

Historical Fiction Writing - A Practical Guide and Tool-kit

Myfanwy Cook



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Revised edition, featuring fully interactive table of contents, cross-referencing, links to external websites, downloadable resources, and content/formatting optimised for standard Kindle e-readers.

The purpose of this historical writers' guide and tool-kit is to introduce aspiring historical fiction writers to the skills needed to write both historical novels and short stories. It also provides the opportunity for more experienced writers to revisit these skills, or make the transition from general to historical fiction writing. It is a step by step guide based on activities that provide an opportunity to practise and experiment with the skills and techniques needed to write authentic and satisfying historical fiction, which is both entertaining and engrossing.

This practical handbook is designed to be used sequentially, but as with any good 'tool-kit' each chapter is a complete entity designed to highlight a particular skill or purpose, or writing 'tool' that will enhance your writing skills. Each group of skills that you need has been grouped together under seven main headings. The activities in each chapter focus on one aspect of the craft of writing historical fiction and can be used independently to clarify a particular problem or to reinforce the techniques and suggestions you are introduced to in the chapter. The objective of this how to write creative fiction guide is to provide you with the tools that that you will need to write your own work of historical fiction in an historical subgenre of your choice such as historical crime fiction.

The tips and suggestions which have been generously contributed to this project sometimes complement and sometimes contradict the activities provided. They provide a fascinating glimpse into the way some of the most noteworthy and popular historical fiction writers and professionals within the field view their craft and the genre.

The activities are based on the innovative workshop activities designed and used successfully by Myfanwy Cook (www.myfanwycook.com) over the past 15 years. Myfanwy has had over one hundred short stories published both in the UK and Australia. She has won national prizes and had her stories broadcast on the radio. Currently she is features editor of the Historical Novel Society's HNR magazine (www.historicalnovelsociety.org).

Myfanwy believes that mastering the art of writing is like becoming an apprentice. It is a craft and demands certain practical skills alongside imagination, creative flair, the desire to write and above all a love and commitment to writing. The workshops that she's run have confirmed that what often holds aspiring writers back is their lack of confidence and fear that they lack certain practical skills such as how to write dialogue. What she is constantly amazed about is the richness of the imagination and the heartfelt aspiration to write historical fiction.

It is hoped that this guide book will fill in some of the gaps and act as a tool-kit to provide you the aspiring writer with some of the skills that you haven't yet mastered, but also that you will find it an interesting and useful introduction to the historical fiction writing genre.

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