



How to Grow a Novel: The Most Common Mistakes Writers Make and How to Overcome Them

By Sol Stein

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Each year thousands of fiction writers, from beginners to bestselling author, benefit from Sol Stein's sold-out workshops, featured appearances at writers' conferences, software for writers, on-line columns, and his popular first book for writers, *Stein on Writing*. Stein practices what he teaches: He is the author of nine novels, including the million-copy bestseller *The Magician*, as well as editor of such major writers as James Baldwin, Jack Higgins, Elia Kazan, Budd Schulberg, W. H. Auden, and Jacques Barzun, and the teacher and editor of several current bestselling authors. What sets Stein apart is his practical approach. He provides specific techniques that speed writers to successful publication.

How to Grow a Novel is not just a book, but an invaluable workshop in print. It includes details and examples from Stein's editorial work with a #1 bestselling novelist as well as talented newcomers. Stein takes the reader backstage in the development of memorable characters and fascinating plots. The chapter on dialogue overflows with solutions for short-story writers, novelists, screenwriters, and playwrights. Stein shows what readers are looking for-- and what they avoid-- in the experience of reading fiction. The book offers guidelines-- and warnings-- of special value for nonfiction writers who want to move into fiction. Stein points to the little, often overlooked things that damage the writer's authority without the writer knowing it. And this book, like no other writing book, takes the reader behind the scenes of the publishing business as it affects writers of every level of experience, revealing the hard truths that are kept behind shut doors.

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How to Grow a Novel: The Most Common Mistakes Writers Make and How to Overcome Them By Sol Stein Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #158882 in Books
- Published on: 2002-03-20
- Released on: 2002-03-20
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .58" w x 6.00" l, .64 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 240 pages

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Sol Stein likens the reader of fiction to a baseball fan. The "tension, suspense, anxiety, and pleasure" a spectator experiences are "all the things readers hope for when they turn to a novel." In *How to Grow a Novel*, Stein coaches fiction writers in providing exactly those things for readers. First off, says Stein, you must write what you read; don't try to pull off a romance novel if you are a student of serious literature, or a literary masterpiece if you thrive on thrillers. With that in mind, Stein gears his book toward both "those who are trying to write a good book and those who are trying to write a good read." Most of *How to Grow a Novel* delineates what Stein considers to be a writer's obligations to his readers. A writer, he says, should be "amusing, entertaining, interesting," should create characters with character, and should maintain interest primarily by "never tak[ing] the reader where the reader wants to go." Stein illustrates his points with examples from his own experiences as a novelist and as a fiction editor.

The final section of the book is devoted to the responsibilities of the publisher. Any but the most stalwart writer can't help but be disheartened by the book business. It has often been said that a publisher determines a book's fate--barring a miracle--long before it is even released, by the funds allocated to publicize it. Stein takes this one step further, positing that a book's positioning is determined "when the agent submits it for consideration.... There are reportedly nearly a thousand literary agents in North American alone, but fewer than a dozen have clout."

Still, take heart, and try to enjoy the process. "Writing is the second most exciting activity a higher power invented for human beings," says Stein. "And when you get to your eighties, it's the first most exciting activity." --*Jane Steinberg*

From Library Journal

"Come sit. We need to talk." With this simple invitation, novelist, editor, and writing instructor Stein invites the reader to listen as he shares what he has learned from his extensive experience in the fields of writing and publishing. This book, his second (following *Stein on Writing*), stands apart from the wide field of instructional writing books by putting the writer's focus on the reader. Stein states bluntly right from the beginning that "liars say they write only for themselves" and that a "lack of courtesy" toward the reader is one of the chief faults of unsuccessful writing. While this is perhaps a controversial notion, prospective writers will nonetheless be well rewarded by reading this collection of tips, methods, and numerous anecdotes. In this delightful instruction session, Stein proves once again that he is still a vibrant and talented force in the writing and publishing professions. Highly recommended for libraries supporting fiction writers or fiction writing instruction.

--*Angela M. Weiler, SUNY Libs., Morrisville*

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Review

"[Stein] shares what he has learned from his extensive experience in the fields of writing and publishing. This book stands apart from the wide field of instructional writing books by putting the writer's focus on the reader. Highly recommended." ?*Library Journal*

"Stein is a fascinating guide and teacher. This should be required reading [for] 90 percent of published

authors . . . Wonderful.” ?*The Daily Mail (London)*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kurt Hooper:

In this 21st one hundred year, people become competitive in every way. By being competitive currently, people have do something to make these individuals survives, being in the middle of the particular crowded place and notice simply by surrounding. One thing that oftentimes many people have underestimated it for a while is reading. Yep, by reading a reserve your ability to survive raise then having chance to stay than other is high. In your case who want to start reading a book, we give you this kind of *How to Grow a Novel: The Most Common Mistakes Writers Make and How to Overcome Them* book as beginning and daily reading reserve. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

Adrian Rogers:

This book untitled *How to Grow a Novel: The Most Common Mistakes Writers Make and How to Overcome Them* to be one of several books in which best seller in this year, that is because when you read this reserve you can get a lot of benefit upon it. You will easily to buy this book in the book retailer or you can order it by way of online. The publisher on this book sells the e-book too. It makes you more easily to read this book, because you can read this book in your Smartphone. So there is no reason for you to past this e-book from your list.

Cora Spillane:

The particular book *How to Grow a Novel: The Most Common Mistakes Writers Make and How to Overcome Them* has a lot info on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of profit. The book was written by the very famous author. Tom makes some research before write this book. This book very easy to read you can find the point easily after looking over this book.

Jeremy Turner:

In this period of time globalization it is important to someone to get information. The information will make someone to understand the condition of the world. The health of the world makes the information much easier to share. You can find a lot of recommendations to get information example: internet, newspapers, book, and soon. You can view that now, a lot of publisher that will print many kinds of book. Typically the book that recommended to you personally is *How to Grow a Novel: The Most Common Mistakes Writers Make and How to Overcome Them* this book consist a lot of the information with the condition of this world now. That book was represented just how can the world has grown up. The language styles that writer use for explain it is easy to understand. The actual writer made some analysis when he makes this book. That's why this book suitable all of you.

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