



The Sneaky Comp Title Test For Memoir Writers

- Can you name five competitive titles for your memoir? You are allowed to do research for this question. It's an open-internet test.
 - *If you're able to do this with all five titles, give yourself 30 points. If you can do it for three, give yourself 20. If you can do it for one, give yourself 10 points.*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

- Can you argue WHY these titles belong on a list with your book? What are they saying to your ideal reader? What point are they making that your reader needs to hear?

- *If you can do this with all five titles, give yourself 30 points. If you can do it for three, give yourself 20 points. If you can do it for one title, give yourself 10 points.*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

- Can you clearly explain what your book will add to the conversation these other books have started? How does your book fit into the mix? Why would your ideal reader care?

- *If you can do this with all five titles, give yourself 40 points. If you can do it for three, give yourself 20 points. If you can do it for one title, give yourself 10 points.*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Score Yourself

- **100 points.** Woo hoo!!! The odds are good your book is commercially viable. You are ready to develop a book proposal and start making a plan to pitch to agents, hybrid publishers, university or small presses, or to self-publish. Check out my book [*Blueprint for a Memoir: How to Write a Memoir for the Marketplace*](#) for step-by-step on how to develop a book proposal.
- **60 to 100 points.** You got this! You're doing all the right thinking to position your book for the marketplace. Keep working to understand the universe your book will be born into. Read other memoirs, read reviews of other memoirs, and spend time at the bookstore seeing what's on the shelf.
- **30 to 60 points.** Nice work! You know how to think about comp titles and your ideal reader. As you work on your memoir, continue to orient toward your reader and what they need; that mindset will help you prepare for the marketplace. *Blueprint for a Memoir* will help you through this phase.
- **< 30 points.** You may be at the beginning of your memoir-writing journey and just starting to understand your story for yourself; it might not yet be time to consider the reader and the marketplace, which is fine. If this is you, stay the course!

- You may not be writing for anyone else, which is also fine. There are many excellent reasons to write a memoir besides publication. Own your intention and do what is best for you and your book.
- You may think you are writing for other people but you haven't done the work you need to do to make sure your book is commercially viable. Get honest with yourself about your story and your intentions, and if you need to take a fresh look, do it before you approach the marketplace.