

There's a reason they don't have reality shows about writers: it's not visual. There's nothing to see and not much to tell. When you're really getting stuff done, you're just sitting in a chair with a laptop and trying to type fast enough to keep up with the movie in your brain. That's the glamorous life of the writer for you.

Lev Grossman on Writing

Brown hasn't slacked off on writing just because he has sold millions of books. He said: "I still get up every morning at 4 a.m. I write seven days a week, including Christmas, and I still face a blank page every morning. My characters don't really care how many books I've sold." And he said: "In addition to starting early, I keep an antique hour glass on my desk and every hour break briefly to do pushups, sit-ups, and some quick stretches. I find this helps keep the blood (and ideas) flowing. I'm also a big fan of gravity boots. Hanging upside down seems to help me solve plot challenges by shifting my entire perspective."

He said: "Writing an informative yet compact thriller is a lot like making maple sugar candy. You have to tap hundreds of treesâ€¦boil vats and vats of raw sap ... evaporate the water ... and keep boiling until you've distilled a tiny nugget that encapsulates the essence. Of course, this requires liberal use of the DELETE key. In many ways, editing yourself is the most important part of being a novelist ... carving away superfluous text until your story stands crystal clear before your reader. For every page in *The Da Vinci Code*, I wrote 10 that ended up in the trash."