

How to Write a Book: Writing Questions Answered

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You love to write and want to write a book, but you can't get started. This article answers questions that plague even experienced writers.

Writing Questions Answered

When I started writing, I had lots of writing questions and no one to ask. I didn't even have a computer to search my questions, so I was up a creek without a paddle. I don't want you to have to learn that way. If you have any writing questions, please feel free to write me. My address is below the article.

In the meantime, let this guide you:

1. What is the first step in developing a story?

Ans: This won't be the answer you find most places. Plunge your mind into the middle anti-climax scene and develop your story around it. This way, you will know what characters you will need and where the story is going. Next, decide on the end of the story. After you decide on both of these, decide what kind of lead-in you need, and voila! You have a complete story.

Let's do one for practice: First - the middle. A detective goes home to find his wife dead and his daughter kidnapped. The end must be happy, and the detective is the hero. He will nab the killer and rescue his daughter. Now that we know the middle and the end of the story, what would you write as the beginning? Write to me and tell me your idea.

2. What is a plot?

Ans: The plot is, in essence, what the middle scene is about.

3. What is a theme?

Ans: The theme is what the overall story is about. It could be about a man changing his ways or about a miser (like Scrooge) learning to be kind and generous.

4. What is style?

Ans: Style is how you phrase your thoughts. It is how you express the character in dialog. In essence, your style is you-

how you look at things, the way you talk, the way you think; your style is how your mind processes your thoughts and spits them out on the printed page.

5. How do I develop my style?

Ans: You don't. Let your style develop itself. You do that by reading everything you can get your hands on and writing stories. As a young writer, it doesn't matter if your stories are good or not. You're developing your style! You're learning how to string your words together in the way that typifies you.

Eventually you will borrow a little from this author and a little from that, and you will flavor the mix with your own experiences, concepts, and fantasies, and out will pop your own style. Your style will change as you learn more, add more, and write more, but your style will always be you.

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Deborah Owen, founder of <http://www.creativewritinginstitute.com> - the only fully mentored writing school. Have your own private tutor at bargain basement prices. To receive our newsletter or a free evaluation of your writing, write to deborahowen@cwinst.com