



WRITING RESOURCES

Thank you very much for your interest in being published by Pan Macmillan.

This document is meant to guide you by providing you with a number of available resources that you may use to help you to improve your writing. The resources listed in this document include: writing courses, platforms you could submit your work to and books you could consult on writing and publishing. This document also contains guidelines for submitting your manuscript to Pan Macmillan and other various publishers.

In addition to this, we also provide you with information on self-publishing: a non-traditional way of getting your book published.

IMPROVING YOUR WRITING

All publishers will tell you that any writer worth their salt is a reader. It is therefore important to be a consumer of literature in general and, more specifically, the genre you hope to publish in. Here is a list of some of the blogs, newsletters and publications that do an excellent job of reviewing books and sharing literary news:

The Johannesburg Review of Books

<https://johannesburgreviewofbooks.com>

The Johannesburg Review of Books publishes reviews, essays, poetry, photographs and short fiction from South Africa, Africa and beyond.

Brittle Paper

<https://brittlepaper.com/>

Brittle Paper is a literary project designed to help build a vibrant African literary scene.

The Guardian – Books

<https://www.theguardian.com/books>

As part of their cultural reporting, *The Guardian* has extensive books and literary news from the US, UK and Australia. It very useful to see what is trending in other parts of the world.

Cheeky Natives

<https://cheekynatives.co.za/>

The Cheeky Natives is a literary podcast primarily focused on the review, curatorship and archiving of black literature.

AVAILABLE COURSES ON WRITING

There are several independent colleges in South Africa that offer writing courses. Some courses are offered at institutions as contact sessions while others are offered online. The National Library of South Africa also offers information for writers and courses aimed at assisting those who wish to become writers. Below are some of the institutions that offer courses on writing.

SA Writers College

<http://www.sawriterscollege.co.za/>

SA Writers College is committed to helping writers write well, whether they want to get published, work in the writing industry, or write for their own pleasure. The college offers over 35 writing courses, all tutored by professional writers.

All About Writing

<http://allaboutwritingcourses.com/>

All About Writing offers courses, both online and face-to-face, that promote good writing. They include creative writing courses, a mentoring programme as well as retreats and workshops.

National Library of South Africa – Centre for the Book

<http://www.centreforthebook.org.za/>

Community Publishing Programme – The Centre for the Book gathers and distributes information and provides advice and guidance on matters pertaining to books, publishing, creative writing and reading strategies.

Writers Write

<http://writerswrite.co.za/pages/course-information>

Writers Write offers a creative writing course that applies to novels, memoirs, short stories, screenplays, blogging and even to storytelling for business.

Curtis Brown Creative

<http://www.curtisbrowncreative.co.uk/>

Launched in 2011, Curtis Brown launched its creative-writing school as a way of reaching out to new novelists, helping them to write their best and understand the publishing industry. Curtis Brown offers three- and six-month contact courses in London and online courses with flexible hours so that writers with restrictive schedules or those in different time zones can take part from all over the world. Curtis Brown has now also launched a low-priced online 'starter' course for people trying their hand at writing for the first time and people who are not able or ready to take on the greater time and financial commitment required for longer courses.

Several academic institutions also offer short courses in Creative Writing. Please do some further research to see which course might be suitable for you. In addition to short courses, academic

institutions also offer degree programmes in Creative Writing. Below are some of the short courses offered at academic institutions in South Africa:

University of the Witwatersrand – The Wits Writing Centre

The Wits Writing Centre is for anyone at Wits who wants to work on their writing: for those who already write well and for those who would like to write even better. In all cases you, the writer, make the decisions and direct the writing.

North West University – The ATKV School for Creative Writing

<http://www.nwu.ac.za/atkv-school-creative-writing-about-us>

The ATKV School for Creative Writing at the North West University offers a variety of short writing courses to anyone wanting to take up creative writing or aiming to improve their creative writing skills. The only admission requirements are writing talent and a passion for creative writing.

UNISA – The Povey Centre for the Study of English in Southern Africa

http://brochure.unisa.ac.za/slp/showprev.aspx?d=1_2_738_90&f=p_72052

The Povey Centre for the Study of English in Southern Africa at UNISA offers a short course Introduction to Creative Writing. The course introduces students to the basics of creative writing in prose and poetry and also enables the student to approach a creative writing task with discipline and direction.

University of Cape Town – GetSmarter™ Online Short Courses in Creative Writing

<http://www.getsmarter.co.za/courses?category=Writing>

The University of Cape Town offers an online short course that looks at the major concerns writers face while working on an extended piece of fiction and offers an introduction on how you should present your work to editors and agents. Network with fellow writers, share work, contacts and ideas, and review one another's creative writing pieces as part of your own writing process. On successful completion of the course, the student will receive a certificate from Penguin Random House and receive the opportunity to submit their manuscript for consideration to be published under Random House Struik's eKhaya imprint.

BOOKS ON IMPROVING YOUR WRITING

7 Easy Steps to Write Your Book: How to Get Your Book Out of Your Head and a Manuscript in Your Hands!

7 Easy Steps to Write Your Book teaches you how to write your book using examples and exercises. Totally interactive, the reader participates in learning how to prepare to write, creates a writer's Identity and their own powerful Writer's Power Tools. The book offers solutions for procrastination and strategies for dealing with writer's block. The reader learns how to 'Schedule Your Success' and get the book out of their head and onto paper.

McIndoo, A. 2011. *7 Easy Steps to Write Your Book: How to Get Your Book Out of Your Head and a Manuscript in Your Hands!* Motivational Press: Carlsbad.

The Writer's Handbook 2011: The Complete Guide for All Writer, Publishers, Editors, Agents and Broadcasters

This acclaimed writing companion provides you with the most comprehensive information on the writing industry. From pinpointing contacts in a wide range of publishing houses and literary agencies to information on writing courses in your area; from screenwriting, TV, radio and newspapers to local literary festivals and grants, *The Writer's Handbook 2011* is a practical and easy-to-use resource for all writers.

It offers invaluable advice and insight from publishing experts, and successful fiction and non-fiction writers. Whether you are an aspiring or established writer, or a publishing professional, this is the book that you should not be without.

Turner, B. (ed.), 2010, *The Writer's Handbook 2010: The Complete Guide for All Writers, Publishers, Editors, Agents and Broadcasters*. Palgrave Macmillan: New York.

On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft

Part memoir, part master class by one of the bestselling authors of all time, this superb volume is a revealing and practical view of the writer's craft, comprising the basic tools of the trade every writer must have. King's advice is grounded in his vivid memories from childhood through his emergence as a writer, from his struggling early career to his widely reported near-fatal accident in 1999 – and how the inextricable link between writing and living spurred his recovery. Brilliantly structured, friendly and inspiring, *On Writing* will empower and entertain everyone who reads it – fans, writers, and anyone who loves a great story well told.

King, S. 2000. *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*. Scribner: New York.

There are many other books available on writing to help you improve your writing. Do your research in terms of which book is suited towards the genre and audience that you are writing for.

BOOKS ON GETTING PUBLISHED

Get Your Book Published in 30 (Relatively) Easy Steps

This book traces the entire publishing process, from the moment the author conceives an idea to the moment the finished book arrives in the bookshop, and beyond, by breaking it down into 30 easy-to-digest steps. It is also an overview of the inner workings of the international book trade as well as the South African book industry.

Van Rooyen, B. 2010. *Get Your Books Published in 30 (Relatively) Easy Steps*. 2nd ed. Penguin: Johannesburg.

How to Publish Your Book

How to Publish Your Book gives you the tools, strategies and systems you need to master and implement in order to successfully enter the book industry. This book is a must-read for anyone looking to release a book.

Sachs, J. 2013. *How to Publish Your Book*. Motivational Press: Carlsbad.

SUBMITTING YOUR WORK

SUBMITTING YOUR WORK TO REVIEWERS

If you just finished your draft and are gearing up to send your manuscript to publishers, you may also choose to send your manuscript out for a review. This will give you an honest, professional opinion on your manuscript, which will steer you in the right direction.

Faber Academy – Manuscript assessment services

<http://www.faberacademy.co.uk/manuscript-assessment.html>

You may choose to have your manuscript assessed for lots of different reasons. It might be that you've just finished a first draft and you have no idea how to go about starting to edit it. Or perhaps you have edited it, once or several times, and you're still not quite sure you've got the thing right. Maybe you've had a few passes from publishers, and you need some help figuring out how to get your novel through those gates; a fresh pair of eyes to show you where things could be improved.

Or maybe you're about to submit to publishers, and you'd like some reassurance that your manuscript is in the absolute best shape it could be. In all of those cases, a professional reader's report will be able to help.

SUBMITTING POETRY AND SHORT STORIES

There are several platforms to which you can submit short stories and poetry. Do some research as the platforms listed below are not the only ones to which you can submit your work. There are also competitions that run throughout the year for short story and poetry writers, which focus on unpublished works. You should use such opportunities to get your name out there and create interest in your work.

AERODROME

Aerodrome publishes interviews, reviews, extracts and original creative writing. It aims to both champion and critique the art of writing, and showcase the subjects conveyed through books and writing.

You can submit original short fiction and poetry to *Aerodrome*. Send your poetry submissions to poetry@aerodrome.co.za and your short stories to fiction@aerodrome.co.za. Please ensure you read the poetry and fiction guidelines on the Aerodrome website before submitting your work.

SUBMITTING FICTION AND NON-FICTION TO PUBLISHERS

SUBMITTING TO PAN MACMILLAN SOUTH AFRICA

Pan Macmillan South Africa only accepts manuscripts at a certain time of the year. For details on our open submission window please visit our website on: <http://panmacmillan.co.za/submissions/>.

Children's Books

Pan Macmillan undertakes a limited programme of local children's publishing, with most of our titles being international children's books. Our children's titles are usually commissioned by the children's publisher, rather than relying on unsolicited submissions.

Additional Guidelines

Fiction

Fiction submissions should be accompanied by a well-crafted one-page synopsis. The synopsis should outline the major plot points of the story, be interesting to read and summarise your story in a captivating way.

One of the elements that we look for in commercial fiction submissions is a riveting plot line: stories with carefully considered, captivating and well-paced narratives that will be of exceptional entertainment value to the audience.

Another important aspect of a well-crafted fiction submission is interesting, credible characterisation: believable, lively, thoroughly entertaining characters.

General Tips

Keep your covering letter short and to the point. It should contain, at most, a paragraph motivating your submission, and should include all of your contact details.

Pay close attention to your submission's presentation and grammar. Ensure that your submission's layout is clear and consistent. Adhere to conventional styles such as paragraph indenting, reported speech and others. Make sure that your submission has been thoroughly edited for correct grammar and spelling.

Also important are your writing style, narrative voice and dialogue: is the writing of your submission lively and entertaining? Is the narrative voice credible and entertaining? Is there a good balance of dialogue that is interesting, as well as adding to the text, and narrative that allows the story to unfold in a natural way?

SUBMITTING TO OTHER PUBLISHERS

Do your research in terms of which publishing houses are accepting submissions in your field or genre and only submit to those that are appropriate.

For a list of publishers in South Africa please visit the website of the Publishers' Association of South Africa (PASA) at www.publishsa.co.za.

The Professional Editors' Guild of South Africa (PEG) is a useful resource to find professionals in the publishing industry. See www.editors.org.za for more information.

SELF-PUBLISHING

WHAT IS SELF-PUBLISHING?

Self-publishing is the publication of any book or other media by its author without the involvement of an established publishing house.

IS SELF-PUBLISHING SUITABLE FOR YOU?

If you can't find a publishing house that is interested in publishing your book or you would like to publish your book yourself, you may consider self-publishing if you are sure you can fulfil all the roles of a publisher without sacrificing quality. Alternatively, you can use self-publishing services to publish your book.

SELF-PUBLISHING SERVICES

There are many companies that offer professional self-publishing services. These companies offer all the services that a traditional publisher offers, but you as the author cover the costs for those services. Below are some of the companies that offer self-publishing services. It might be useful for you to visit their websites and see what kind of services they offer and what the costs are:

Staging Post

Staging Post is the assisted self-publishing wing of Jacana Media. With an in-house production team and project manager that supports the process, Staging Post provides the expert advice and professional guidance you will need to produce a polished book.

For more information, visit their website on: <http://www.stagingpost.co.za/>

Kindle Direct Publishing

Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) is Amazon.com's ebook publishing unit. Kindle Direct Publishing can be used by authors and publishers to independently publish their books directly to Kindle and Kindle Apps worldwide.

For more information, visit their website on: <https://kdp.amazon.com/>

Electric Book Works

Electric Book Works is a self-publishing company that offers services in planning, production, marketing and distribution of books. Their services include:

- Preparation, including prototyping, scoping and planning
- Editing, from manuscript development to copy-editing
- Digitisation and page layout
- Image preparation
- ISBN and barcode
- Page design for all formats, including ebooks, print editions, and online versions
- Proofreading, whether basic or specialised
- Corrections
- Cover design, either basic or high-end
- Logo design for new publishing brands
- Marketing and distribution in print, as an ebook, and on the web.

For more information, visit their website on: <https://electricbookworks.com/>

Electric Book Works contact details:

Email: info@electricbookworks.com

Self-Publish SA

Self-Publish SA offers independent authors excellent editing skills, a strong design element for both the cover and inside pages together with layout services and digital printing. They also do ebook conversions and can help you set up a small website or blog to market your book, as well as design social media campaigns.

In terms of traditional marketing and publicity services Self-Publish SA acts as a consultant and can help you draw up an effective plan to launch your book.

For more information, visit their website on: <https://selfpublishsa.co.za/>

Self-Publish SA contact details:

Email: sally@selfpublishsa.co.za

Sula Book Distributors

Sula Book Distributors is an innovative and experienced business that started in 2010 and has since become a leading book distributor in South Africa. Through Booksite Afrika, they provide comprehensive book distribution service to bookstores, on-line stores, academic institutions, library suppliers and specialised retail outlets in South Africa.

For more information, visit their website on: <https://sulabookdistributors.co.za/>

I-Go-Books

I-Go-Books is an online bookstore that offers more than just a sales platform. A subsidiary of Pinetown Printers, their services include printing, marketing and distribution that caters to niche markets.

For more information, visit their website on: <https://igobooks.co.za/>

Remember to do research on self-publishing if you are considering it as an option for you. Do your research on the requirements of publishing your book yourself and the costs that will be involved.