

You Can Be An Author

even if you're not a writer

The One, Two, Three of Creating a Book

Kim Pearson



Primary Sources

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Published by Primary Sources, Issaquah, WA 98027

www.primary-sources.com

Printed in the United States of America by Gorham Printing

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ISBN: 1-881849-06-6 Softcover

*“What lies behind us
and what lies before us
are small matters compared to
what lies within us.”*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Introduction

Why Not Write a Book?

The word author says it all: authors are people with authority.

People who write books are admired. They have credibility. We are more likely to believe what they say. We think they must know what they are talking about – after all, they wrote a book!

We acknowledge that writing a book is a big achievement. It takes time and effort, dedication and persistence. These are rare qualities. Many people say they'd like to write a book, but very few ever do.

But nearly everyone has at least one subject that they know well. Nearly everyone has experienced some interesting or exciting events. Nearly everyone has learned some hard and valuable lessons. Nearly everyone has a book inside them somewhere.

“You should write a book,” you may have heard your friends and associates say. “I should write a book,” you may think, after you told your story, or expounded your theory, or explained your new method for the hundredth time.

Well, why don't you? Have you ever thought the world may *need* your book? That your knowledge, or inspirational story, or revolutionary method, may be the exact thing someone is waiting to learn? Maybe more than one person is waiting – maybe there are thousands who could be helped by what you have to say.

I'm not trying to make you feel guilty. There are good reasons people don't write the book they have within them. The most common are:

It's too difficult.

I don't have the time.

I'm not a writer.

These are not empty excuses. Writing a book *is* hard. It *does* take time. Writing talent and skill *do* help a great deal.

That is exactly why authors are given respect.

Can Everyone Write?

We are funny about writing. We think everyone can write -- after all, we learned how in first grade! Reading and writing are a big part of what makes us “civilized.”

One of the correlating lessons that we learned, at the tender age of four or five, was that we must do

our own work. Never, ever, copy someone else. We are all capable of learning the skill of writing.

A first grader can write a simple story. A fourth grader can write a book report. By the time you get to high school, you have learned to research and do reports on complex subjects. You have learned grammar and spelling and sentence construction. You have read some great works of Literature. You know what makes a book good.

So now you are an adult and you should be able to write a book of your own. Right?

Not necessarily. Writing is a difficult skill. It takes time to perform it well. It takes effort and dedication and persistence. It helps to have talent, or skill. It really, really helps if you love to write. Not everyone has this knowledge, skill, talent, or time. Not everyone loves to write.

Maybe your skills and talents lie elsewhere. Maybe you don't have the time to devote to a project as big as writing a book. Maybe you absolutely hate to write and never read for pleasure. But does that mean that your great ideas, your new methods, your inspirational stories, are not worthy of a book? Of course not!

There's Help Available

Regardless of what your second grade teacher told you, you don't have to do it all by yourself. Many people are available to help you author your book – writers, editors, proofreaders, illustrators, designers,

printers, publicists. They can do much of the work, *including writing*, while you oversee the process and ensure that your idea or story is presented in a way that is true to your own vision.

The three parts of creating a book are:

- 1) to take what's in your head
(ideas and inspiration)
- 2) to put those ideas down on paper
(writing and editing)
- 3) to package them in the form of a book
(book design and printing/publishing)

The first part, ideas and inspiration, is the heart of your book, and can come only from you. But after that, all the functions of writing, editing, book design, printing, publishing, and marketing, can be performed by others, under your supervision and guidance.

This book gives tips on how to author a book, from honing your ideas to choosing and managing a team of experts to help you write, design, print and sell your book.