



Share Your Work!

AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF MEETINGS, group members will have collected quite a few stories and may be ready to share them with family or community members. There are many ways to share your collection: organize a public reading, publish an anthology, submit stories to local newspapers, or create an exhibit. These and other ideas are included in this chapter, but the possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

Public Readings by Participants

Public readings give group members the opportunity to share their best stories with your community. If your group has published an anthology (see below), readings are a way to publicize it and sell copies. Readings also give the community an opportunity to see what your group has to offer—you may get some new members. I joined my first memoir-writing group after attending one of their readings.

Some things to consider when conducting a public reading:

- ✍ Of course, not everyone may wish to read publicly—that is okay.
- ✍ Ask readers to choose stories that represent their best work and that they will enjoy sharing.
- ✍ Rehearse. Spend a few sessions before the reading having members stand up to read their stories aloud—at least once using a microphone.
- ✍ Yes, *do* use a microphone—even if members don't want to. Some audience members may be elderly and will appreciate the extra volume.
- ✍ Send press releases to local newspapers and newsletters. Put up posters. Prepare special invitations for members to give to friends and family.

Stories from the past are a glue that bonds the listeners with the teller.

—Vera Rosenbluth, author of *Keeping Family Stories Alive*