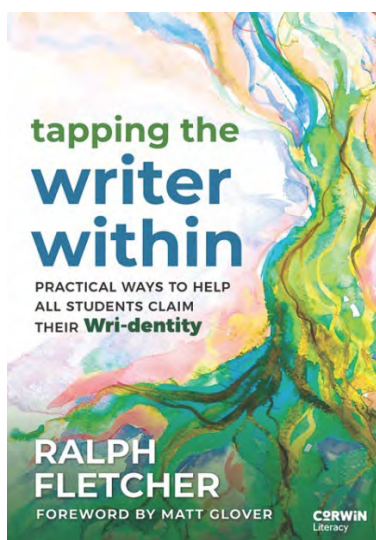




July 9, 2026

Books For Writing Teachers



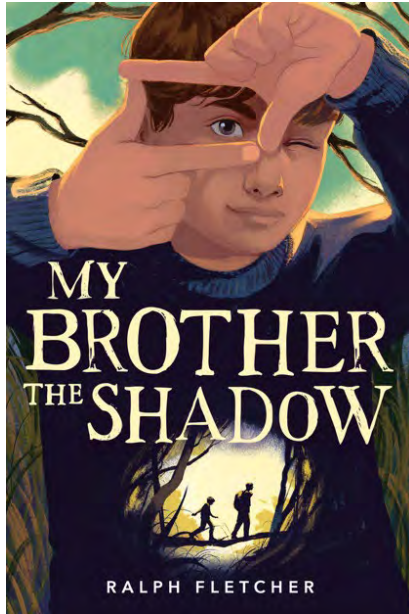
All year long teachers give, give, give... But that's not sustainable. Everybody needs time to replenish their batteries. Summer is a time to give back to yourself and refresh the spirit. In that spirit, check out my new book [*Tapping the Writer Within: Practical Ways to Help All Students Claim Their Wri-dentity*](#) for practical, research-based strategies to foster authentic writing, inspire reluctant writers, and help every student embrace their identity as an author (published by Corwin).

After reading this book, Laurey Brevig (a teacher from Garden City, New York) said this:

"Empowering students to see themselves as writers is at the heart of Ralph Fletcher's new book 'Tapping the Writer Within.' Inspiring and highly relevant, it is filled with practical ideas for nurturing community, honoring student choice, cultivating joy, and fostering meaningful talk and reflection. This is the perfect summer read for teachers!"

Books for Young Readers

I'm thrilled to share the cover of my new book **coming in 2027**: [*My Brother the Shadow*](#) (published by Hachette).

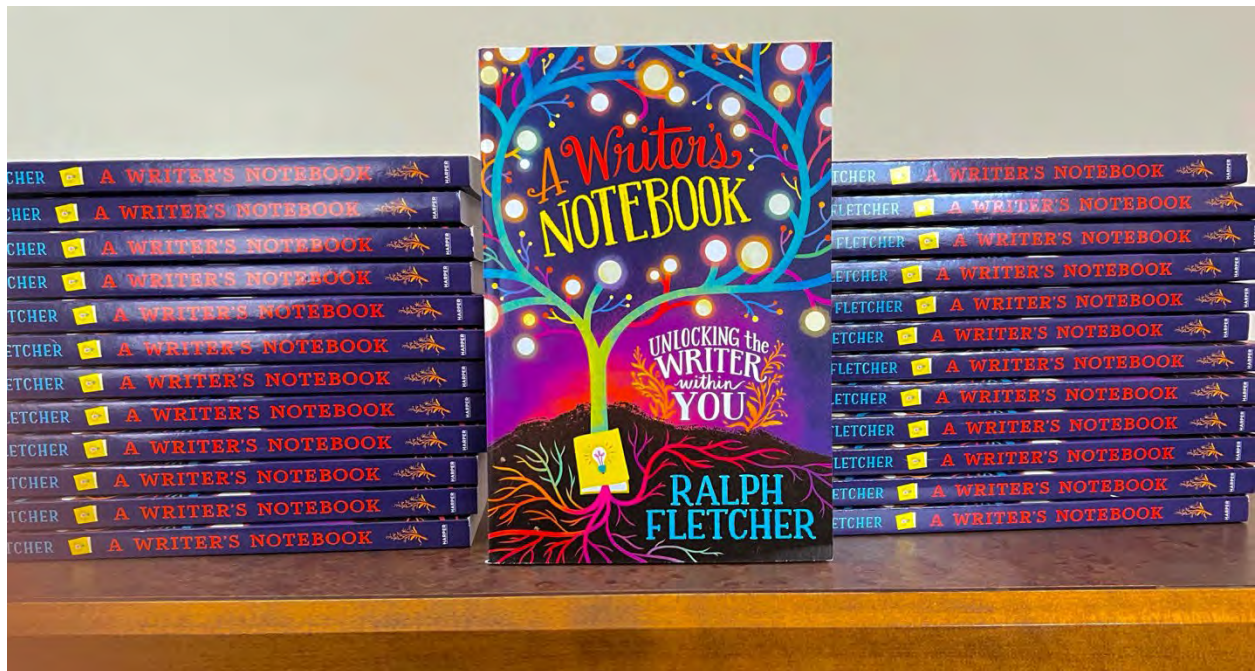


My Brother the Shadow is a novel-in-verse about two brothers. Marco (6th grade) watches as his big brother Chase goes off to college only to get involved in serious drug use. Marco takes a photography class; his images illustrate the book. Reading level is age 12 and up. The back jacket copy describes it as an “unflinching look at brotherhood in the face of addiction.”

Kate Messner, author of *The Trouble with Heroes*, read the novel in manuscript and has this to say: *"If you know middle school boys who think they don't like reading, Ralph Fletcher's My Brother the Shadow is the novel to put in their hands. Written in beautifully crafted and accessible verse complemented by evocative photographs, this book is a gem."*

My Brother the Shadow will be published winter of 2027. The publisher will release it as an audio book around the same time. I'll let you know when it's available for pre—order.

The Writer's Notebook



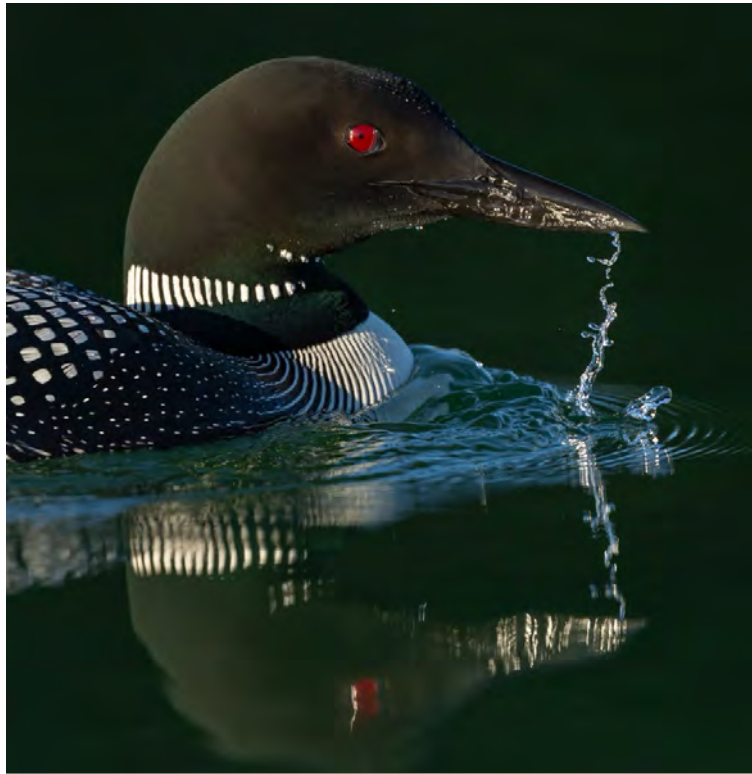
Remember those summer days back when you were a kid...and played with your friends from dawn to dusk? Play is the work of childhood, isn't that what they say? Well, grownups, too, need time to play—and we don't get much of it. A writer's notebook is the perfect place let your writing go without deadline, pressure, or constraint. In your notebook you might:

- *experiment with a picture book idea.
- *draft lyrics for a song.
- *make a list of the humorous sayings spoken by a grandchild.
- *recall and record advice your wise grandmother gave you.
- *take a stab at a screenplay, or a Netflix series.

Don Murray, an important mentor of mine, encouraged people to “do the writing only you want to do.” Do you have an idea that has been tugging at your sleeve, but you never quite got around to writing? A notebook gives you the idea place to make a start—especially during summer months when you have (hopefully) stretches of open time. In my book [*A Writer's Notebook: Unlocking the Writer Within You*](#), you'll find lots of invitations for how a blank notebook can help you find your stride as a writer.

Photography: Embrace the Element of Surprise

In June, I went on a nature photo trip to British Columbia, Canada, to photograph loons and owls. So much fun! I'm reminded that strong photos often contain something surprising or unexpected: the reflection of the water stream, or the way the shadow of the chick falls on the parent.



Surprise is important in writing too. A 3rd grader describes her house while baking cookies with her grandma: “The whole house smelled happy.” A surprising description, an unexpected sentence, a word used in a new way, can lift humdrum writing into something special and memorable.

I’m looking forward to joining Georgia Heard and 28 writers for the Quoddy Writing Retreat in Downeast Maine. It’s a week full of writing, play, companionship, inspiration, laughter—and lobster! This retreat fills up quickly. Hit me up if you’re interested in joining us the summer of 2027.

That’s it for now! Keep the writing flame lit!

Ralph Fletcher

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