

Learn at Leisure (University of Nottingham)

School of Continuing Education, University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus, Wollaton Road, Nottingham NG8 1BB
tel 0115-951 6526 fax 0115-951 6556

Writing is fun (July). Aims to give confidence to those who are unsure of their creativity, to awaken the imagination of those who have let it fall asleep and to strengthen the resolve of those who are wavering in their writing endeavours. Also examines techniques and rules that transform pieces of writing that please only the author into pieces that others want to read. Uses a combination of workshops, exercises, talks, discussions and readings. Part of the Nottingham University Summer School.

The Old Rectory Adult Education College

Fittleworth, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 1HU
tel/fax (01798) 865306
e-mail oldrectory@mistral.co.uk
web site <http://www3.mistral.co.uk/oldrectory/index.html>

Writing from experience (January). How to record emotion and atmosphere: looks at angles and techniques.

How to be a travel writer (March). Aims to equip students with the skills needed to record travel experiences. Includes practical assignments and individual advice from the tutor.

Write your autobiography (May).

Examines fiction and drama from an autobiographical point of view to help with autobiographical writing.

Write a short, short story (November).

Covers how to write saleable material for the short story market (e.g. *Bella, Best, Chat and Take a Break*). Looks at different styles.

South and Mid Wales Association of Writers

c/o IMC Consulting Group, Denham House, Lambourne Crescent, Cardiff CF4 5ZW
tel (01222) 761170 fax (01222) 761304
Contact Julian Rosser

South and Mid Wales Association of Writers Weekend Course (May). Includes study groups on writing feature articles, stories, novels and children's books, and

how to get published. Open to members of the Association and the general public.

Southern Writers' Conference

Stable House, Home Farm, Coldharbour Lane, Dorking, Surrey RH4 3JG
Contact Lucia White
Venue The Earmley Concourse, Chichester

Southern Writers' Conference (June). Includes a full programme of talks and discussions covering practically every aspect of writing, with some distinguished guest speakers from the literary world. Takes place annually.

Ty Newydd

Ty Newydd, National Creative Writing Centre of Wales, Llanystumdwy, Cricieth, Gwynedd LL52 0LW
tel (01766) 522811 fax (01766) 523095
e-mail tynewydd@diol.pipex.com

Writing and photography (September)

Explores the natural environment around Ty Newydd to inspire writing of any kind and the art of photography.

Poetry and performance (October)

Includes poetry and music, the dramatic monologue and performance poetry. For beginners as well as more practised poets. **The short story (November).** Participants are welcome to bring work in hand. In 2000, 4½-day courses include: fiction poetry; writing for TV, radio; theatre for children; storytelling; poetry and sculpture.

Urchfont Manor College

Urchfont, Devizes, Wilt. SN10 4RG
tel (01380) 840495 fax (01380) 840005
Writing for pleasure (November).

Travel writing (April).

Creative writing workshop (April).

Creative writing (October).

Wedgwood Memorial College

Station Road, Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent ST6 9PT
tel (01782) 372105/373427 fax (01782) 372104
Contact college for details.

Writers' Summer School, Swanwick

Contact Brenda Courtie, The Rectory, High Street, Brighthelm, Northants NN7 3BJ
tel (07050) 630949
Venue The Hayes, Swanwick, Derbyshire

One-week summer school held in August. Informal talks and discussion groups, forums, panels, quizzes and competitions. For beginners and published authors.

Preparing and submitting a typescript

A well-presented typescript will make a good impression on the publisher's reader. Michael Legat gives below guidelines on how best to present your typescript.

A well-presented typescript (sometimes still called a manuscript) or printout is not only easier for the publisher's reader to read, but indicates a professional attitude on the part of the author. Most material for potential publication is nowadays produced on a word processor (see PCs or writers on page 553), but work produced on a typewriter is entirely acceptable. On the other hand, most publishers refuse even to consider handwritten typescripts and no publisher will accept them in final copy.

Presentation

Great typescript is essential not only to make a good impression but also for the publisher's copy editor to work on. Keep your corrections to the typescript to a minimum, and retype any pages which look messy.

Margins of at least 3cm on all sides (left, right, top and bottom) are essential to accommodate editorial amendments and instructions from the copy editor or designer to the typesetter. Use the same margins throughout, so that the type on one page is of the same width and so on, except at the beginning and end of chapters, there will be the same number of lines on each page. Chapters should always begin on a new page. If you use a word processor, do not use its facility for shifting the type on the right hand side of the page, on the left side only.

Set out the text in double spacing, i.e. a line of space between two lines of text. This will allow room for any last minute changes you may want to make

and for the copy editor's amendments. Indent the first line of each paragraph a few spaces and do not leave a blank line between paragraphs unless you want to indicate a change of subject, scene, time or viewpoint. Be as consistent as possible in your choice of variant spellings, capitalisation, use of sub-headings, etc. For example, use either -ise or -ize suffixes consistently throughout.

Number the pages (or 'folios', as publishers prefer to call them) straight through from beginning to end – don't start each chapter at folio 1. If you need to include an extra folio after, say, folio 27, call it folio 27a and write at the foot of folio 27: 'Folio 27a follows'. Then write at the foot of 27a: 'Folio 28 follows'. Don't do this too often or you will confuse and irritate your readers.

Create a front page (unnumbered) for your typescript. Type the title of the book about halfway down the page, with your name (or pen name) immediately beneath. Type your name and address in the bottom left hand corner. It is worth including your name and address on the last folio too, in case the first folio becomes detached.

Produce your finished material on standard A4 paper whether you use a type-

Manuscript checklist

- Allow generous margins
- Use double spacing
- Number each folio
- Include a front page
- Keep a duplicate of the manuscript

writer or a word processor and linked printer (in the latter case do not use continuous listing paper), and use one side of the paper only.

Fastening the typescript together

Publishers prefer to handle each folio separately, so do not use a binder which will make this impossible; ring binders are just about acceptable, but it is best to place the typescript in a cardboard envelope folder which will obviate the need for pins (which scratch), paperclips (which pick up other papers from a busy editor's desk) or staples (which make it awkward to read the typescript). Do not use plastic folders, as they tend to slip when placed in a pile, and both editors and agents keep typescripts piled on their desks.

Word count

The length of a book is referred to by publishers as 'the extent'. You will need to know the approximate number of words in your book when you send out letters asking if you may submit it for a publisher's consideration. It is not essential to indicate the word count on the typescript but there is no harm in adding the information on the first folio. Use the word count facility on your word processor, or simply count the number of words on a few full pages to get an average and then multiply that figure by the number of pages in the typescript.

Submitting your typescript

Choosing the right publisher

You will save time and postage if you check first that you are sending your typescript to a publisher who will consider it. Publishers specialise – it is no use sending your romantic novel to a firm which publishes fiction but only of the most highbrow, 'literary' genre, and even less use to send it to a firm which publishes no fiction at all. (For an index of *Publishers of fiction* see page 222.) By studying

entries in the *Yearbook*, examining publishers' lists of publications, or by looking in the relevant sections of libraries and bookshops, you will find the names of publishers who might be interested in seeing your work, including the paperback houses; remember, though, that paperback publishers are often linked to a hardcover firm (the *Yearbook* gives details of these relationships), and you should submit your material to one or other of them, but not both, because they work closely together.

It is important to make the right approach to a publisher. Many publishers will not accept unsolicited material, and others are willing to consider submissions only from an agent (listings of literary agents start on page 346), and these conditions are usually indicated in their entries in the *Yearbook*. It is wise in all cases to enquire first, by letter, whether the publisher would be willing to read your material. There is no point whatsoever in asking for an interview – the publisher will not want to talk to you about the book before reading it.

The preliminary letter

This will save you time, money and possible frustration. Most publishers prefer to see a brief, businesslike preliminary letter together with a synopsis of the book and the first couple of chapters. From this the publisher can judge whether the book will fit the list, in which case you will be asked to send the complete typescript either immediately or when it is completed. This procedure is especially advantageous for non-fiction – most non-fiction books are commissioned as the result of an

Treatment for plays

For plays, use capitals for character names and underline stage directions in red by hand. If a traditional typewriter is employed use red for names of characters, stage directions, etc, and black for dialogue. See also *Presenting scripts for television* and *film* on page 309.

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al submission in the form of a synopsis and specimen chapters.

It is permissible to send your material simultaneously to more than one publisher, provided that you inform each publisher that the book is being considered elsewhere at the same time.

Always enclose return postage, whether in a letter or the typescript itself. Remember too that whilst publishers take every reasonable care of material, they will not accept responsibility for loss or damage while it is in their possession, so it is essential always to keep a copy of your typescript, with all changes to the text incorporated in it.

Waiting for a decision

There is usually a considerable interval between submission and the publisher's decision. Most publishers acknowledge receipt of typescripts; if you do not have one it is advisable to check that your material has arrived. Apart from that, not worth chasing the publisher for a quick decision, which is unlikely to speed the process, unless your book is of a topical nature.

You should hear from the publisher within about two months. During this time the typescript will have been read 'in house' or sent to one or more advisers whose opinions the publisher respects. Acceptable readers' reports may mean that the publisher will immediately accept the typescript (although probably before consulting the production, editorial, subsidiary rights and other department), especially if it fits easily into the current publishing programme and if it is highly saleable. On the other hand, a publisher may hesitate, despite glowing reports, and seek further opinions and more various options before reaching a decision. Publishers want to be sure they will be able to sell their wares profitably, and if they are doubtful of turning the money they will have to invest in the book – probably at least £500 – and making a profit, it will be hard despite the readers' enthusiasm. You have not had a decision after two

months, write either a tactful letter saying 'I don't want to rush you but ...' or, alternatively, request an immediate decision, and be prepared to start again with another publisher.

If your book is rejected, although some publishers may give you their reasons for turning it down, most will not, nor in either case should you expect to be able to discuss the matter further, unless specifically invited to do so. Publishers do not have the time to spend on books and authors which they are not going to publish. If, in the course of rejection, the publisher should be complimentary about your work, you can take the remarks at face value – publishers do not encourage rejected authors unless they mean it.

Illustrations

If illustrations form a large part of your proposed book and you expect to provide them yourself, then they should be included with the typescript. If sending specimen chapters, then you should also include sample illustrations (this applies largely to children's picture books and to travel and technical books). Do not send originals – duplicate photographs, photocopies of line drawings and so on will ensure that little harm is done if illustrations go astray.

In the case of a children's book which you intend to illustrate yourself, obviously one finished piece of artwork is essential, plus photocopies of roughs for the rest (it is not wise to finish all the artwork before acceptance of the book – the publisher will decide on the number of illustrations to be used, and their sizes, which may not be in accordance with your original plan). If you have written a children's story, or the text for a picture book, do not ask a friend to supply the illustrations; the publisher who likes your story may not admire your friend's artwork, and will prefer to find and commission a different artist. Of course, this does not apply when an artist and author work closely together to develop an idea; in that case it is best to start by finding a publisher who likes the artist's work before submitting the story.

See *Writing and the children's book market* on page 252, *Illustrating for children's books* on page 256, and *Children's book publishers and packagers* on page 259.

Travel typescripts should be accompanied by a sketch map to show the area you are writing about, with sufficient detail with which to follow the account.

If the illustrations are not your own artwork or photographs, it is best to establish early on who is responsible for the illustration costs; a seemingly generous advance against royalties might be less attractive if you have to gather the pictures, obtain permission for their use, and foot the bills.

Quotations

It is normally the author's responsibility to obtain and pay for permission to quote written material which is in copyright. Permission should always be sought from the publisher of the quoted work, not from the author. There are no standard fees for quotation: for fashionable modern writers and for the lyrics of popular songs permission may be very costly, but in other cases only a nominal fee is charged. It is permissible to quote a short extract (up to 400 words, or up to 40 lines of a poem, but not more than one quarter of the poem) under a convention known as 'fair dealing', but only for purposes of criticism or review. Fair dealing does not apply to use in anthologies. The source of any quotation must always be fully acknowledged.

Although this is your area of responsibility, you should ask your publisher for advice before embarking on the clearance of permissions for any copyright material, including illustrations.

Proofs

When the publisher accepts your typescript, if you have used a word processor you will probably be asked to supply a copy on disk. The files containing the work should be unformatted plain text –

doing a fancy layout will be a waste of time, as it will be unformatted by the publisher or typesetter. Having the book on disk will save time in production, as well as cutting down the margin for error creeping into the text.

As the author you should see the finalised copy of the typescript before it goes to the typesetter. This is really your last chance to pick up any typing errors which have previously been missed, to make any other changes, and to approve or challenge any amendments made by the publisher's copy editor. This applies also to highly illustrated books, such as children's or 'coffee table' books, on which the designer and editor will have worked in tandem to marry the text and the pictures on each page, sometimes modifying the text to produce a satisfactory end result.

After seeing the finalised copy, you may be sent either a computer printout which has had all the last minute amendments incorporated, or galley proofs or page proofs. The printout will bear no resemblance to the finished book, but will contain everything that will appear in the book; galley proofs, produced by the typesetter, are columns of continuous text, page proofs have been made up into pages, including page numbers, headings, illustrations, and so on.

Corrections can be made at any of these stages (see *Correcting proofs* on page 584 for the conventional proof-correcting marks), but it is a costly business, especially where page proofs are concerned. You will probably have signed a contract undertaking to pay the cost of correction (other than printer's errors) over, say, 15% of the cost of composition. This does not mean that you can change 10 or 15 lines in every hundred – even small changes are very expensive – but you are entitled of course to correct any errors made by the printer or typesetter.

Michael Legat became a full-time writer after a long and successful publishing career. He is the author of a number of highly regarded books on publishing and writing.

Editorial, literary and production services

The following specialists offer a wide variety of services to writers (both new and established), to publishers, journalists and others. Services include advice on manuscripts, editing and book production, indexing, translation, research and writing. For an index of the services offered here, see page 580.

A Feature Factory' Editorial Services

Incorporating Academic Projects)
St Andrews Court, 53 Yarmouth Road,
Norwich NR7 0EW
tel (01603) 435229 mobile (07970) 368228
editors Dr Dennis Chaplin, Alexandra Ross
Produces company magazines, brochures,
company histories, press releases/features
(including same-day turnaround),
advertisements, research briefs for
biographies, research briefs for
press/broadcasting, backgrounders, writing
and research tuition, DTP. Extra
researchers often needed for projects.

Abbey Writing Services

Witchon Cottage, Holcombe Rogus, Wellington,
Somerset TA21 0PT
tel/fax (01823) 672762
email John.McIlwain@virgin.net
Director John McIlwain

Comprehensive non-fiction writing, professional management and editorial service. Educational consultants. Lexicography. Founded 1989.

Academic File

Association with The Centre for Near East
and Asia Research – NEAR)
Wallorton Gardens, PO Box 13666,
London SW14 8WF
tel/fax 0181-392 1122 fax 0181-392 1422
website <http://www.eagroup.com>
Director Sajid Rizvi

Research, advisory and consultancy services related to politics, economics and societies of the Near and Middle East, Asia and North Africa and related issues in Europe. Risk analysis, editorial assessment, editing and publishing design and production. Founded 1985.

Advice and Criticism Service

1 Beechwood Court, The Street, Sydenstone,
King's Lynn, Norfolk PE31 8TR
tel (01485) 578594 fax (01485) 578138
e-mail hilaryjohnson.demon.co.uk
web site <http://www.hilaryjohnson.demon.co.uk>
Contact Hilary Johnson

Authors' consultant: detailed and constructive assessment of typescripts/practical advice regarding publication. Recent organiser of Romantic Novelists' Association's New Writers' Scheme and publishers' reader. Specialities: crime/thrillers/popular women's fiction.

Alpha Word Power

3 Bluecoat Buildings, Claypath, Durham DH1 1RF
tel 0191-384 7219 fax 0191-384 3767
e-mail p.g.h@btinternet.com
web site <http://www.btinternet.com/~p.g.h/awp.htm>

Publishing services: camera-ready copy, word processing, text from and/or to disk, desk editing, proofreading, liaison with printers/binders/graphic design; full secretarial services including audio-typing; business services. Specialises in versatility and speed of turnaround. Founded 1985.

Lucia Alvarez de Toledo MTT, MTG, MTL

138a Melrose Avenue, London NW2 4JX
tel 0181-450 5344 fax 0181-452 9005
e-mail lucifer@ladet.demon.co.uk

Research, interpreting, translation, subtitles, voice-overs, proofreading, editing, copy-writing, into/from English, Spanish, French, Italian. Founded 1979.

Amolibros

5 Saxon Close, Watchet, Somerset TA23 0BN
tel/fax (01984) 633713
e-mail amolibros@aol.com