

# Figure out Your Creative Style

by Mathangi Subramanian

Take this quiz and find out what kind of creative you are - and keep in mind that as our lives change, our process does too!

## 1. How much time do you have to yourself?

- a. Time? Who's she? Never met her.
- b. I'm pretty busy, but I can scrape together a few hours here and there.
- c. Despite all my obligations, I have a predictable schedule. It isn't always easy, but I can find time if I need it.

## 2. How often do you have time to yourself?

- a. Hardly ever!
- b. Maybe once or twice a week, depending on whether my boss is in a good mood / my partner is in a good mood / the babysitter doesn't cancel.
- c. Every day! My sanity depends on it.

## 3. When you engage in creative work, how long can you focus on it?

- a. Five minutes here and there? But even that feels hard sometimes.
- b. When I have the time, I have a ridiculous attention span. I can work for hours and hours without stopping.
- c. 1-2 hours if I plan ahead, but then I get tired or have to start my day.

## 4. What's your workspace like?

- a. It's a shared space like a kitchen table.
- b. I love to be creative in public spaces.
- c. I have a dedicated workspace. (It might just be a tiny corner, but nobody else uses it but me!)

## 5. What kind of projects are you working on now?

- a. Short stuff that I can finish quickly or pick up easily.
- b. Some bigger projects and some smaller projects - I like to try everything!
- c. A single long term project. I like to focus.

## If you got mostly A's, you're in your Lucille Clifton era

Lucille Clifton was a single mom who wrote her poems at the kitchen table surrounded by her children and anyone else who stopped by. If you're in your Clifton era, you might want to focus on short, finite projects that will give you a sense of satisfaction. (I went through a stage like this from 2020-2022, and basically spent the whole time learning how to write and pitch a personal essay - and I published my first humor piece, which was a long time bucket list item!) Even if you only have five or ten minutes at time, use them - especially if you know that tiny burst of creativity will make you happy! Most importantly, don't beat yourself up: just because you're not creating on a regular, robust schedule doesn't mean that you or your art is less legitimate than people who do.

## If you got mostly B's, you're in your Roxane Gay era

Fierce, fat, feminist Roxane Gay is a powerhouse of truth on and off the page. She's incredibly versatile, and her work includes memoir, fiction, and even comic books. On social media, she's advises writers not to write daily, but to write consistently. If you're in your Gay era, you might be neurodivergent and / or you might have a schedule where you can only create on certain days when you have childcare and / or a break from your job. If you want to be intentional about your schedule, try to reserve one day a week where you can create for 4-5 hours - whether that's at home or in a coffee shop. Another option is to take solo trips dedicated to creativity. (I do this! Once a year I either house sit or use hotel points to spend a weekend away from my family and just write!) Most importantly, don't beat yourself up for not writing every day. Your style requires a lot of emotional energy, which means you need your time off!

## If you got mostly C's, you're in your Toni Morrison era

Ah, Toni Morrison, the best writer who ever lived. (This is fact, not opinion, I WILL FIGHT YOU). Every day, she woke up before sunrise and wrote while her children slept. If you're in your Morrison era, then a) you are incredible (I have NEVER sustained a daily writing practice), and b) it's time to treat yourself. Create a dedicated workspace - even if it's just a table in a corner - decorate it with inspiring works of art, and stock it with the best versions of the supplies you need (that you can afford). Also, don't feel obligated to write in the mornings: pick a time that works for you, like lunch breaks or late nights. If you can, get help with things like cooking, cleaning, and childcare so you have some time to rest in between your creative time and all your other obligations. Most importantly, lean into the joy of your creative practice - what a treat to create every day!