

Day 5 - NaNo Word Count

Thursday, 05 November 2009

11,497.

Do novelists really count their words every day? I doubt it. Unless you're writing an article or short-story for publication, where word count is a key consideration, keeping a tally of words is a silly way to measure the quality of a story.

Of course, NaNo is different. NaNo is all about word count and process over product. It's been said that it takes about a month of repetition for a behavior to become habit. One of the purposes of NaNo is to encourage wanna be writers into the habit of writing.

If you can keep up a pace of 1600-2000 words a day for 30 days, preferably blocking the same set of hours each day, then writing will become habit. The habit of daily practice will improve your writing.

Today I closed with a NaNo word count of 11,497. This last 2000 words were really tough to pry out. I had many distractions; I lost direction. Today was a heavy dialogue day, which I find extremely difficult to write, especially because my inner critic is so adamant that I'll never live up to my expectations. My mind wandered over to chores that need to be done. Papers that should be filed. My fingernails that need trimming. Anything but scraping together that next line of dialogue.

The results are painfully unspectacular.

Despite the rough day, I will carry on, even laughing at what I've written because if I believed these words were the end and the best I could do, I'd surrender to my inner critic and cry.