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Writing can be a struggle for even the most experienced writers at times. If it's not difficulties with grammar, or having the knowledge to create a gripping and compelling piece of material, it's struggles with finding the creativity needed. Writing is one of the most creative things in life, and it's for that reason that these struggles often occur. Thankfully, there are plenty of resources out there that can help everyone better their writing skills in all areas and be very useful in times when they face these difficulties. This list goes through 15 of the best books for everyone to better their writing skills, each with a short description and real life review from other people who have read the book and found it of great use. 1. Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life The difference between Bird by Bird and the other books in this list, is that it focuses on freeing yourself from writers block and unleashing your creativity, rather than the grammar aspect of writing. This is a great read for anyone who perhaps is stronger at being grammatically correct, but struggles to channel their creative flow. Customer Review on Amazon: "Though aimed at writers, this book is full of sage advice and razor-edged honesty for the average joe. If you're a writer--and I claim to be one--it's more than a few anecdotes and good advice; it's a lifeline in the thrashing seas of rough-draftdom, a foothold on the sands of jealousy and vain ambition." - Anna 2) Between You and Me: Confessions of a Comma Queen Between You & Me is perfect for anyone who has a hard time taking information in. It plays on the humor side of things by making comical references about mistakes in punctuation and grammar using examples such as The Simpsons. An excellent book that helps you to truly understand some of the common mistakes you're making in spelling, punctuation and grammar, while getting a laugh out of it at the same time. Customer Review on Amazon: "I learned from this book, and I enjoyed myself immensely while reading it. It's made me want to pick up my next work of nonfiction sooner than the usual schedule (which would be maybe in six months or so?). It made me want to buy, read, and annotate/highlight a style guide to learn even more." - Kelly 3) The Only Grammar Book You'll Ever Need This is simply what it says it is on the front cover (apart from the other books on this list of course). This book's a great resource for people to sharpen up their grammar skills, regardless of what you're writing. It covers everything you'd ever need to know about producing top quality writing; whether you need advice on which words to use, how to phrase things, punctuate sentences or simply organize and structure your work. Customer Review on Amazon: - Scroll down to continue reading article - - Scroll down to continue reading article - "This truly may be The Only Grammar Book You'll Ever Need. I am a tutor and have found this book indispensable; it's especially useful when coaching students for the SAT-II Writing exam and the English section of the ACT. Any grammar question you can possibly have seems to be in here, and it's very easy to reference. I can't imagine being without this book." - Lulu 4) The Chicago Manual of Style (16th Edition) The Chicago Manual of Style is such an authoritative book that there's now a 16th edition released, and it really is the perfect well trusted guide for help on your writing style. As times change and the way people work changes, newer editions of the manual are being brought out to keep the information fresh and relevant to how we work and communicate in the world today. Customer Review on Amazon: "I do freelance work as an editor and proofreader. I also tutor students in writing and they need to follow specific style guidelines. I find the Chicago Manual of Style to be a very helpful, detailed guide. Most publishing companies use CM as their style guide, so I recommend it to freelancers." - Jaime 5) 2015 Writer's Market: The Most Trusted Guide to Getting Published We've spoken about grammar, creativity, style and so on, but the 2015 Writer's Market walks you through the complete process of getting yourself published and paid for your writing, which adds to your overall writing skill set. It's gives a big benefit to readers who may have their writing skills down, but don't know the first thing about contacting publishers and getting their content seen by others. The best part is that it includes sample query letters as templates that you can use to contact people efficiently and effectively. Customer Review on Amazon: "This is exactly what I was looking for...this publication has been on the market for years, but they used to call it something else. It is an incredibly helpful tool for any writer;actually a writer's 'Bible'." - Julie 6) Zen in the Art of Writing: Essays on Creativity This book is another excellent read on unleashing your creativity and escaping from the common writer's block. Ray Bradbury has some wonderful tips for writers looking to tap into their creative side and improve their quality of writing, such as writing 1000 words a day, getting into a weekly regime and letting yourself explode. Customer Review on Amazon: - Scroll down to continue reading article - - Scroll down to continue reading article - "This book is like getting a transfusion. Not of blood, but of Ray Bradbury's enthusiasm. His motto was "Exactly one-half terror, one-half exhilaration." Well, this book takes out the terror of writing, and leaves us with pure exhilaration." - Kendal 7) The Elements of Style (4th Edition) The Elements of Style is perfect for everyone looking to better their writing skills as it offers practical advice to people that help them turn dull and plain sentences into rich and powerful pieces of writing. It is perfect for people looking to communicate more effectively with their readers. Customer Review on Amazon: "As the 'rules' in this iconic book take up only 14 pages, it continually amazes me how often I can find the answer to a grammar or punctuation question within those pages. It doesn't cover everything, and some of the 'rules' are of course changing with the passage of time - but if a wannabe writer can't afford a whole bookcase of tomes on How to Write, then this is the one he or she should buy." - Peggy 8) They Say / I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing (3rd Edition) This book is perfect for academic writers who will need to build thorough and persuasive arguments within their writing. Even though it may be focused at academic writers who are required to produce top notch arguments, "They Say / I Say" is still a great read for all writers as it helps you build a thorough and compelling case for the topic at hand. Customer Review on Amazon: "Well, this book is of fundamental importance in any argumentative writing we do, not only academic writing but also any other kind of writing in which we need to prove a thesis. It really demystifies the common difficulties of writing and improves our understanding of the say sentences may go inside a text." - Morris 9) The Emotion Thesaurus: A Writers Guide to Character Expression The Emotion Thesaurus is incredibly helpful for writers looking to better their skills as it helps you present emotions to others in a very compelling way. Not just the emotions of fictional characters that you're writing about, but also within personal stories that you really want to sell to your readers in an expressive way. Customer Review on Amazon: "The best 5 bucks a writer could spend. I could see the emotions in playing out in my head, but lacked the words. Just skimming the book, I can and will take my writing from "Good" to "Amazing" Now I finally understand Show don't Tell your reader. Even my daughter was impressed with the book. I would recommend this book to new writer like me and even the seasoned writers. I don't think you will be disappointed." - Jon 10) The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century The author Steven Pinker gives readers his answers as to why the so much writing these days is of poor quality, and how it can be improved. Readers can improve their writing overall with the use of The Sense of Style, as Steven shares his brilliant insights of grammar, style, creativity and elegance. Customer Review on Amazon: "The Sense of Style is a scholarly and witty book on the art of writing well. Bestselling author, linguist and cognitive scientist Steven Pinker provides readers with a new writing-guide for the twenty-first century. He breaks down grammar rules and challenges purists on the best use of language." - Book Shark 11) The Negative Trait Thesaurus: A Writer's Guide to Character Flaws Much like The Emotion Thesaurus previously mentioned, The Negative Trait Thesaurus is a great resource for enhancing characters within a particular story, even if it is that of your own. The book explores the many different flaws of people that writers could add to their character's persona, and allows you to enhance your own story by considering these attributes you feel might be relevant to your own life. Customer Review on Amazon: "I turn to Ackerman and Puglisi's Emotion Thesaurus regularly when needing inspiration for character reactions and action beats. Their new additions to the series are shaping up to be just as valuable, if not more so. In the introductory material to this volume, they state that they view this book as a "brainstorming tool." This is spot-on." - K.M Weiland 12) The Positive Trait Thesaurus: A Writers Guide to Character Attributes This wonderful book is the complete opposite to The Negative Trait Thesaurus. It focuses on all the attributes you could consider when creating a fictional character, or yet again when telling your own story. When added to your own personal story telling, incorporating certain attributes helps build a connection with your readers. Customer Review on Amazon: "Authors, you need this book. As a writing coach who reads and critiques 200 manuscripts a year, I can't speak highly enough about this book and the companion book, the Negative Trait book. I have a bookcase full of writing craft books that I draw on in my teaching and recommend to my clients, but I can easily say these books by Ackerman and Puglisi are at the top." - Susanne 13) Mistakes Authors Make: Essential Steps for Achieving Success as an Author - Scroll down to continue reading article - - Scroll down to continue reading article - The title says it all, loud and clear, "Mistakes Authors Make" is an incredibly informative book that explains some of the most common errors in writing and publishing that people tend to make. It can be a great indication as to where you might be going wrong, if you feel like you're not quite getting the success in authorship that you want. Identifying your mistakes will get you back on track for success. Customer Review on Amazon: "The authors of this book think that everyone has a book in them and they are willing to explain all the things you should do right. You will learn about marketing avatars, time management, networking and much more. You will also know the difference between self-publishing and vanity publishing." - Rebecca 14) Writing Tools: 50 Essential Strategies for Every Writer Again, the title makes it so clear. Writing Tools is one of the best resources for every writer, outlining 50 strategies that will help you become a much more effective writer. Whilst many of the strategies in this book may be considered fairly simple, and featured in various other writing guides, there are several that are completely unique. This makes the book a must read for any aspiring writers. Customer Review on Amazon: "Roy Peter Clark's Writing Tools is to authors and journalists what Home Depot is to construction workers. Clark gives writers a fully stocked shed of clear, concise tips, strategies and guidelines to instantly help improve anyone's writing." - Armchair Interviews 15) Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within (2nd Edition) Last on the list, is "Writing Down the Bones", where author Natalie goes through the relationship between Zen sitting practice and writing. An excellent book to top off the list, helping you become a more powerful writer by giving thoroughly researched advice. Natalie has been addressing writers through books and workshops for over 20 years, and the advice she gives from what she's learnt in this time is astonishing. Customer Review on Amazon: "Natalie Goldberg's insights about writing as a spiritual practice are just as valid today as they were in 1986 when this book was first published. Her suggestions to writers work, both for beginning writers and for writers who depend on words in order to make a living. I recommend this book to the emerging writers I mentor as a must-have reference second only to a good dictionary." - Kay So there you have it, 15 great books to help you improve your writing skills. If you enjoyed this article, check out this similar post on 10 books to help you polish your English and writing skills. - Scroll down to continue reading article - - Scroll down to continue reading article - What are some other books you've read that improved your writing skills? Let us know in the comments.

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