

Understanding I.D.E.A. in Your Writing

A Workshop Handout

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Welcome

Writing has always been about connection — and the stories we tell either open doors or close them. This session is an invitation to think carefully about whose door we're opening.

Reflect:

Who do you most naturally write for? Who might be missing from that picture?

What Is I.D.E.A.?

Inclusion. Diversity. Equity. Access.

These aren't buzzwords — they describe practices that have been part of thoughtful communities for generations. You may recognize them by different names.

Examples You Already Know

- Ramps and curb cuts
- Large print materials
- Captions and subtitles
- Family restrooms
- Dietary accommodations at hospitals

What I.D.E.A. Is NOT

- Hiring unqualified candidates to meet a quota
- A passing trend
- A replacement for excellence

Reflect:

Have you ever encountered one of these accommodations and felt grateful for it? How might that experience shape the way you write about access for others?

A Biblical Foundation

Galatians 3:28 | Genesis 1:27 | 1 Corinthians 12:12–27 | Matthew 28:18–20

The Great Commission sends us to all nations — our writing can reflect that same welcome.

Reflect:

Is there a verse that has shaped how you see people who are different from you? How does that show up — or not yet show up — in your writing?

Practical Steps for Your Writing

- Be specific; avoid assumptions
- Use language your characters would claim for themselves
- Research before you write
- Consider a sensitivity reader

Reflect:

Think of a character or real person in your current project. Have you given them the same depth and dignity you would want for yourself on the page?

“Writing and reading decrease our sense of isolation.” — Anne Lamott

A Closing Reflection:

Who in your life or community has felt isolated? How might your writing become a door that opens toward them?

Restoring stories. Releasing voices.