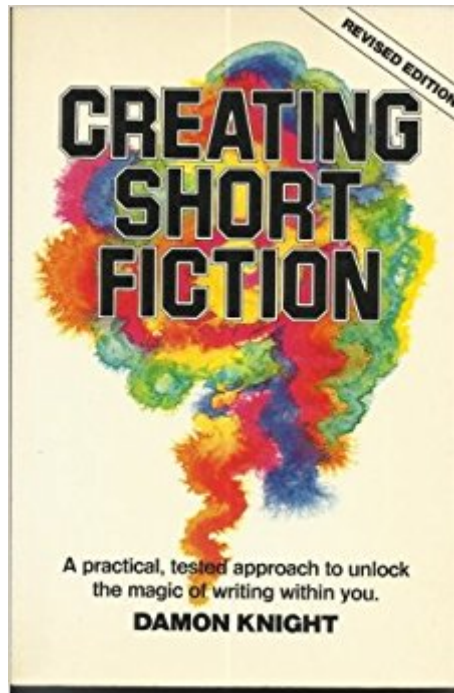




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# Creating Short Fiction



## Synopsis

Distilled from decades of teaching and practice, this book offers clear and direct advice on structure, pacing, dialogue, getting ideas, working with the unconscious, and more. Newly revised and expanded for this Third Edition, *Creating Short Fiction* is a popular and widely trusted guide to writing short stories of originality, durability, and quality. Celebrated short-story author and writing instructor Knight also includes many examples and exercises that have been effective in classrooms and workshops everywhere. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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"To those who hunger to be writers I commend this book without reservation."--Harlan Ellison "What Knight doesn't know about writing the short story cannot be put into expository prose anyway."--Algis Budrys "Knight is one of the preeminent teachers of writing in this country. [This book] should be considered essential for all beginning writers . . . not to mention a few others, who've forgotten the valuable information it contains."--Lucius Shepard, author of "The Jaguar Hunter""To those who hunger to be writers I commend this book without reservation."--Harlan Ellison "What Knight doesn't know about writing the short story cannot be put into expository prose anyway."--Algis Budrys "Knight is one of the preeminent teachers of writing in this country. [This book] should be considered essential for all beginning writers . . . not to mention a few others, who've forgotten the valuable information it contains."--Lucius Shepard, author of The Jaguar

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Distilled from decades of teaching and practice, 'Creating Short Fiction' offers no-nonsense advice on structure, pacing, dialogue, getting ideas, and much more. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

CREATING SHORT FICTION by Damon Knight is a foundational, 101-level, instruction book that you've probably been looking for, especially if you are interested in writing genre fiction. This book will teach you to write better short stories and get them sold. For those who are unfamiliar with Knight, he was an author, an editor, and a critic. Knight was a Hugo Award winner, founder of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America (SFWA), cofounder of the Milford Writer's Workshop, and cofounder of the Clarion Writers Workshop. SFWA's Grand Master Award for lifetime achievement was renamed after him. In other words, Knight the real deal. CREATING SHORT FICTION begins by describing the four stages of a writer's development. If you are not yet making sales, this list gives you an idea of how close you are. Knight then works through all the elements of writing a short story, so that you may progress from one stage to the next. He teaches developing writers how to select and develop ideas, offering a checklist of all the elements a story must contain for it to be able to stand under its own weight. Knight then provides an annotated version of one of his short stories as an introduction behind the curtain, to see those elements at work. The remainder of CREATING SHORT FICTION helps writers decide how to begin a story; how to select and develop a character, his motivation, and his viewpoint; how to maintain a reader's attention; and how to finish a story. Always the good teacher, Knight then concludes his book by offering some advice on what writers should expect as their career develops, offering tips and highlighting traps to avoid. Nearly every page of CREATING SHORT FICTION contains great advice that is all but guaranteed to improve the quality of your short stories. Do not mistake its brevity for lack of substance. It is a powerful tool that will reward re-reading, so long as you put Knight's advice to work.

I found this book to be a succinct, balanced and practical guide to writing fiction. Damon Knight writes with the authority of a dedicated and accomplished author. The book offers practical exercises that complement the theory. Although most parts of the book are clear, I felt that the section on point of view lacked clarity. I enjoyed the passages about the life of a professional author, such as ways to cope with slumps and writers' block. Damon Knight even offers suggestions about spouse selection for an author. The writing advice is generally timeless; however, some sections reflect the passage of time: recommendations of traditional print reference materials (such as a dictionary and encyclopedia set) and the merits of electronic versus manual typewriters. There is even a section on an emerging technology: word processors. I recommend the book to all aspiring authors.

For me this book is boring throughout most of it and spent my time wondering when it would actually get to the part I purchased it for. The last quarter of the book is when the stuff that I was interested in reading actually came into it.

Damon Knight helped me figure out how to tell a better story. I may not have the talent to be a great writer but I am definitely better than I was.

I Love how he describes the Stages the New Writer Goes through!!!! So enlightening and encouraging. I'm Normal, lol.

I've been writing non-fiction professionally and recreationally for several decades, but fiction was always a bit of a puzzle. I looked at a number of fiction writing guides, but I kept hearing working writers say that THIS was the book that really told you how to write. Damon Knight came out of the great era of fiction writing, a time when there were dozens of popular magazines buying short fiction. There was Colliers, the Saturday Even Post, and of course the Sci-Fi mags like Amazing Stories. Knight is best known as a sci-fi writer, but his lessons apply to any genre. Knight was writing long before the popularity of MFA creative writing programs, and he's not interested in exploring new forms, or extended navel gazing, or challenging the reader's preconceptions, or their patience. He's here to tell you how to tell a story that will interest the reader, and he does that very well.

I just started writing fiction stories in 2008. I've never gone deep into the subject of 'writing' in

general. I am currently studying: Grammar, Vocabulary, Style, ect....This book is the BEST book I've read to this date! I keep it next to me daily, and I've read it now at least a couple dozen times. When I get nervous; especially creatively... I break open this book, and read one chapter. The outcome: THOUGHTS FLOWING FROM MY HEART TO MY BLOOD TO MY VEINS TO MY HAND; DIRECTLY INTO MY PEN, AND ONTO THE PAGE!! I do still write ALL my stories out using the 'pen to paper' method. I think typing them directly into an electronic device... ? I have no words as to how I feel about this method, but whatever works for the writer. There is only ONE other book that has hit me as hard and deep as this very book; I will mention it here; "Writing Down the Bones" by: Natalie Goldberg. Now, she does mention poems a lot. Nonetheless, if you replace the word poem, with story, it will all make perfect sense. In closing: My writing studio is decorated on either side with orange sticky notes; they all contain direct quotes from this book: "Creating Short Fiction" and "Writing Down the Bones" Not only do these books instruct/teach; they also inspire, and break writer's block! Trust me; I had writer's block for also three years!!!

The author, for the most part, takes the writer's point of view. There is less of the literary critic's yen for rules and more of the imaginative writer's take on how to get words on paper and rearrange them. He makes the distinction between the literary product and the "popular" story and implicitly favors the latter. I've read several books on the topic and enjoyed this one most of all. Most of the prose demonstrates his ideas about keeping the reader reading.

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