

Title:

Writing: Is It A Skill, Craft, Or Gift?

Word Count:

597

Summary:

Whenever you gather writers together they talk about writing. There are many different types of writers. Those who prefer to compose in long-hand or can only write on an old-fashioned manual typewriter. Those who write to music, demand complete silence, or create best surrounded by noise. You have the writers who must plan and outline before they can begin and those who find even talking about a project before it is drafted can stifle their creativity. But one of the most con...

Keywords:

write, writer, writing, publish, edit, profit, market, advice, help, tip, article, improve, skill

Article Body:

Whenever you gather writers together they talk about writing. There are many different types of writers. Those who prefer to compose in long-hand or can only write on an old-fashioned manual typewriter. Those who write to music, demand complete silence, or create best surrounded by noise. You have the writers who must plan and outline before they can begin and those who find even talking about a project before it is drafted can stifle their creativity. But one of the most controversial divisions among writers is about whether writing is a skill, craft, or gift.

I admit that I like to stir the fire a bit because I can argue all three points and depending on how my own writing is going at the moment I may find that one viewpoint carries more weight for me personally.

I know as a teacher of writing that writing is a skill. I have taken people, young and old, who loathed writing and believed they would never be able to write -- and provided them with basic tips and tools to become good basic writers. I have taken good basic writers and given them the support and direction they've needed to become skilled writers. I've watched skilled writers with practice and determination become proficient writers. I have seen this in the classroom, at writing conferences, and in newsrooms. I have witnessed this transformation enough to know that writing is a skill that can be taught and a

skill that can be learned.

I know as a writer, editor, and reader that writing is a craft. As the definition reads to craft is "to make or produce with care, skill, or ingenuity". A skilled writer can capture our interest and convey information, but a writer can also craft a story, poem, or essay that touches our emotions as well as our brains. For those who have gone beyond simply skilled to be craftsmen and craftswomen they can rely on their knowledge, experience, and instinct to create writing that does more than simply delivers -- it also sings.

I know as a writer and reader that writing is a gift. Some writers simply possess a special quality that allows them to step beyond and above the huddled masses. For some it is a special ability to shape words into images and ideas and for some it is a unique vision of this world (or another) that speaks to our souls in a way others cannot.

Are writers born or made? Many people argue that some gifted writers are born, but I am not convinced. Perhaps you could have some predisposition but I believe that writers are made. They are made in the rocking chair when Mother reads "Goodnight, Moon"; they are made under the cover with a flashlight when you simply must finish "The Hobbit" for the first time; they are made when you proudly pocket your first library card; they are made when you fill your first notebook; they are made when you submit your first poem, article or story for publication; they are made when you receive your first rejection; and they are made when you turn the computer on every day to write.

I believe some writers are supremely gifted but even so does that mean it was a gift given to them whole or was it a gift developed through years of reading, writing, talking, and thinking about words?

So, I believe, writing is all three -- a skill, a craft, and a gift. Some writers find their ability spans all three while others never progress past the level of skill.