

Ongoing self-training

1. All working writers stuff up from time to time. You actually learn more from your mistakes and struggles than from when it's effortless. Writing is hard because art is hard. Stop blaming yourself and just get on with it.
2. Make a note of issues that you had problems with, so you can develop your technique from that experience.
3. As you watch film and TV, look for examples of poor writing in these areas and particularly, *for clever answers*. Write them down.
4. When you see, for example, a poor bit of exposition, seriously consider how you could have done it better and identify what was leading the writer to write poorly. It will normally be a concentration lapse, often because their minds are focussed on other things, particularly something they're excited or anxious about that's coming next. We could call this the **Don't Worry about this Bit, Wait 'til you see the next bit** syndrome.. We are all victims of **Don't Worry about this Bit, Wait 'til you see the next bit** syndrome at some stage or other . A good recent example of DWTBWTSNB syndrome is the bit in *What Women Want* where Mel Gibson achieves the ability to hear women think by getting an electric shock (dropping hair dryer into water), then suffering a blow to the head. Mary Shelley invented the 'life affecting change caused by electricity' in *Frankenstein* and it's a bit tired now. But my guess is that the writer was much more taken up with the idea of what was about to happen to the character next (the male chauvinist actually hearing what women think), so didn't pick the cliché of electricity. Other clichéd ways of characters achieving mysterious powers are: nuclear waste, blow to the head. We have to do better than this! (This is what comes of us all giving up science at an early age in order to write - a hundred years after relativity we are just grappling with parallel universes!).