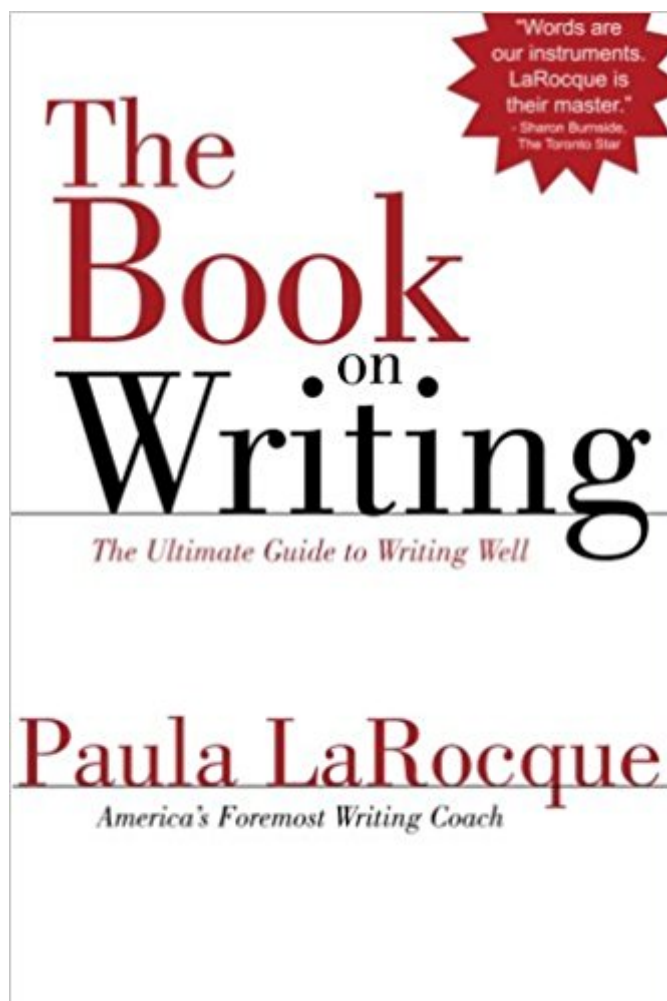


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The Book On Writing: The Ultimate Guide To Writing Well



Synopsis

Youâ™re going to love the way Paula LaRocque teaches in *The Book on Writing*. A celebrated writing coach with a sense of humor and a gentle touch, sheâ™s also a master writer herself with a long and distinguished career in both teaching and practicing the art of writing. *The Book on Writing* contains 25 chapters in three sections: • A dozen essential but easy-to-apply guidelines to good writing, from the importance of clarity to the value of a conversational tone. Paula LaRocque believes learning is easier and more successful when we are not only told but also shown. So her *Book on Writing* is chockfull of actual writing examples that supplement and illustrate principles that apply as naturally to fiction as they do to nonfiction. • How to tell a storyâ”from building suspense, to effective description, to the uses of metaphor and literary devices. Paula LaRocque also deals with the narrative âœengineâ • and the value of the archetype in plotting and characterizationâ”as well as with pace and speed and leveling what she terms writingâ™s âœspeedbumps.â • • A clear and concise handbook that deals with common problems in grammar, usage, punctuation, and styleâ”the kind of problems that often trouble even wordsmiths. The handbook also debunks pesky language âœrulesâ • that are actually myths. *The Book on Writing* is one-stop shopping for writers. Read it once, and youâ™ll be a better writer. Read it often, and youâ™ll be among the best.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

PAULA LaROCQUE Biography Paula LaRocque is a communications consultant who has

conducted writing workshops for hundreds of media, government, academic, and business groups in the United States, Canada, and Europe. She was assistant managing editor, writing coach, and frequent columnist at The Dallas Morning News from 1981 through 2001. She also has been writing consultant for the Associated Press, the European Stars & Stripes, and the Drehscheibe Institute in Germany. From 1971 to 1981, she taught technical writing at Western Michigan University's School of Engineering, and communications/writing at Texas A&M, Southern Methodist, and Texas Christian universities. She has been a columnist for Quill magazine since the early 1990s, airs commentaries on the language for National Public Radio in Dallas, and is author of three non-fiction books and a novel: *The Book on Writing: The Ultimate Guide to Writing Well* *Championship Writing: 50 Ways to Improve Your Writing* *On Words: Insight Into How Our Words Work* and *Don't Chalk Line*, a Ben Gallagher mystery. Her second novel in the Ben Gallagher mystery series, *Monkey See*, will be published in 2013. A member of the Associated Press Managing Editors association from the early 1990s through 2001, Paula was elected to the Board of Directors and appointed an officer. In 2001, the association granted her its singular and highest honor: the Meritorious Service Award for exemplary contribution to journalism. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree Summa Cum Laude and a Master of Arts degree from Western Michigan University. Blog and website: www.paulalarocque.com Paula also can be found on Facebook, Twitter, Goodreads, and LinkedIn.

It's risky to critique a book about how to improve your writing. Everybody will be watching. Best to say it's great and quickly move on to other work. But if you're paying attention, this book will definitely improve your writing. The book is divided into three parts. The first is devoted to making sentences more powerful and descriptive. The second demonstrates ways to do the same to narrative prose. The third, after a brief quiz (perhaps to see if you've been paying attention), refutes some questionable rules and ends with a "style guide", an alphabetical list of certain best practices, and of points likely to cause confusion to some writers. Ms. LaRocque has so many quotations from so many sources it makes me wonder if she can ever just relax and read for pleasure--or is she always ready to note and quote some useful example of either good or bad writing. Nevertheless, her examples are well-chosen and make the book entertaining as well as useful. I wish I had discovered this book my senior year in high school and carefully integrated one chapter a month into my writing skills every month thereafter. The lessons are well presented and one could easily re-read this book from time to time without being bored. Most likely it will remind you of something you had forgotten and your writing will be the better for it. Alas, she did not address the issue of the

apostrophe s ('s) after nouns and names ending in s. A small omission, and something to make the next edition even better.

This book is a gem. Originally published in 2003, I didn't run into anything outdated. It's an excellent resource for learning to write well and for unlearning common grammar myths. I work in both fiction and nonfiction and I would highly recommend it to all writers, no matter what your genre is. Even for people who aren't writers, but have to write as part of their jobs. The chapters cover many topics: sentence structure, use of metaphors, clarity in writing, trusting your readers, and sections on mechanics (i.e. grammar quiz with explanations, a style guide). Truly an invaluable resource, but also written in a style that is both engaging and direct. I couldn't possibly remember all the mechanics that I was embarrassed to be ignorant of. (It's okay, by the way, to end sentences with prepositions and to use adverbs when needed. Isn't that liberating?) But I know where to look for them when I get jammed up. I had many of those WHAT?! moments, for example:--Did you know "decimate" means to destroy a fraction (1/10), rather than to destroy? Apparently, once upon a time when there were uprisings and such, punishment was some times doled out against 1 person in every 10.--The word is "minuscule" not "miniscule"? (I don't think I've ever written it, but I have definitely pronounced it incorrectly. Many times.)(Oh, also, you should really never use parentheses. I'm looking for a support group, no worries.)--The phrase is "spit and image" not "spitting image." Again, not one I've used, but I'm fascinated. Buy this book. Keep it handy.

This is one of the best books on writing (and I've read a lot of them). This book emphasizes clear writing, which, in turn, is about clear thinking, and it delivers on what it promises. The material is cleverly selected and structured. The text is loaded with apt examples. Paula's erudition is astounding, yet she is never snobbish: you are left with the feeling that the author is genuinely interested in talking to her readers. The resource will be useful for both beginners and more advanced readership. Will recommend it to my colleagues and friends.

Ridiculously good. In the first few pages we get info not found in the entirety of other books. I didn't really expect much new info here, but I was honestly astonished by what I did find. This woman knows her stuff, and it's obvious from page one. This is the sort of material we hope to get when we buy these process books, yet rarely do. Great stuff.

Good but not the Ultimate! The Book on Writing by Paula La Rocque bills itself as "The

Ultimate Guide on Writing Well. If it were the ultimate guide there would be no need for other books on writing. And as we all know, there are many books on writing on the list of books that offer tips and guidance on how to write and rightfully so because no book on writing is ever complete in itself, not even Strunk and White's, The Elements of Style. But for writers, particularly writers new to the art of writing and groups of writers assembling in for profit or nonprofit groups to learn about the art of the various genres, La Rocque's book has a lot to offer and more if one considers the special interests that the author shares with her readers. There is something special about this book. Half of her chapters are dedicated to Story Telling Devices. This section alone might suggest to you that you should have The Book on Writing in your library.

At the recommendation of my publisher, I purchased and read every word of this "tutorial." Paula offered practical and useful advice on how to make your book clearer and more readable and that's what every author strives for - a book without roadblocks that keeps the reader interested and turning pages. My astute publisher knew I would discover what she had been trying to get across and I've taken it to heart...slashing words and commas right and left. Thanks to Paula and Ginnie for making my novel more readable!

As a speech-language pathologist, I work with adolescents on their vocabulary, grammar, and writing skills. I have purchased several books on writing, but this is the very best that I have found. Forget the others, and purchase this book!

I'm a professional writer, and "The Book on Writing" has proven to be invaluable to my work. I highly recommend it to anyone who makes a living with words.

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