

The
Wow

e-newsletter

by Ken and Dahlynn McKowen

Principles

Volume 6 No. 3 March 2010

www.PublishingSyndicate.com

Read to Succeed

When asked how one becomes a writer, the obvious answer is that one must write. Seems simple enough, but for many reasons most people never follow through. Yet there is much more to being a writer than writing untold thousands of words. Knowing *what* to write is equally important—and knowing your audience isn't a bad thing either. So how do you know what to write? By living life *and* reading!

Long before Dahlynn and I ever thought about becoming writers, we were—and remain—avid readers. As a kid, I remember reading hundreds of comic books and *Mad* magazine or sitting for hours on our living room floor reading our family's set of encyclopedias. Dahlynn's mom insisted that she go outside and play rather than sitting in the house reading. She appeased her mother by going outside, but with a book so she could sit under a tree and read.

If you are going to write a nonfiction book, then obviously you need to have knowledge of your subject matter. Reading is one of the best ways to garner that knowledge. If you want to write novels, then the same remains true. Thumb through (or read) nearly any novel and you will be confronted with information about cities, towns, stores, bars, hotels, diseases, weapons, causes of death, cars, trucks, flowers, rivers, technology...and the list goes on forever. If you've not had the opportunity to travel the world, or at least to the setting of your story to explore everything in it, then how can you possibly add to your novel the ambiance or flavor of what your subjects are seeing, feeling, knowing and doing?

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Published by *Publishing Syndicate*

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Read to Succeed

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Dahlynn and I thought we would share with you what we've read during the past year or so, not including daily newspapers, magazines, websites, e-mails, books we use when researching our new titles, and even Dahlynn reading 36,000 Chicken Soup stories in 2009 (trivia: Dahlynn has read more than 100,000 stories for Chicken over the last dozen years). This list will give you an idea about the subjects we are drawn to, which is just about everything. Sometimes we read and like each other's book choices, sometimes not.

Ken's book list

- *The Places In Between* by Rory Stewart
- *Primary Colors* by Joe Klein
- *Slavery by Another Name* by Douglas Blackmon
- *Who Killed Chester Pray* by Nicholas Clapp
- *A Guide to the Birds of East Africa* by Nicholas Drayson
- *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen
- *Churchill, Hitler and the Unnecessary War* by Patrick J. Buchanan
- *World Made by Hand* by James Howard
- *A Friend of the Earth* by T.C. Boyle
- *The Lost Symbol* by Dan Brown
- *The Wild Trees* by Richard Preston
- *Marshall South & the Ghost Mountain Chronicles* by Diana Lindsay
- *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein
- *A Reporter's Life* by Walter Cronkite

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What books have you read within the last year? Send us your list and we'll post the most popular overall responses in next month's newsletter: Writer@PublishingSyndicate.com



We've created a Facebook fan page for our wine travel book series. Please join us and pass along the invite to your friends and family. The more Wine-Ohs, the better the party!

Read to Succeed

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Dahlynn's book list

- *It's Only a Movie: Alfred Hitchcock* by Charlotte Chandler
- *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer
- *The Lost Symbol* by Dan Brown
- *Reporting Live* by Leslie Stahl
- *The Places In Between* Rory Stewart
- *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen
- *Primary Colors* by Joe Klein
- *A Reporter's Life* by Walter Cronkite
- *Devil in the White City* by Erik Larson
- *Years of Minutes* by Andy Rooney
- *Roasting in Hell's Kitchen* by Gordon Ramsey
- *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* by J. K. Rowling
- *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson



“Read to succeed” may be a silly cliché, but for us, the saying is an every day ritual. Granted, we didn't know we'd become writers/authors when we were young, but our love of reading translated into viable careers. Regardless if you're a “weekend writing warrior” or a fulltime professional pen, reading for enjoyment (and sometimes to check out your competition or the trend in what books are popular) should be a part of your life. You just never know when it will be your book you'll pick up next!

—Ken 

Do You Know the Answer?

Per Wikipedia.org, as of March 23, 2010, which book below has the lowest recorded sales?

- 1) *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1952)
- 2) *Anne of Green Gables* (1908)
- 3) *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (2007)
- 4) *Black Beauty* (1877)



The answer can be found at the top of the Publishing Syndicate home page: www.PublishingSyndicate.com

HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF!

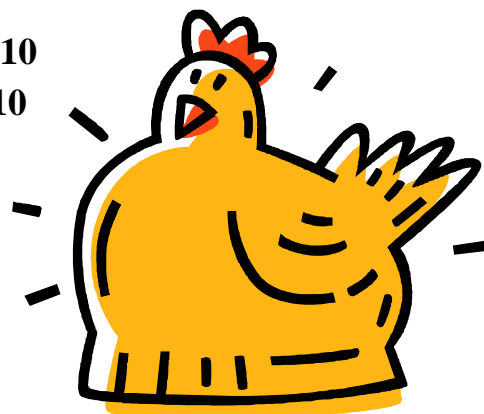
Chicken Soup for the Soul

www.ChickenSoup.com

HURRY!

My Dog's Life: Deadline: March 31, 2010

My Cat's Life: Deadline: March 31, 2010



Deadlines Extended!

New Moms: Deadline: July 31, 2010

Grandmothers: Deadline: August 31, 2010

Grieving and Recovery: Deadline: May 31, 2010

Preteens: Deadline: December 31, 2010

Teens: Deadline: December 31, 2010



Think Positive: Deadline: April 30, 2010



Young at Heart: Deadline: December 31, 2010



Mothers and Daughters: Deadline: Dec. 31, 2010



A "young-at-heart" story submitter? Heck ya! Retirement years are the best; share your fun stories with the world.



Cup of Comfort

www.CupofComfort.com

For Couples: Deadline: April 20, 2010

Finalist notification: June 15, 2010

Go for it! Get published!