The Creative Writing Handbook

The Creative Writing Handbook

*Techniques for New
Writers*

Edited by
JOHN SINGLETON and
MARY LUCKHURST

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How to Use This Book

If you are following a creative writing course, or belong to a creative writing group or are writing on your own you will find this book essential reading. It's about learning the craft of writing. It is not a textbook. Neither is it a 'How To' book. It doesn't *tell* you what to do. We don't believe in prefabricated writing assembled from step-by-step instructions.

What we do believe is that the imagination drives writing and that it is most effective when harnessed to craft. We feel writers come to good writing in different ways but the best way to improve is by constant practice; by trying out and experimenting with new forms and strategies; by rewriting. So what this book offers is not writing-by-numbers but a whole variety of suggestions and ideas for every kind of writing you can imagine. It's a rich resource book packed with possibilities.

Most taught creative writing goes on in practical group sessions. This book shows you how to get the best out of such workshops and how to build on that experience by developing your writing in your own time.

We believe good readers make good writers so we have recommended hundreds of books and authors for you to select, browse through and learn from. Accomplished writers read as well as write because they've learnt their craft by imitating the good practice of others. Writing is something you can catch through reading.

The Handbook is sequenced and the chapters take you through each stage of the writing process from first acquiring basic skills with words, finding ideas and developing

them through different forms and genres to the final crafting stages of revision and editing. But don't feel you have to work your way through it systematically. Pick and mix. Select from it what appeals. Adapt the material to suit your needs.

We feel strongly that writers should not work in intellectual isolation. So, Chapter 1 considers some general issues of practice and theory and puts writing in a broad cultural, historical and ideological context. Each of the subsequent chapters starts with a short discussion on aspects of language and genre and is followed by a workshop section where up to ten workshops are described in detail. You can use them to structure your own course with a small group of friends or follow them as part of a taught school, university or community writing programme. The third and final section of each chapter offers you a whole range of writing suggestions to try out in your own time. Some of them could be workshopped as well. The point is you use the book the way you want.