitch it to a local magazine maybe, and that's how you get your chops.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. One of my suggestions was go out and interview one homeless person. So she's making an assumption. First off she says there is a dramatic increase in homeless youth in any urban area and I challenge her to document that. I'm thinking likely 'and a corresponding rise in the crime rate' also needs to be documented if you'd like to write about it in an article. It can't just be your personal impression that in the neighborhood you live in there's a lot of crime now, and more homeless drug addicted youth.

Having spent some time on the homeless issue I know that there are many reasons for youth homelessness including mental illness, being kicked out of the house because you are gay, and aging out of the foster care system is actually a huge, huge problem. These kids are not drug addicts. They just have no family and now they're 18 and their foster family can't get any money to house them anymore and they kick them out on the street. I actually wrote a feature about that very issue, kids who age out of foster care face a lot of challenges.

So you may be making an assumption about the homeless youth population that is not correct and the crime rate may not correlate to them. It may be somebody else who has a home but is a criminal. So you have to challenge all of these assumptions to find the story. Once you've done that you might go out and just do a profile of one program that's working with homeless youth. Where you just talk to the executive director and maybe one client of their, one homeless person about how this program helps them and it's like a two person interview.

Now we're shining a little flashlight in one little area in one city and it's executable and they're not going to be like, how are you going to do this? Because this is a gigantic story. We always want, especially with new writers, to think of things that are easily executable. They're simple. They don't have a ton of interview in them. You're not going to have to talk to dozens and dozens of people. Let's find things where you can talk to two or three people and you got a story.

So I don't know if you want to look at Ava's. I gave her some thoughts.

**Linda:**

I lost that one.

**Carol Tice:**

The price of satire and how creators adapt....

**Linda:**

There you are... Yeah. Yes. I like this and I feel you're better to critique this. Yes. Is the price of satire. How creators adapted to YouTube copyright strikes on September 14 the US Court of appeals ruled that copyright owners such as Universal Music Group must consider the existence of fair use of their material on sites like YouTube before sending a takedown notice, also known as a copyright strike in YouTube parlance.

The lawsuit involved was spurred on when Universal Music Group issued a takedown notice over a 2007 YouTube video of a toddler dancing to Prince's Let's Go Crazy. Really? Come on. While this ruling may not change the current state of affairs, what's even more interesting is how some YouTube creators refuse to be silenced and the methods in which they continue to produce content on YouTube.

So I like the way you're actually kind of spinning this forward. Because that news, especially for a magazine like Wired that's of the moment, it's last week. So somebody's

already doing it. But the idea of saying how are people reacting to this? And what's going to happen next? And going straight to the creators I think is pretty interesting. But what did you say about it, Carol?

**Carol Tice:**

Well, I need it broken down a little more. People are going to need to know what their use is and just reading what you wrote I just wasn't sure if they're continuing to develop content in defiance of this law or they have changed what they do to comply with this ruling? I mean, parody has always been protected. Satire has always been protected. Legitimate satire has always been protected. So is it now not protected? I just don't really understand the issue.

You're going to have to slow down and parse this issue for people who don't know anything about it yet, and then tell us what interesting thing happened as a result of this. What is the reaction of people who produce things where they sample music? Or they use all those little video clips that everybody uses from movies and stuff in all their blog posts now.

**Linda:**

And I think the reaction is the most interesting part... For something like Wired, a lot of these people they know what's going on. They know what fair use is. They know about this stuff but this is something, I wouldn't say human interest but it's like another angle on the same story.

**Carol Tice:**

So I looked around about this a little bit. So Loretta said she had talked to one police officer in one county who was dealing with homeless youth. You can't conclude that there's a boom in homeless, young, drug addicts from talking to one police officer. You're going to need data. I don't know if he's even the interesting interview. I would want to work my way down to the agencies that are dealing directly with the homeless population and with homeless people.

I've gone to a union mission and interviewed homeless people. Get all the way down to their story. That's the moving story of real people and real problems.

**Linda:**

Do you want me to talk about Lisa's idea now?

**Carol Tice:**

Sure.

**Linda:**

So the headline is Parochial schools have a long history of academic excellence, so why isn't it part of the school choice conversation among parents? So first of all that's way, way long for a headline, but the idea, and it could be a good subheader, nut graf or deck or something like that. We talk more about those later.



But the idea is every fall parents in the know about school choice and open enrollment begin touring and registering students at charter schools and public schools accepting open enrollment. A 2013 study found that students in private parochial schools outperformed peers in both public and charter schools lending a potential academic advantage. Yet the schools often do not factor into the academic conversation for parents who can afford it or qualify for the assisted tuition rates many of these schools offer.

The number of students attending these schools is consistently decreasing. What advantages do parochial schools offer students? And how can the schools better reach out to prospective students, publications or national education week, Catholic Week Digest, an independent school magazine.

So first of all, yeah. This is getting closer to a salable idea. Definitely, Lisa. First of all I would say that with these three markets you'd have to think about that because I think something that you would write for Catholic Digest would be different from something that you would write for independent school magazines so you want to make sure that they're close enough, and I can see the overlap there. So I understand that.

What I'm thinking is that if you are targeting people at parochial schools, that own them or manage them or whatever, they're already going to know the advantages so you don't really need to talk about that for this audience. But what might be interesting is your angle of how schools can better reach out to perspective students and you could have all those scary stats about how enrollment is going down and why it's happening and what they can do about it.

But another thing I was thinking is I think a lot of parents don't think about these schools because they automatically assume, like me, that we can't afford them. We don't know that there's this tuition assistance and that there's scholarships, and I'm wondering if a second idea that could work, and it's always a good idea to spin off lots of ideas from one, is the parenting magazines on how you can get your kid into a private school even if you don't have a lot of money. Because a lot of parents would love to do that and I think that would be a really interesting take on it. Carol, what do you think?

**Carol Tice:**

I'm thinking that you're kind of preaching to the choir in the Catholic world and maybe this is for more of a parents' magazine type of thing?

**Linda:**

That's what I just said.

**Carol Tice:**

Is that what you said? Sorry. I was doing the chats.

**Linda:**

I was thinking it could be a service piece for an educational trade like here's how to reach out and get those parents to come in. You don't need to tell them how great it is because they know. They run these schools like you were saying, so yeah.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. Absolutely there's a good service to parochial school teachers or administrators sort of trade article there. But then if it's aimed at parents then it's a different article, and I guess I'm...I don't know. I challenge the idea that parochial schools have a long history of academic excellence. I think your mileage may really vary there. If there's study data that they are getting better grades, I guess you can work with that. Yeah. I don't know. It's two articles. It's either how to pick which type of school is right for your kid which would be for more a general parenting magazine. Or it's tips for administrators on how to put their case to more parents and get more parents involved.

I think Catholic Digest people are sending their kids to Catholic school for the most part. Maybe the focus for them is if you have any data on what percent of Catholic kids don't go to Catholic school, and if it could be focused on how to get them into your Catholic school. Because kids of other faiths also go to parochial schools sometimes, but maybe if it focused down that way then it works for Catholic Digest.

**Linda:**

Hey. Barb has a good question. Was it Barb? We have two good questions. Barb's is how do you get study data? That's a very good question. I think we talk about it in the next question.

**Carol Tice:**

I feel like we did a whole training on that, on how to... I have a post too, I can pop in on how to find facts and make sure they're true. There are lots and lots of ways, and that's one of the reasons we like people to work a beat, is that you learn what the credible sources of data are in your particular industry. Those of us who cover restaurants know that Technomic does good restaurant data. And if you're writing about health, the National Institute of Health is a good place to look. Academia, government's always good sources.

**Linda:**

Organizations.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. Organizations.

**Linda:**

Industry orgs.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. Like the National Restaurant Association studies, polls their membership about food trends and things. That's good data. What you what is someone disinterested in

the result. Not Clorox has done a study which reveals that bleaching your clothes is really awesome. Watch out for those. There's more and more of those sort of sad, self-interested, really small study sample, not very valid data floating around.

**Linda:**

And you know what? Susan has a question that I think we should address. What happens if my first two ideas are tepid and they aren't targeting the market I was aiming for? Can I keep pitching? Or is that going to make me fall behind in the course?

First of all I have to say. You know there are five weeks in the course so there is time. It's not a total rush to get your idea done immediately. However, I'm wondering if you're one of the people in the forum where you had an idea and then we suggested tweaks to it that made it not appropriate for the magazine you want but more appropriate for another magazine? That can sometimes happen and there are a couple things about that.

One is that it's great if we can target only the magazines we want to write for, only the publications we want to write for. But if you want to make a living off it, we have to broaden our horizons a little bit and think about magazines that we wouldn't normally write for. I've written for a ton of trade magazines. They always were my bread and butter and they weren't the topics I was most passionate about which are health and wellness, but they paid the bills and we writers can be curious and interested about anything. So if you have an idea that you like and it fits a magazine but it's not a magazine you would normally want to write for, I would say for it anyway.

And then the other thing is I'm not sure what you mean by tepid ideas. Because every idea almost, except for maybe two or three, of the hundreds that have gone up there so far, everything needs tweaking. When Carol and I come up with ideas, they need tweaking.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. That's what I was going to say. You need to realize that all ideas need tweaking. You start and go gee, this thing. I'm sort of interested in that. And then you have to start sort of developing it.

**Linda:**

Another good question.

**Carol Tice:**

How do you tell if it needs tweaking or if it's just bad? I think we're pretty frank in telling people 'yeah, this totally won't work.'

**Linda:**

That rarely happens, is the thing.

**Carol Tice:**

That doesn't happen very often. It's mostly okay well there's a germ here and you could take it this direction, this direction, this direction. Often what you're going to hear is you need to start talking to some real people and finding out what this story really is. And then we often find once we've said that, that people give up and pitch another idea and that isn't what we're trying to say. We want you to research your pitch. That's what you're going to have to do anyway and when you get to writing queries you're going to see that we want interviews in them anyway. You'll be amazed at how much anxiety and I was up 'til 2 am freaking out and panicking will be resolved by talking to some people and finding out what the story really is.

**Linda:**

I was going to say I think what most people want, what we all want deep in our hearts is that we post an idea and everybody goes 'oh my god it's brilliant. We love it.' But it's just not the way it happens because often almost always the ideas we came up with are, like we were saying last week, and as we've said in the forum, they're seeds of ideas. Like Carol was saying. Okay I found something interesting.

Then you're like okay it needs a news hook. It needs an angle. Who am I going to interview? Is there really a story there? Should I take it local? Should I take it national? How can I package it? There's so many things to think about before it becomes saleable. If somebody says okay here are some things you can do with this idea. That doesn't mean your idea sucks. It means you do those things with the idea and then you can sell it. So if you keep posting more and more ideas, it's going to be a very hard slog for you because typically the first ideas we come up with are not ready.

**Carol Tice:**

I can tell you. Often while we're writing them on assignment, I'm going back to the editor and saying you know we were doing this thing but now that I've talked to these people, I think this angle will be a little better. People need to realize that idea evolution is a normal, natural part of the world of writing articles and you're not a bad person. You're ideas are not horrible. They're not more horrible than anyone else's. They just need development and that's what we're here to do. That's what this class is for.

We're here to help you develop your ideas. Don't give up or freak out if someone doesn't say, 'oh yeah. Great idea. Go write ea query about it.' Because that's not mostly what we say. We are here to get everybody skilled in developing these and getting them sold, so we are going to try and iterate this with you as much as we humanly can so that you get in the best shape, so you have all the skills that we want you to have.

So anyway, someone said are we going to get to everyone? I sure hope so. Let's get back to some pitches. Tracy's was why you need a mobile vet on your speed dial now. Because horses are really accident-prone. It will have five reasons why a mobile vet is better than a traditional office visit.

I guess my question on that is, is a mobile vet available to every horse owner everywhere? Or is this an emerging trend, the mobile vets? How many are there? How

common is that? I would need you to quantify that so you could prove to these Horse Illustrated markets that this will be relevant to a wide percentage of the people. Because if it's only like sort of 10% of the country has a mobile vet within easy shouting distance than it's...

**Linda:**

I was thinking the same thing.

**Carol Tice:**

...problematic.

**Linda:**

Any national magazine is going to want to make sure that whatever you're proposing a good portion of their readers can actually do. So that's something to look...then again, look into this because maybe there is a lot of these vets and people just don't know they exist.

**Carol Tice:**

Or, Christy's thought, aren't all large animal vets kind of mobile? Don't they all come out? So I'm not sure.

**Linda:**

I thought they were. But she said a lot of horse owners truck their horses over to get their teeth floated, I don't know what any of this means, and she probably knows more about that than I do.

**Carol Tice:**

But I can tell you I do not believe there is a mobile vet where I live and there's lots of farms. So, I don't know. As we were just saying, please research that a little and find out if there's a widespread story there where telling us about mobile versus bring your horse to the vet would work.

Amanda's article idea. I love this idea as a mom whose son wants to play football and things. Youth sports that are surprisingly dangerous and aren't football. She seems to have some stats. She doesn't tell us where they came from but I'm hoping they are fairly current and from a reputable place. But she says that cheerleading and wrestling have the second and third highest concussion rates. I also want to know where that stat comes from. I know lacrosse, I gather, is a slaughterhouse. I think that's a great parenting idea. All our kids are doing sports and how dangerous are they? I loved it. Linda?

**Linda:**

Yeah. I like this idea, too. I've got to tell you a lot of the women's and parenting magazines have done this. And I'm going to tell you also every pitch clinic or other type of class we have, somebody does this idea. Do you not remember, Carol?

**Carol Tice:**

You know, I think someone did do it. But I think it's a good idea.

**Linda:**

Yeah. I think people have seen it a lot but, again, if you have this news hook, which you do, which is very sad that it happened. But it is your news hook. Then it's in the public consciousness again and like you said there's new information and I like your angle that there are sports you wouldn't think of as being dangerous that are, like cheerleading. So I think that could be super interesting. As long as in your headline. I mean you used sports that are surprisingly dangerous and aren't football, so that's kind of getting at what you want, so that's nice.

**Carol Tice:**

So Jessica she noted that her idea was missing a news hook. It's also missing a headline. I'm hoping that you will repost and tell us a bit more about the topic because we kind of can't do much without either a news hook or a headline. At least one or the other, please. Do you want to go to Jill's?

**Linda:**

Jill. Jill. Jill. Where are you? Oh. Oh yes. Fun idea for foodies. Start a cookbook club or join a cookbook club. 20 years ago a group of culinary experts in Kansas City met to form a cookbook club. Now more than 100 cookbooks later the club is still going strong despite a 25-year age range and a variety of backgrounds that include author, food stylist, and homeless shelter chef, the members have forged a special bond and taken potluck to the next level.

In this article they will offer tips on the perfect number of members, rules to prevent havoc in the kitchen, how to divide up the planning and hosting of dinners, a sidebar highlights their favorite books and dishes. And she mentions that it was sold to Midwest Living but they killed it because a new editor came on board and thought it was not trendy enough. Yeah. Welcome to the club. That's happened to all of us.

She is struggling to find a news hook and also the club members are older, 50s to 70s and she's thinking of marketing it to a mature women's magazine like More or food magazines or Real Simple. Somehow I feel like More wouldn't be a fit for this just because I read it sometimes and it just doesn't feel quite right for them, but I could be wrong.

The idea that it's not trendy enough I think could be taken care of if you could find some sort of statistic that this is going on more and more. Like this is something old that's come back again could be really interesting. I think Real Simple could be a good place for it. And what else was I going to say about that?

You'd have to explain what a cookbook club is, because I actually have no idea. Oh, there it is. They read, look through one cookbook a month and bring dishes from it to share and critique. I have some lively quotes from them. Another idea is I was

wondering if you could do this for a local Kansas City magazine? Just on this group and then you could talk about other cookbook groups in the area or how to start your own or whatever. I think that could be really great. What do you think, Carol?

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. I have nothing to add. I want to talk about Terry's which is dollhouse exhibit, a tour of family life over time and it's for Amtrak's print magazine for passengers. I like that you're coming up with a nice custom pub there.

**Linda:**

Very cool.

**Carol Tice:**

It's basically a write up of one exhibit that's going to be at one museum. It's way in the future, so she's thinking ahead which is excellent, but my experience is that it is very hard to sell an article about one museum is going to do one exhibit. Most of these are round ups. So it would be like oh, you're coming to DC in spring 2016. Here are five fascinating exhibits that you could visit that are only here temporarily. I think you're going to have to flesh it out to a round up to get interest. There's just not enough value to the reader.

**Linda:**

Also I have to say I guarantee there are magazines for dollhouse enthusiasts out there and if they don't already know about this, this could be pretty interesting for them. Or a round up, again round ups are always popular with this type of magazine, of other exhibits around the country that are happening or something like that could also be really nice.

Terry said I considered a round up but in the first class session they sometimes highlight one exhibit. So you know what? If you've...then go for it, definitely. We don't know all magazines. We're just giving you our impressions based on knowing the industry but if you've read the magazine, you see they do it then we're wrong.

**Carol Tice:**

But that first class section, I would challenge you. First of all aren't those going to be really short? And I would challenge you to bylines to Masthead and see if that's staff written or if they take freelance on it.

**Linda:**

Also true.

**Carol Tice:**

Because it's just so simple they could write it up themselves.

**Linda:**

And Heather mentioned in-flight magazine could be a good market. Again if you do a roundup of what's going on in this city. If you like dollhouses here's places you can fly to you can see them. That could also be good.

**Carol Tice:**

That might be in the in-flights you work their route system and see what all their destinations are. You could be like dollhouse lovers, here are some awesome dollhouses and in six different markets we fly to. That could potentially make a sale. They love that when you work their destinations and have like multiple destinations of theirs.

But I feel like I was going to say one other thing. Oh, someone said there's only 15 minutes left and so many pitches. Don't worry. We'll go over. We'll keep going.

**Linda:**

And also we'll get to them...and also we have that forum that's got like three people critiquing ideas on it so it doesn't have to be done on the call. This is just an extra kind of bonus to do it in a different format. It does not mean that your idea will not be critiqued.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. So Sasha gave us three. Lose weight without trying to curb your sugar sensitivity. I feel like we hit that on Tuesday this potatoes not Prozac book is like four years old and you'd need a fresher news hook for it. But I like this. Are you dating a functional addict? I just have to say it. I would read that article and god knows there's so many celebrity addicts I would think it would not be hard to come up with...and celebrity divorce splits caused by drug use...that it wouldn't be hard to come up with a news hook for that one. We'll need some fresh study data or something but I love that idea.

**Linda:**

Can I talk to this other one, too? And then there's a couple questions in the chat that you might want to talk about, about the homework process. Because it is a little bit confusing, I understand.

I did want to look at Sasha's other ideas. Are you sitting your way to a heart attack or stroke for AARP Bulletin? And it says recent studies ID how dangerous prolonged sitting is and I have to say that's been done a lot for a few years we've been hearing 'sitting is the new smoking.' But all of a sudden what popped in my head is the idea of okay what the heck do I do about it? We've heard of standing desks. That's all we hear.

Because you say in your idea that exercise doesn't help so basically we need to stop sitting and do more standing but a lot of us have sedentary jobs. So are there more creative ways that we can be standing more that aren't just the tired, old standing desk tip. So that might be something really interesting to research. Sorry I didn't mean to totally usurp your idea but I'm always spinning off ideas.



**Carol Tice:**

No problem. I'm just answering some technical things. Deborah says clarify the submission and feedback of the homework process. There's a homework module that I showed you at the top of this call. You can go and read there. You can't find the ideas you submitted for response I would take a guess that you did not read the orientation guide which tells you how or subscribe to your topics so that either get an email or see a counter at the top of the forums when you get a response. This is why we posted many sort of introductory how to get ramped up in going in Pitch Clinic items for you to read through.

**Linda:**

Oh. Carol just schooled everyone.

**Carol Tice:**

I just want you guys to read that stuff because it will save us all a lot of back and forth about how do I do this. I can't find this. And we want to spend our time critiquing your ideas.

**Linda:**

Oh and by the way, Tammy, the standing desk is not a tired, old idea. Just the idea of bringing it up as a solution to editors. They're going to think it's tired and old because they've seen it a million times. Standing desk I totally want one. It's awesome. So you can tell that guy that.

But Ray says can we move on to the next phase if we got an Okay from one of the guest editors. Yes. Anybody who says you are greenlighted for the next module, which is coming out tomorrow. Right, Carol? Then go ahead and do read everything before you start writing and before you start researching and then go for it.

**Carol Tice:**

And take the query letter writing training before you file a query letter in the module two forum.

**Linda:**

Yes. We can tell when people don't do it.

**Carol Tice:**

We can tell. We will really know because there are basic just query level construction and format we're imparting you in there. You want to know them.

So do you want to take this one from Karen?

**Linda:**

Hold on.

**Carol Tice:**

Make friends with germs, it's going to help your baby breathe better.

**Linda:**

What? Let me see. Make friends with germs. I like that. Oh I thought you said read better. Thought if you make your baby read better. I was like are you kidding me?

**Carol Tice:**

Breathe.

**Linda:**

It may help your baby breathe better. A new Canadian study published today in science translational magazine suggests that infants who are exposed to four types of gut bacteria within the first three months of their lives dramatically cut the risk of developing asthma. The research supports the hygiene hypothesis. If people don't know what that is, the hygiene hypothesis is that when we make things too clean and too sanitized we actually up our risk of allergies because we need actually to become inoculated to these things through exposure. We're making our environment too clean a factor which leads to harm in babies' developing immune system.

So the fact that this is a new study is really cool. The gut bacteria part is really cool because I don't think we had that sort of specificity before as to what you need to be exposed to. In this she'll plan to ask how often they should wash babies' hands. Should they use regular antibacterial soap? Should they be concerned about their infant putting dirty toys in their mouths? Exposing them to other babies?

I think that's an evergreen idea of how clean should you keep your baby. Everybody knows about the hygiene hypothesis. But this new study and the gut bacteria kind of brings a new twist to it, so I think it will be worth re-visiting for the pregnancy, newborn and parenting magazines.

What do you think, Carol?

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. I kind of like it.

**Linda:**

I think I'm not paying attention. She's in the forum, I know. I know. Me too. Me too.

**Carol Tice:**

So Barb had posted this. For tech's sake. I'm asking her to give me a subhead to it because I don't know what it's about based on that but it sounds like it's about the school year has seen K-12 schools implementing tech friendly policies. Issuing laptops and tablets. Teachers are integrating it into lessons.

I will have an overview of research evaluating how and whether electronic devices really enhance learning. I guess my first question would be how recent is this research?

Hopefully it's really, really new and fresh. And then she says also lots of interviews with a variety of instructors. You're typical 500, 150 word article is only going to have room for three or four or five interviews so not tons. So commenting on how this is working out in the classroom. When does it work? When doesn't it? And how is it different from non-tech learning. I'm worried that we've kind of got a book topic here about electronics in the classroom.

**Linda:**

Yeah. But there must be some smaller aspects she can spin off of this for some type of magazine because it's really interesting.

**Carol Tice:**

For tech's sake, where the rubber is meeting the road. I still don't know what the article is about, Barb, or who it's for. I'm looking for a subhead that's like, 'do devices really make kids learn better?' Something that tells me what this story is about.

**Linda:**

It's so new that there haven't probably been a lot of studies yet on okay. This is happening. Is it actually better than ye old chalkboard or whatever? That could be kind of interesting and qualitative.

**Carol Tice:**

How is it helpful? How is it not helpful? Speaking as a mom who's one son can only get through a novel on Amazon whisper where it lights up each word for him I can tell you there are definitely some uses for technology. But yeah, it's an open question. How much tech is taking over.

Let's go back to the markets which were Scientific American and Psychology or maybe a local magazine like the Washingtonian. I'm thinking a parenting magazine or a magazine for teachers, like a teacher trade hub about the effectiveness of this. I could totally see devices. Your kid wants to bring his device to school. What you need to know. Or, so your kid's been issued a laptop. What you need to know. You've got to think about market match here. I don't see the markets you have identified as right for it.

I don't know. Linda?

**Linda:**

Are we still talking about the tech one?

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah.

**Linda:**

It could be an educational trade or it could be I don't know, maybe a parenting magazine but I'm not sure about the ones that she mentioned although I do not read those, so I could be wrong.

**Carol Tice:**

Kristy has one is missing a news hook. Ten unexpected ways you are annoying your dog. That sounds more like a blog post to me than a magazine article.

**Linda:**

Where is this? Is this a new post?

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah you have to go to the next page. There's more than one page.

**Linda:**

Oh, another page.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. I just don't know about that one, Kristy. I like this one, though. Why you want your child to fail. This is kind of an idea that's been around a long time. I'd love to see if you could offer a new, something fresh on it. I mean Wendy Mogel's *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* has been out a long, long time, but we're definitely in a general culture of *atta boy* and hyper-parenting and helicopter-parenting and people super micromanaging what their kids do, and don't climb trees. There's a lot of that out there. I think just sort of our general culture almost gives it a news hook. We'll need something new to say about it, I think.

**Linda:**

I have to say I like this dog idea. Maybe the title sounds like a blog post but the information is really interesting and I like the way annoying your dog is actually a really cute way of putting it. Because a lot of people have read certain things that you do with your dog make you look too dominant or not dominant enough and so on. I don't know.

This aspect of it is really interesting. She said hugging your pooch you show signs of dominance and may make him feel insecure. Common human behavior towards our pets annoys them rather than feel like part of the pack. Learn how you are annoying your dog and what you can change to truly be man's best friend.

I think that's really cute for one of the dog magazines. I don't know about vets. It says vets. Is that a trade magazine? This is definitely a consumer idea like dog owners not vets. But I think that's really cool.

Can I mention something?

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. Go.

**Linda:**

You know we've had some cats that've been sick and we've been taking them to all kinds of vets and they all seem to have newsletters, and I'm not sure where they're getting the articles from but somebody is writing all these informational articles that are going out in vet newsletters, vet hospital newsletters, shelter newsletters. That could be an interesting market to look into for articles like this.

I'm done.

**Carol Tice:**

Ray just said that she didn't realize that she needed to post in this thread for live review. Yeah. We're looking on this thread for live...

**Linda:**

They can post in the chat.

**Carol Tice:**

Or you can post it in chat. That's fine, too. Those are your live event options. The other ones are assuming you are looking for our fabulous editors' feedback on there.

So here's one I love from Heather. Are we putting our children off sports? I'm not sure that's phrased quite right but I get where you're going with it. Because people are too type A parenting at sports. We're too freaked out about injuries. I mean I worry that you're asking a question that we know the answer is yes to so we probably want to phrase this a different way, and probably flip it over to don't put your kid off of sports. Five tips.

**Linda:**

I was going to say it would be a really good service piece for one of these magazines. Like how to, especially if your spouse or the kid's coach is really aggressive, what you can do, and what you can do yourself to make sure your kid is not feeling too pressured.

**Carol Tice:**

Right. Yeah. I'm just seeing Sarah's headline in chat. Is your family ready for a dog this holiday? That article is written every year so to get to be the person who writes it you're going to have to tell us something fresh about it. It can't just be a 101 what is involved in dog ownership blah, blah. You're going to need a very smart news hook...

**Linda:**

I could mention, though. What is involved in dog ownership, yes, but choosing the type of dog that suits your family's lifestyle. That is a total evergreen. If you could think if there's anything new about that. Like oh there's this new breed, or we've discovered this, or more people are getting this kind of dog and it's wrong for them. And if you could do it maybe as like a chartacle or something? Because it's evergreen. They're going to run it forever but every single time it needs to be slightly different so that they want to run it again.

What do you think, Carol?

**Carol Tice:**

The other thing you can do is if there've been some things in the news where a particular kind of dog is acting out against young children or if there's been a death or something.

**Linda:**

Yeah, I know.

**Carol Tice:**

It could be are these breeds for your kid? Know the risks or something you could narrow it down to particular breeds. Or pocket poodles, everyone's getting them but here's why you shouldn't. Where you go kind of contrarian on a trendy dog or a dog that a lot of people maybe shouldn't be getting.

**Linda:**

Yes. But you can make that work. You just have to make it different. I've seen that lots and lots of times, so that means it's a good idea, yes. But then you need to think of what angle can I take to make this something the editor has not seen yet.

**Carol Tice:**

...Heather, on that putting your kids off sports, she says her hook is the 2016 Olympics in Rio. I think that's kind of a stretch. I think you're going to want a different news hook for it and that's real far away.

**Linda:**

I'm sure it would be pretty easy to find a news hook for that with all that stuff that's going on in the news that she mentioned. I don't think that would be difficult for her at all.

**Carol Tice:**

Right. So Lisa has pitched one. The headline isn't here but I think this also seems like it's about brain injuries and school sports that are dangerous. We've kind of been over that.

**Linda:**

We do see that idea a lot. We do. We saw it last year and we saw it twice here. It's a good idea but everybody's thinking about it and again your job is not, okay then this stinks I don't want to do it. It's like number one, how can I make it different? And a really secret number two, what markets could I pitch this to, to whom this is something new? Every parenting magazine has seen it but is there a type of market...? So Parent Guide or Parents, yeah, they've seen it, but if you do some digging you will probably find some kind of market where you can make some weird association that actually works.

**Carol Tice:**

So Mike says Mayday Mayday we've lost all control. Why avionics security has never been more important and this would also obviously be for an aerosafety pub. Wired? I don't think so. Probably too deep in the weeds for them. Air and Space, yes. Security screenings and proprietary technology can't keep a good hacker down. Security research has shown how easy it is to hack in-flight entertainment systems and take it over, steering controls on cars on the road...

**Linda:**

I think that's the work of Wired, actually.

**Carol Tice:**

Maybe. If there's a news hook....

**Linda:**

I read Wired. I like Wired.

**Carol Tice:**

Is there a news hook like a recent incident?

**Linda:**

Oh yeah, this is all news hook right here, baby.

**Carol Tice:**

Mike, when you say the news hook is aircraft security is a perennial issue that's not a news hook.

**Linda:**

It's not a news hook.

**Carol Tice:**

That is a non-news hook. We just want to clarify for everyone because we hear that a lot.

**Linda:**

No. But the steering control in the cars, isn't that kind of a recent thing? I feel like I recently heard that but I think you could work with this. I would try Wired or Wired News Online. I think they pay like half the price but you know. They are much easier to break into if they still exist. Yeah. Mike says very recent. Yeah.

**Carol Tice:**

We're still rolling with ideas. Don't worry, people, because it's the top of the hour. We will catch you. I love that idea, Mike. I would like to see you post that, if you haven't for the editors, and see them treat that a little bit.

**Linda:**

Can I mention something? Mona, I feel like we covered last week or we did it in the forum but I might have taken notes on it on Tuesday and then we never got to it. So let me see if I can dig that up for her while you work on this next one. All right? I think I have notes and we never got to it.

**Carol Tice:**

While Linda's looking that up I'm going to take the branding power Wow Air from Heather, which she was thinking all the business mags for Forbes, Entrepreneur, Ink, Fast Company. I'd like to point out to people that those have totally different concepts, not Entrepreneur and Ink they're fairly similar. Forbes is certainly different from the two of those and Fast Company is different from all of the others. Fast Company is much more techie. Entrepreneur and Ink are much more start-up oriented and sort of new, smaller business, million-dollar business. Forbes is a billion dollar business and billionaires and really established big, successful companies a lot more so than Entrepreneur.

So she says Wow Air, which launched in 2011 is a great example of a company with a cohesive and identifiable branding message. This magazine is really expensive but you get it free. Special prize only for you my friend, it says on their in-flight magazines. They have hilarious horoscopes in it. So they have a fun, kinky branding like male chimp and companies.

She says I see a travel blogger has done something similar recently. Seven reasons to fly Wow Air, but I want to do it as a branding case study example of how Wow Air has defined what its brand is and is showing their brand in all public angles of its business and why now Wow Air has just announced that they plan to launch \$99 flights to Canada etcetera.

The challenge you face for a story like this is that it sounds like an ad for Wow Air and that you're a fan of Wow Air. It sounds like you have an agenda that you want to rave about Wow Air because you think they have great branding. That isn't to say that case studies on branding don't get assigned but how would you source this? Besides talking to this company what you'd want is branding experts to talk about why this is working and how successful is this place? I've never heard of this airline so I'm wondering how well they're doing.

What's your proof that it's their branding this way is successful and it's working. Yeah. They're adding a couple of new flights but overall how's this business faring? Do we know? If they're super successful. If they're the only successful budget airline that launched in the past decade and they're raking it in and growing really fast and they're really awesome, maybe you could pitch this but you're going to need to anchor it with experts who say why their branding is different, unique, interesting.

So, Linda, did you find your note on that? Linda? She's probably still looking.

**Linda:**



Yes. Sorry. I had myself on mute. That was her idea. She did revise it here and it's the three secrets of creating abundance now. Are you still feeling financially pinched? How can you transform lack of abundance and live a more fulfilling life? This how to essay begins with a story about a young bride who brings abundance in a dramatic way to her family. I then acknowledge the financial strains of American women today and then provide three simple exercises for how you can bring abundance into your life starting right now.

Markets Oprah, Redbook, Real Simple. I think Oprah is perfect for this type of thing. But, yeah, it's hard to tell if you're going to be the sole expert like I mentioned in the chat, which wouldn't really fly for these types of magazines. You could do a reportive essay where it begins with your story and then you go into the experts and then you mention other women, so that could work really well.

The only thing is the word abundance has been so overused lately in sort of the self-help genre. It's all about attracting abundance and what does that really mean? What does that really mean? It's kind of nebulous and here I think you're talking about financial abundance, whereas in a lot of self-help they're talking about an abundance of love or energy or whatever, so you're going to really need to think of your wording and make sure that it comes across as something that will fit into the magazine and what you want to say.

Yeah. Kristy says what is abundance? I know it's a lot of...what? In self-help abundance is just like not only financial but basically you have enough of everything you need relationship-wise, health-wise, financial-wise. That's what abundance is, so I think we need to think about our wording a little bit, but I think you're onto something so let's think about what you can do when you repost this in the forum. I think you should maybe switch up the title. Let us know if you're planning to be the only expert which won't work, and if you can think of anybody else you might talk to, and just flesh it out a little bit, and we'll take another look if that's okay.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. Someone is saying the story isn't about me but someone I know. Remember that your friends are not a good source of stories.

**Linda:**

And also I think you mentioned in the other thread that she was an Indian bride in India and I think if you're bringing this to American magazines for an American market you're going to want an anecdote from somebody who lives here right now and that this happened here. But you could also pitch that in India and use her, or use somebody in India.

**Carol Tice:**

And any time you tell us there are secrets they better be amazing things I don't already know. Just want to say. You better blow our minds with those secrets. If it's all stuff I already know, you're in trouble.

So Shirley had ditch the pajamas. The benefits of co-working spaces. Boost office makeovers. I'm not sure I understand that and I work in a co-working place. So I don't know. There's a lot of background here but I don't understand the premise of this. Stats that co-workers are more motivated and engaged. Yes. Yes. We like it. We like freelancing. We know that. But what are you trying to say in the story? That all just sort of grounds it. Seems like there's a lot of co-working space available but there really isn't enough space. So is it about the shortage of co-working space? She wants to talk to real estate investors, entrepreneurs and highlight notable space makeovers. I guess I'm not getting who this is for.

**Linda:**

I'm not quite getting...I mean I'm kind of getting it.

**Carol Tice:**

It's like do these real estate investors want to develop more co-working spaces? Or is it for people who are thinking about co-working? I don't know...

**Linda:**

No. No. Yeah. I think it's that businesses are remaking their offices inspired by co-working spaces because people like co-working spaces so much and they have so many benefits. Maybe that's it.

**Carol Tice:**

If you're here, can you let us know?

**Linda:**

Oh she said I think I was headed more towards investment premise trying to find something new.

**Carol Tice:**

So Noel says is loud music the new smoking? Concerts are getting louder but earplugs are still uncool. Well that second half, concerts are getting louder but earplugs are still uncool is what we call an all -in-headline. I got your whole concept there and now I don't need to read more.

Mike, you need to post in the forum that says, module 1 story ideas. That's where you post if anyone else is wondering.

**Linda:**

Oh Karen mentions what if I saw my idea at a magazine's blog? I found info on gut bacteria and asthma on Discovery's website even though the research only came out yesterday. Yes. Because a lot of editors get this information ahead of time, or they have someone who's posting this stuff immediately. I think if you're going to be pitching to parenting and to women's magazines you do not have to worry about what was on the Discovery website at all.

**Carol Tice:**

Remember they're just doing some quick little brief. Oh this study came out today, the end. And that's why your job is to get something more sophisticated than that. You have to think about okay what can I do with that research? How can I take that research, maybe combine it with this other research I know about and get another trend idea out of it. Or how can I ask the next question of what will happen next as a result of this research. You have to do more with it than say an exhibit opened. A research study came out. That's the challenge.

So Ryan has a funny one for Toastmaster. How to deal with being the villain of a panel discussion. I love being the villain of a panel discussion but I guess some people don't. I kind of love that. I think that's a fun idea if they haven't done it. I don't know if that's the exact headline I would go with but when you're the...when you disagree with everyone. I've had that. I've been on panels where everyone has been 'everything's great out there' and I'm like 'oh, cut the baloney.' I'm always the bucket of cold water saying yeah, here's what's really happening, and please don't give people false illusions that this is a super easy career to do. Anyway.

So, yeah. Here's another all-in-headline from Tammy. After 55 years the newest PET scans are still classified as experimental. And? Why? Do I need to know that? How does...should I not have PET scans?

**Linda:**

It says why now in 2006 when PET scans reached 55 years since the invention... But 55 isn't really a landmark anniversary like 50 would be. But, again...But she wants to pitch it to a news magazine so it's like okay this is definitely a news piece but I wonder if there's some other angle that you can take with it. Is this happening with other sorts of medical technology? How is this impacting people and what can we do about it? There's a lot you can do with this information.

**Carol Tice:**

Right. So back to Noel's idea about the earplugs. So what do you want to say? How to make your kid think earplugs are cool? Or how to know how loud a concert will be? Is there a way to find out? I think there's an issue here. Okay my kid wants to go to a really loud concert and maybe I feel uncomfortable. Develop that a little bit more. Maybe how to set ground rules about that? Maybe wearing earplugs is part of you deal?

**Linda:**

Look at this. Here's an article on sleep. Quiet lease, finding the best earplugs. So even people who read Sleep, and this came out in the spring, it's like maybe they're not as nerdy and dorky as we think? Maybe that's something there. I think you just need to dig into it a little bit and look around a little bit more.

**Carol Tice:**

Maybe they could put their beats headphones on and use that to dampen sound? Maybe there's some cool suggestions you could come up with? Seriously. My son does that.

**Linda:**

Yeah. How to make it look cool. I like that.

**Carol Tice:**

So Tammy had how to stop leaving money on the table. Five smart ways to find grant money for your non-profit. Needs a news hook. Very evergreen.

**Linda:**

Hey, can I give a tip?

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah.

**Linda:**

I always say the word surprising. Five surprising, smart, ways to find grant money for your non-profit. Then it's on you to find the really new, innovating things that people haven't heard of that are super cool and that's the kind of thing that will sell.

**Carol Tice:**

Then make them actually surprising and we're all set.

So there's one how to buy and sell on Craig's list without getting creeped out. I don't know. Craig's list has been around a super long time. Has there been something in the news net? These don't have news hooks really. Please develop them. Do more research.

So we did is loud music the new smoking...

**Linda:**

Which one are we on now? Are we on Rebecca?

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. With Rebecca she has many possible headlines but it's basically how to convince your boss you deserve more job flexibility is her topic. Here are tips. Were you planning to be the expert in this article and give us the tips? Or are these from an expert and you haven't told us who the expert is yet? And what is the news hook for it?

**Linda:**

Oh, you know what. I actually have notes on that from our call last time.

**Carol Tice:**

Oprah does not do these kind of topics. She does not do workplace topics. As an avid reader I think it'd be fun if she did but they just don't do workplace topics really.

I'm going to move on to Elaine's, the high cost of substitute teachers. Target to the Chicago Tribune or Chicago magazine or the Better Government Association. Is there new news here? Have substitute teachers' costs gone up? I'm just not sure what's fresh in it. If you can develop it some more.

Christina says, start solar. Five easy ways to shift your home from cold to sunshine. I actually like that idea because I think the one way we all know is solar panels that cost a fortune that we don't get because we're like, I can't spend \$20,000 to put solar panels on my house. She says you can do it from solar cell installation. Oh, you're saying it's easy, not low cost. Well yeah it's easy to do. I can just a contractor and they can throw it on my roof, but it's really expensive.

I think the killer article would be five low cost ways to go solar, because I think it has a reputation as an expensive market but there are things like switching out your lightbulbs and stuff. I really would like to see a news hook on this. Christina, what's new on it? Are there new products that have come out? There's lots of innovation in solar power, so see if you can find some cool stuff.

**Linda:**

I'm sorry. What's this Craig's list idea that I missed? Because she's talking about the Konmari movement which is so funny because I totally read that book. What is this Craig's list idea? I think I missed it while I was working on another idea.

**Carol Tice:**

How do sell on Craig's list without getting creeped out. I just don't know what's new there.

**Linda:**

She said there's a news hook in terms of the New Year being times when people want to clear out their stuff and sell things. I'm not sure that's quite enough to make this one. I mean it's a good seed of an idea like all the other ones. I think we just need to play with it until we find something that people have not seen.

**Carol Tice:**

Maybe getting creeped out isn't what's interesting there. Maybe it's not about Craig's list. Maybe it's like going ... eight ethical ways to get rid of all your stuff. Go on a buy nothing group and offer it. Put it on Craig's list and that would be fun actually. I like that idea.

**Linda:**

There's lots of ideas.

**Carol Tice:**

So Diane's headline is should everybody get a trophy? You know Ss stand for amazing on our report cards now instead of As and Bs and so on. That whole 'good job' all the time thing. I think this is a topic that's been around a lot.

**Linda:**

It has but...again a seed of an idea. Here's something really cool. I've got to tell you my son is always like 'how come I don't get a trophy?' I'm like 'because you haven't won anything yet.' Hello. They don't get that. Why don't I get a trophy for showing up? Because you didn't do anything special.

But still, like it's a topic that parents are always interested in and there's always new generations of parents coming and reading these magazines, so that's why it's an evergreen. But again, what can you do to make it different. Has it been increasing even more these days? Is there an opposition movement? Is there something in the news? I think you could work with this.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. There's something there but tell us what is the fresh thing.

Jenet says the new super girl, world champion power lifter Alice Zhang is super strong. I think we know she's probably super strong but maybe there's something else you could say she is something? She definitely sounds like someone who's worthy of a profile. I don't know about these markets. Ms, Bust, Bitch, Bustle, Slate?

**Linda:**

These are all feminist magazines, so she's talking about the 'like a girl' movement, which I think has been around for a while, and I think that the idea of the women power lifters has been going on for a while. In fact, I used to write for Oxygen magazine for years and they covered this stuff for at least a decade and a half. They would have profiles of these really strong women, power lifter women. Now the ideal for Oxygen is much more sleek and refined, not as bulky as it was in the 80s but it has been going on for a long time. So is there anything different about this, I guess?

**Carol Tice:**

Amber says did you come to the three Rs pitch yet. I have not seen that and I am skipping over Duncan's that we did already do Tuesday.

**Linda:**

Oh yeah. That was a good one, yeah.

**Carol Tice:**

Paula's is turn those kitchen scraps into your next meal. Locals offer their best tips to reduce food waste at home. Sounds like you iterated this off of the feedback you got and now it sounds pretty good. I like it. This is sort of a second run at this topic and she was going to interview chefs to get some, like here's an awesome tasty recipe you can make with broccoli stems kind of things.

**Linda:**

It's going to be unique ways, too. Can you post in your thread that we gave you the green light to module two in case one of the editors says hey. Because I think it's ready.

**Carol Tice:**

At this point we went through all the ones that were on the thread for review so, Deborah I don't know where your pitch is. We went through everything that was on the...

**Linda:**

Was it in the...oh she says can your child learn the three r's outdoors? I didn't see that one. If it's in the forum we're going through as quickly as we can. We have editors on a few hours a day and then Carol and I are on on and off every day. Things are always really crazy the first couple days.

I'm not sure what Duncan Pike is doing. He is saying me, Linda. You are not Linda. Me, Linda.

**Carol Tice:**

He reposted the same article for our review. If you want the editors to look at it, you need to put it in Module 1 story ideas forum. I have started a particular thread for this event that we just went through everything on.

Susan has a good question. Is everyone going to be invited to the 8 Pitch Challenge? No. Only everyone who does all of the homework is going to invited to do the 8 Pitch Challenge and try to get a refund.

**Linda:**

And. Wait. Duncan is writing something now. I think we can move him on to Mod 2 with this, right? I mean we really liked this and he's all set. You think?

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. Go ahead...

**Linda:**

Post that you got approved to go through to the next one. That's right, Katie. You don't get a trophy without doing the work. You're not my kid in Tae Kwon Do class. Just kidding.

**Carol Tice:**

Just to lay it out. If people are wondering, the homework is come up with a story idea that's saleable. Flesh it out into a query and get approval on that. You'll get feedback and you'll rewrite it and then you'll take a letter of introduction training. You'll pitch an LOI draft and get it reviewed and post a final of it. There's basically sort of five steps.

Idea, query letter, query letter revised, letter of introduction, letter of introduction revised. That's it. And they'll all be in the homework modules.

**Linda:**

Yeah. When the modules come out you'll see the homework in each one but you do need to get editor's permission to move on from one to the next. We'd want to make sure everybody is doing the best work that they can and we're not trying to hold anybody back or make it super difficult, but we are strict especially because we have this refund offer. And we did refund a butt load of money last class, so we have no problems with that. But since we're giving this offer and the whole point of it is for you to get work, then we are going to be pretty strict and push back until the editors agree that it's salable.

**Carol Tice:**

And the big thing to know about Pitch Clinic is what we really want you to do is not focus on getting the refund but focus on getting the knowledge you need to get tens of thousands of dollars' worth of assignments, way more than the price of this course from what you learn in the course.

And that's why we don't just say okay write a query on that even though we know it's just half there and there's no news hook. We're not doing any favors doing that because the real point of this class is for you to have a career in this when you're done where you can get a lot of assignments. So that's our focus and that's where we're coming from if you want to know.

So Sarah says cruelty-free fashion is haute, or the explosion of cruelty-free fashion. I feel like it's been around for so, so long what's your new thing about it? You say vegan fashion is going mainstream. I just feel like it's been there for ages and ages. I don't know. You'd have to give me something that tells me why it is ...

**Linda:**

Well she says it's going mainstream and I know I used to read Vegetarian Times and Veg News and all that, and of course it's very popular there. But is it something that a lot of mainstream people are thinking about? I would do some digging and see if you can find when it's been done and whether it's been done in the more mainstream magazines. I'm kind of not quite sure. And if it has been, you can think of a new angle on it. Or a market that hasn't done it. Almost every idea is workable and that's a good seed of an idea.

She says there are many couture vegan houses now. That's kind of interesting.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. If you could do a round up on those that would sort of be nice. Inside the couture vegan trend, high fashion.

**Linda:**



Yeah. That's kind of cool. Even men's lines which are new.

**Carol Tice:**

The really expensive fake fur when the whole point of fake fur is it's supposed to be cheap. That's sort of hilarious too. That they could get the money for what are supposed to be cheaper materials. I think there's good stuff there.

**Linda:**

And especially she says it's for men's lines, which is pretty new. And I was thinking oh god, one of the men's fashion magazines. Men's Journal, Esquire, who knows. That would be a really cool angle on it.

**Carol Tice:**

I'm sorry Katherine, what was your story?

**Linda:**

Where is she?

**Carol Tice:**

Oh I didn't see this. Why J. K. Rowling's new mystery series is even better than Harry Potter. This is the Cormoran Strike. Hasn't that been already written a lot? The new book is coming out 10/22. Yeah. Not enough lead time to really write on it except for a blog as well.

**Linda:**

Yeah. I'm kind of psyched about this book but...

**Carol Tice:**

When you have something that's super covered like say, J.K. Rowling, one of the most famous authors currently alive, you've really got to get creative about what you want to say. You've got to get an angle that nobody else has thought of, and I'm sure that other people are out there who have already written 'oh this new mystery series is good.' So you're going to have to dig a little deeper there, and the real question is who are you going to talk to for this story? Who's your expert in the story?

I'd be arguing from my own perspective but also bringing in an expert. That doesn't fly.

**Linda:**

Can you find an expert that going to say well this is better than that? Because it seems so subjective. Although I wonder, I'm sure Writer's Digest is all over this already but there might be something you can pull out of this for Writer's Digest, like once you've hit the big time and people are expecting more of you and you've got this super pressure. What do you do? Although readers and writer's digest are typically not at that place. I don't know. I would keep thinking about it. There's got to be something there.

**Carol Tice:**

Maybe is there going to be something crazy in how this new installment is going to be marketed? I've seen fun book marketing stories like that. You're going to have to find something that we don't already know about it. That's all I can say about that.

So, anybody else feel like they have not gotten enough...? Let me put a link right in here to the forum that people should put their story ideas into for story ideas, for editor critique and approval to move on to the next level. Here is it. It says Pitch Clinic Pitches. That's the forum. You just start a new topic. Put your idea in and editors will review it. The good news is this chat log will also be saved.

Great question, Rebecca. If we need to continue working on our idea, when should we have it submitted by? We don't care. Take all the time you need. There's five weeks of this class and we're going to do this and query letter and then we're going to do letters of introduction and you can still be working on your query and working on your ideas all through every week of class. It's not like at the end of this week if you don't have a story idea then you're out. We're not going to talk to you again. There's nothing like that in this class. We're going to look at all the homework modules all five weeks.

**Linda:**

But we don't want people trying to do everything in the last week for the refund offer because that is too stressful on our instructors to suddenly have this, like happened last time, like a deluge of oh my god I got to get this in. It's in the last week. And it's like oh my god here it all comes.

**Carol Tice:**

No. It's true. We would like you to know that it is not realistic to expect that you are going to start with a fresh story idea on week five and you're going to go through all five homework modules and get approved and be in the challenge. Because we are not going to drop everything and throw you to the top of the queue over 100 other people's comments because you're behind and you're doing everything at the very last moment. But other than that we're really flexible on when homework modules are done.

We've had people who kind of end up getting...they're still thinking of ideas and they go to the letter of introduction homework and maybe then they pitch another query while they're thinking about the revision of that. You don't have to do them in the order we're presenting them entirely.

**Linda:**

No, but they have to be approved in the order we're presenting them.

**Carol Tice:**

Well you could get an LOI

**Linda:**

Well that's not true you could get an LOI approved, definitely, yeah. True, true, true, true.

**Carol Tice:**

So there's kind of two halves to it.

**Linda:**

Kristy says...

**Carol Tice:**

...approved idea please do not put another idea in. Instead, please go write your query. You have to be green lighted in all five modules to get into the Pitch Challenge, but you don't have to do them all in the order representing them. You could get an LOI first draft approved and then get a story idea approved and then get a query approved and then get a revision of your LOI approved.

**Linda:**

You need to have your idea approved before you write a query on it. But then we have a LOI lesson and you could always be working on the LOI even if you haven't had your idea approved because that doesn't really matter. I know it's a little confusing but it'll all make sense.

**Carol Tice:**

...without getting a story idea for the query approved. So it's kind of like there's two pieces that you're writing. You're writing a query and you're writing a letter of introduction. So you can work on them in tandem, you know, one after the other, up to you. Just don't think you're going to do it all two days before the end of the month and that we will have time to look through everything and it's all going to work out. Because we're going to ask you to interview more people potentially on a query letter. Leave yourself some time to get it done. Well, Sue Ann, that's why tomorrow we are putting out our query letter training and why next Friday you will get a letter of introduction training.

I think we're still on Lorette, but I think we're done.

**Linda:**

Yeah. But we need to be off.

**Carol Tice:**

We are headed out and more on the forums. Feel free to post more on the thread for today's reviews or on your own separate threads for the editors to see.

**Linda:**

Thanks everyone.

**Carol Tice:**

And please, read the FAQs and how to get started. I think we covered all of the ones that were submitted, Amy. If you didn't think so put it on the end of this...here, let me

show you the thread that we just in and you can post it in here if you want Linda and I to look at it if you think you wanted a live review. But we thought we did everything.

**Linda:**

Yeah. No. I think she should post it in the regular forum at this point so that the editors can see it.

**Carol Tice:**

Yeah. But if she had wanted our feedback in particular. Know what? Throw it onto the bottom of this one and we'll take a look there. We thought we did everything that was submitted for this call.

**Linda:**

Thanks everybody.