



~ Sensory Immersion ~


An IFWA Skills Presentation by Rex J. Leniczek

What is... “SENSORY IMMERSION”?

It may be described in a number of ways, but a simple way I like to think of it is...

The use of one's senses to amplify and/or deepen a specific experience



- 
- Increase reader empathy for main character
 - Increase reader investment in the fictional world
 - Share information about the main character with how and to what they give their attention
 - Bringing unspoken details about the world and others to the forefront
 - Having more details to work with
 - Increase depth and consistency in details

Keep in mind, that these are all good reasons to practice sensory immersion, but as with most things, moderation is important.

Why is it an important tool for fiction writers?



Our SENSES...

- The 5 Primary Senses:
 - Olfactory (Smell)
 - Gustatory (Taste)
 - Auditory (Sound)
 - Visual (Sight)
 - and Somatosensory (Touch)
- Equilibrioception: Balance and gravity
- Thermoception: Hot and cold
- Proprioception: Weight and body positioning
- Nociception: Pain
- Sexual Arousal
- Intuition
- Time
- Magnetic and/or electric fields
- Emotion?



*The use of one's senses to amplify
and/or deepen a specific experience...*

Categories of Experiences	Familiar Experiences	New Experiences		
		Can Experience		Cannot Experience
		Directly	Indirectly	
Examples	cleaning dishes	fishing, sky-diving	being a race car driver	death, being an electron
Immersion Tactic	being more mindful	obtain new experiences	simulate and extrapolate	imagination

Being a WWI fighter
pilot and having to
evacuate the plane
after taking heavy fire?

Solution(s): RIDING IN A
PROP PLANE, SKY-DIVING,
VISITING A WWI HISTORY
MUSEUM

Direct Immersion

(Obtain New Experiences)



Indirect Immersion

(Simulate & Extrapolate)



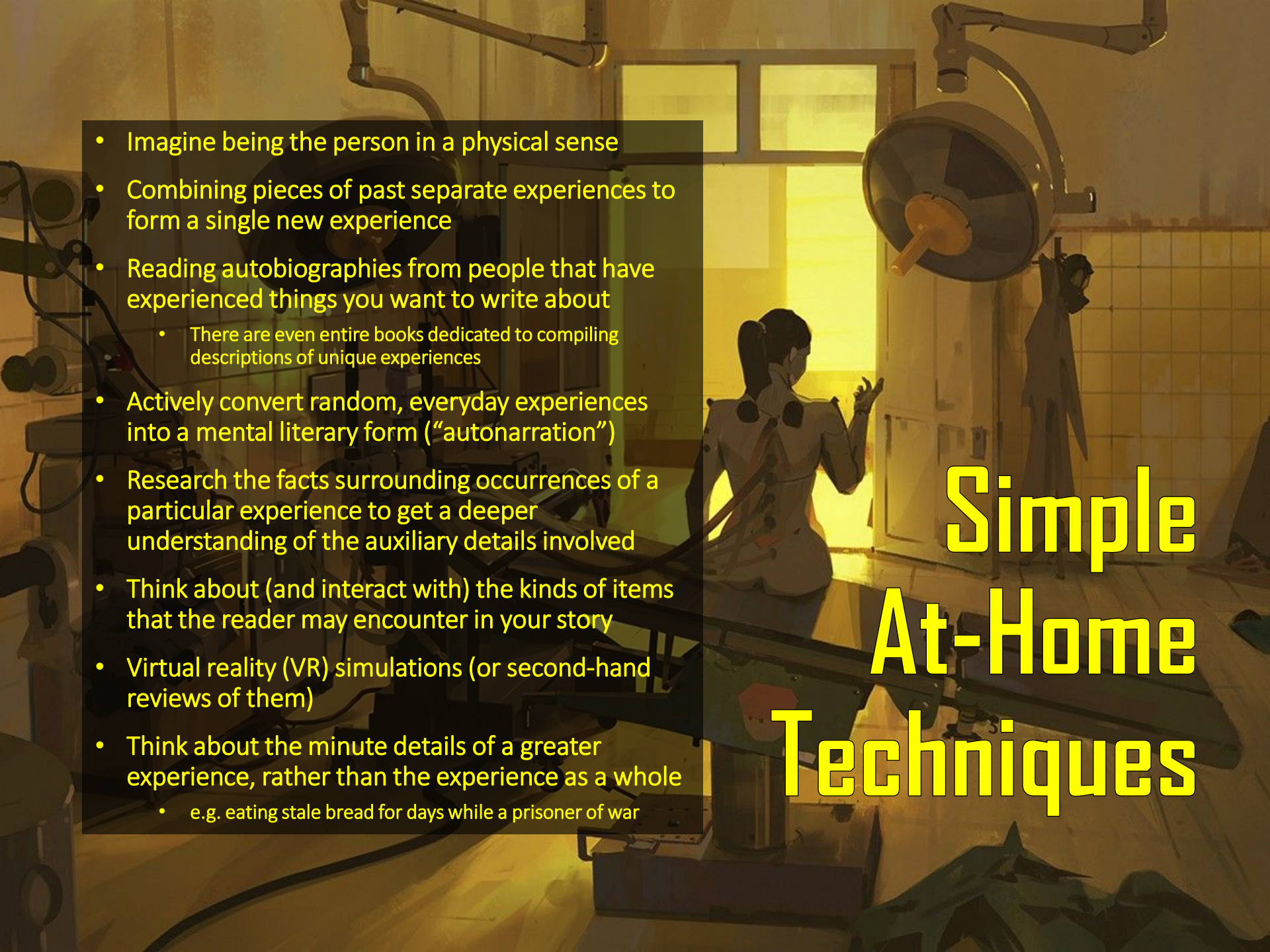
An astronaut, adrift in deep space with no means of communication or propulsion?

Solution: USING A “FLOAT” TANK
(aka sensory deprivation tank)

Mindfulness & Imagination

Imagination is well-known and self-explanatory.

Mindfulness is a road often less-travelled. It is the revisiting of habituated or common experiences with suspended preconceptions and the intention to experience them as if for the first time, paying close attention to all sensory information.

- 
- Imagine being the person in a physical sense
 - Combining pieces of past separate experiences to form a single new experience
 - Reading autobiographies from people that have experienced things you want to write about
 - There are even entire books dedicated to compiling descriptions of unique experiences
 - Actively convert random, everyday experiences into a mental literary form (“autonarration”)
 - Research the facts surrounding occurrences of a particular experience to get a deeper understanding of the auxiliary details involved
 - Think about (and interact with) the kinds of items that the reader may encounter in your story
 - Virtual reality (VR) simulations (or second-hand reviews of them)
 - Think about the minute details of a greater experience, rather than the experience as a whole
 - e.g. eating stale bread for days while a prisoner of war

Simple At-Home Techniques



~Thank You~