

# Novel Writing

Monty Python

1st Announcer (Eric Idle): And now it's time for "Novel Writing" which today comes from the west country from Dorset.

2nd Announcer (Michael Palin): (sound of a crowd in the background) Hello and welcome to Dorchester where a very good crowd has turned out to watch local boy Thomas Hardy write his new novel "The Return of the Native" on this very pleasant July morning. This will be his eleventh novel and the fifth of the very popular Wessex novels....and here he comes! Here comes Hardy walking out toward his desk, he looks confident, he looks relaxed; very much the man in form as he acknowledges this very good natured Bank Holiday crowd. And the crowd goes quiet now as Hardy settles himself down at the desk, body straight, shoulders relaxed, pen held lightly but firmly in the right hand, he dips the pen...in the ink and he's off! It's the first word, but it is not a word.... oh no, it's a doodle way up on top of the left hand margin. It is a piece of meaningless scribble, and he's signed his name underneath it... oh dear, what a disappointing start, but he is off again and he goes the first word of Thomas Hardy's new novel, at 10:35 on this very lovely morning, it's three letters it's the definite article and it's THE, Dennis

Dennis (Graham Chapman): Well, this is true to form; no surprises there. He started five of his eleven novels to date with the definite article. We've had two of them with 'it', there's been one 'but', two 'at's, one 'on' and a 'Delores'. Oh, that, of course, was never published.

2nd Announcer: I'm sorry to interrupt you there, Dennis, but he's crossed it out. Thomas Hardy on the first day of his new novel has crossed out the only word he has written so far and he's gazing off into space....Ohh! Oh dear, he's signed his name again.

Dennis: It looks like Tess of the d'Urbervilles all over again.

2nd Announcer: But he's..No..he's down again and writing, Dennis. He's written THE again, he's crossed it out again and he has written A and there is a second word coming up straight away, it's SAT, a sat, doesn't make sense, a sat, a Saturday, it is a SATURDAY and the crowd are loving it. They're really enjoying this novel and it's AFTERNOON, a Saturday afternoon, is a confident beginning and he is straight on to the next word and it's IN, a Saturday afternoon, IN, in, in,...no, NOVEMBER, November's spelt wrong, he has left out the second E, but he's not going back! It looks as though he is going for the sentence and it is the first verb coming up, the first verb of the novel and it's WAS, and the crowd are going wild! A Saturday afternoon in November was, and a long word here , appro, is it

approval, no, it's APPROACHING, a Saturday afternoon in November was approaching and he has done the definite article THE again and he is writing fluently, easily with flowing strokes of the pen as he comes up to the middle of this first sentence and with this eleventh novel well underway and the prospect of a good day's writing ahead, back to the studio.