Menu of Resources on Writing and Story

I. **Craft**
II. **Fantasy Specific**
III. **Christianity, Philosophy, Self-Care, Memoir**
IV. **Articles**

Since I linked all the books for easy access, I went ahead and used my Amazon Affiliate link, so if you want to support me with a few cents, I will earn money from your purchases without extra cost to you. (Monica Olsen)

I. Craft

The Marshall Plan for Novel Writing: Everything You Need to Know—From Plot to Published by Evan Marshall

Techniques of the Selling Writer by Dwight V. Swain - don't let the title fool you! This book is not about making money; it's about craft, and one of the most thorough and common sensical approaches I've read, recommended to me by my writing teacher, Nicholas Kotar. (MO)

Mystery and Manners by Flannery O'Connor - it's AMAZING, but it is a compilation of all her essays and speeches ever, so it's not all about writing. Two great essays are *"The Nature and Aim of Fiction" and "Writing Short Stories" which you can listen to here* part I and part II. (MO)

Steering The Craft: A Twenty-First-Century Guide to Sailing the Sea of Story by Ursula LeGuin - Truly a great book of writing exercises. (MO)

A Swim in a Pond in the Rain: In Which Four Russians Give a Master Class on Writing, Reading, and Life by George Saunders - Cool concept: he walks through Russian short stories and points out how the writers did various bits of craft. Content note: he does use some language and one chapter has some sexual examples. (MO)

Fight Write by Carla Hoch - recommended to me & I haven't read it yet but can't wait! (MO)

The Making of a Story: A Norton Guide to Creative Writing by Alice LaPlante (my other writing teacher, Jonathan Rogers, recommends)

A Pencil Grows in Kentucky: Creative Writing Lessons, Stories of Appalachian Women, and Poetry from Kentucky Jacqueline Jane Hamilton - super cool professor works with Appalachian girls to empower them as writers. She was at my table at the Novel Marketing Conference and she was delightful! (MO)

How to Write a Story by Lee Roddy (an IEW book) - excellent nuts and bolts foundational writing practice, this textbook is aimed at younger writers but a good refresher for anyone. (MO)

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CAVEAT FOR CRAFT TITLES BELOW - I haven't read most of them yet, but I've been collecting recommended resources appropriate for my teen Creative Writing students. Some of these are recommendations by the Author Media community and some by the Habit community.

Storyworld First by Jill Williamson - world building

Rocket Writers - A Guide to Launching into the Author Space for Storytellers Under 18 by Kristen Gwen

Creating Character Arcs and *Structuring Your Novel* by KM Weiland - honestly, the *Techniques of a Selling Writer* does this better, but you might still want to read if you are voracious and want all the povs (MO)

Plot Skeleton by Angela Hunt

The Novel Matrix by Brad Pauquette *(free Kindle Unlimited)*

The Irresistible Novel by Jeff Gerke

How to Edit Your Novel by Karin Beery (Amazon UK)

Write Your First Novel by Steve Laub

The Happy Writer by Marissa Meyers *(free Kindle Unlimited)*

Amena's Quest Comparative Study Guide by Holli Fry - uses mentor texts so students have a model to look at and better understand a concept. *(written for age 12+) (MO)*

II. Fantasy Specific

Tolkien has some good short essays. The one that comes to mind off the top of my head is "On Fairy Stories" Dn. Nicholas Kotar has done a podcast on this and my favorite literary podcast has also discussed it. (MO)

"The Ethics of Elfland" by G. K. Chesterton (Chapter IV of *Orthodoxy*)

Orson Scott Card - *Writing Fantasy & Science Fiction: How to Create Out-of-This-World Novels and Short Stories* I really like his section on how to begin and end novels based on four types of story structure: MICE (Milieu centered, Investigation centered, Character Centered, and Event centered) (MO)

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III. Christianity, Philosophy, Self-Care, Memoir

"On Stories" by C.S. Lewis

Experiment in Criticism by C.S. Lewis - with accompanying podcast. This one is more about teaching and understanding stories, not about writing them. (MO)

The Educated Imagination by Northrup Frye - great tiny book about teaching literature, which I think writers can appreciate from an inside-out sort of perspective on how literature works. (MO)

Walking on Water: Reflections on Faith and Art by Madeline L'Engle - "...the prime tasks of an artist: to listen, to remain aware, and to respond to creation through one's own art." (MO)

Bird by Bird: Instructions on Writing and Life by Anne Lammott - encouraging about the writer life and dealing it. (MO)

On Writing, A Memoir of the Craft by Stephen King - haven't read it yet but want to; perhaps should go in craft section? (MO)

Adorning the Dark: Thoughts on Community, Calling, and the Mystery of Making by Andrew Peterson - haven't read it but many of my writer friends recommend it.

Notes From The Tilt-A-Whirl: Wide-Eyed Wonder in God's Spoken World by N. D. Wilson - haven't read it but others claim it is amazing for seeing the fantastic world around us. (MO)

Telling the Truth: The Gospel as Tragedy, Comedy, and Fairy Tale by Buechner - haven't read it but it's recommended by other writers. (MO)

From Achilles to Christ: Why Christians Should Read the Pagan Classics by Louis Markos - sitting on my shelf waiting tbr (MO)

IV. Articles

Why the Five Senses are so Critical from my other writing teacher, Jonathan Rogers.

Wood Between the Worlds Press substack - Nicholas Kotar

**Edited by Monica L Olsen, teacher and writer of Cajun Fantasy and Saint Stories*