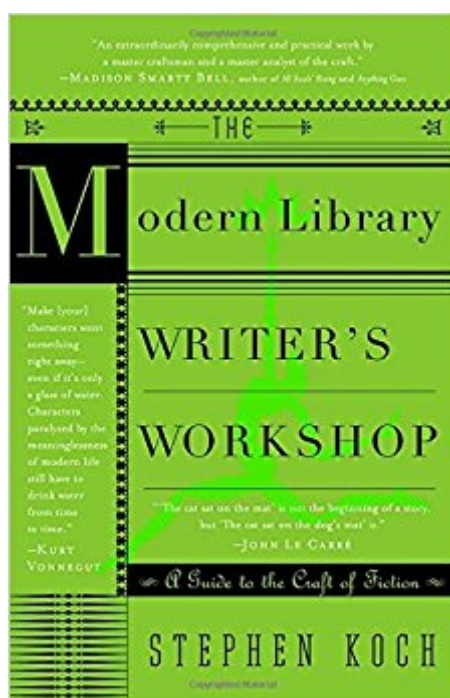


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# The Modern Library Writer's Workshop: A Guide To The Craft Of Fiction (Modern Library Paperbacks)



## Synopsis

“Make [your] characters want something right away—even if it’s only a glass of water. Characters paralyzed by the meaninglessness of modern life still have to drink water from time to time.” —Kurt Vonnegut

The cat sat on the mat is not the beginning of a story, but the cat sat on the dog’s mat is.

John Le Carr© Nothing is more inspiring for a beginning writer than listening to masters of the craft talk about the writing life. But if you can’t get Vladimir Nabokov, Virginia Woolf, and Gabriel Garcia Márquez together at the Algonquin, The Modern Library Writer’s Workshop gives you the next best thing. Stephen Koch, former chair of Columbia University’s graduate creative writing program, presents a unique guide to the craft of fiction. Along with his own lucid observations and commonsense techniques, he weaves together wisdom, advice, and inspiring commentary from some of our greatest writers. Taking you from the moment of inspiration (keep a notebook with you at all times), to writing a first draft (do it quickly! you can always revise later), to figuring out a plot (plot always serves the story, not vice versa), Koch is a benevolent mentor, glad to dispense sound advice when you need it most. The Modern Library Writer’s Workshop belongs on every writer’s shelf, to be picked up and pored over for those moments when the muse needs a little help finding her way.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There's no shortage of writing guides available, but Koch's is especially valuable as it collects the comments and thoughts of such writers as Anthony Trollope, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and Stephen King, in addition to his own sage advice. Koch, who taught at Columbia University's writing program, divides his book into the stages of the writing process. "Begin right now," he urges his readers. He goes over the basics, such as the importance of reading, the difficulty of finding time to write, and the importance of plot, with the added bonus of backing quotes from writers who have been around the block and found success. Learning that Toni Morrison, too, had to balance work and writing, or that Ray Bradbury writes six or seven drafts of each of his stories, is bound to buoy struggling writers. One thing he avoids is talking about the difficulties of a writer's life--a student sagely advised him to leave that to everyone else. Koch's tone is both encouraging and forthright, and his accessible, friendly guide will be essential for aspiring writers. Kristine Huntley

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"An extraordinarily comprehensive and practical work by a master craftsman and a master analyst of the craft."  
•Madison Smartt Bell, author of All Souls Rising and Anything Goes  
"Stephen Koch was my teacher long ago. Now he is everyone's teacher, indelibly. This is a book not just for the beginning writer but for every writer."  
•Martha McPhee, author of the National Book Award nominee Gorgeous Lies  
"The Modern Library Writer's Workshop is a treasure trove of wisdom, both immensely practical and philosophical, entertaining and thought-provoking. Koch takes us inside the writing process, and it is impossible not to emerge transformed."  
•Joanna Hershon, author of Swimming

Reading just the first chapter of this book caught my attention and encouraged me to read on. The first chapter's tips on writing about what you know, where to find your story, inventing your story, etc., peeked my interest. It's a well written book with sentences that flow easily from one topic to another on what to think about and how to prepare for your writings, no matter what you choose to write. I look forward to reading the next chapters!

Bloody Good! Takes the elements of fiction writing apart and puts them back together in coherent form. Forces one to consider all facets of creating fiction. Lot of insights from successful writers woven into his narrative...often in in accord with one another. My copy could not be resold as it totally defaced with highlighter. But I accept that it ain't gonna make me the next Henry Jame....

It's a difficult thing wading through the myriad of writing books and most are all saying the same thing. This is a collection of quotes and advice from other writers and I think the most helpful resource to a writer. I'm currently referring to it as the Bible of writing. It is thick with knowledge and almost every sentence offers encouragement and enlightenment. I do my devotions and read from it every morning before I begin my writing day. If you're looking for a good book to help you come up with a plot or develop characters (I'm not sure there is one), look elsewhere. If you ever wished you could have hundreds (it seems like hundreds) of writers telling you what has worked for them, providing you with guidance and options for getting into a groove, buy this book.

The art of how to write. How to write short stories. How to write a novel. It's all here. This is one of the best learning tools I have purchased. A must read for authors at all levels.

The best book I've studied on the subject so far. Brings in his own experience, and summarizes the best of the other books on the subject.

Recommended by WP; the beginning of the book spoke to me and was very encouraging. Then I hit the dry parts about structure which always kills my brain, personally. Which is My Brain, my personal brain thing. Still struggling to get through it.

I bought this as a textbook for an online short story class I am taking. It is a very good textbook for writers of both short stories and novels. I have learned a lot from this book. Definitely a recommended read!

This is the best craft book, EVER, for writers. Walks with you through all the elements (practical and psychological) that you need to get the job done.

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