

SAMPLE 5:

TEXT: TIMES NEW ROMAN, 10 PT.

RUNNING HEADERS BOXED

HEADERS ALTERNATE TITLE/AUTHOR

DROP CAP

CHAPTER HEADING FLUSH LEFT

# CHAPTER 1

When I was a kid I always dreamed of being a best-selling author. In my fantasy, I would have throngs of folks lined up for my autograph at bookstores, be in demand as a guest on all the talk shows (the reputable ones, that is) and drive the latest and fastest cars available. But, I never knew what to write about or how to get started.

If you're like me, you probably get frustrated with your daily 8a.m.-5 p.m. job. You wake up late, rush into the bathroom for a quick shower, get dressed, grab a cup of half-brewed coffee to wash down your Pop-Tart and then try to break the sound barrier on your way to work. Of course you eventually see two very colorful lights in your rearview mirror (and say some very colorful words in response) and wind up being the last person to work.

But, believe it or not, writing can be the answer. Whether you've written books before or can barely write your resignation letter, you may have what it takes to be successful in one of the various markets available.

Writing is everywhere. It's on billboards, postcards, greeting cards, bathroom walls, correspondence ... you name it, the list is virtually endless. But somebody had to do the actual writing, right? And chances are, you can make a pretty good living at doing just that (with the exception of the bathroom walls, of course).

## GREETING CARDS

Many beginning writers who are starving to be published (and starving for food) try to break into the "biz" by writing cute gags or gushy poems for the greeting card industry.

A lot of "would be" greeting card gurus think of it as a dead market, since many folks are just sending free cards via e-mail. But even

though cyberspace is full of corny cards and flashy graphics, there is still a substantial need for the printed versions. Many people actually think it is "rude" to send an electronic card versus the "store-bought" version, since they often lack that personal touch (and signature). So while the younger generation is jumping on the "cyber-card" bandwagon, greeting cards still make up a large portion of the "snail mail" delivered across the world every day.

Another worry is that many people will start buying greeting card software and just print their own. Sure, that's happening to a certain extent. But unless the sender uses a really good printer, high quality paper and flashy graphics, many of their creations can look "cheap," which is definitely not the thought you want to convey with your cards.

The challenge of writing greeting cards is the fact that you have to rely on wit, wisdom and very few words to convey all of the thoughts of the sender. From Bar Mitzvahs to job promotions, card companies try to produce cards that cover almost every occasion. Of course you may not have luck selling a card to one of the "big boys" right away, but there are still a number of smaller or fledgling companies you can approach.

The first way to look for potential clients is to consult publications such as *Writer's Market* and *Writer's Digest*. Almost all card companies have different preferences for the format of submissions, so be certain to find out what they prefer. Some may want clever lines written on index cards, while others may want a "mock up" featuring your text and some sketches to convey your overall idea. And if you are an artist, some companies may pay you to design the entire card yourself!

If you are required to send a mockup, you may try laying out your card in a card creation software package. This looks much more professional than a few thumbnail sketches on a sheet of notebook paper.