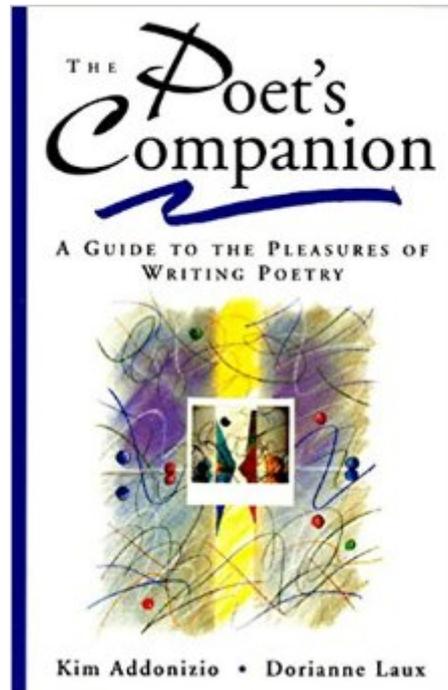


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The Poet's Companion: A Guide To The Pleasures Of Writing Poetry



Synopsis

From the nuts and bolts of craft to the sources of inspiration, this book is for anyone who wants to write poetry-and do it well. The Poet's Companion presents brief essays on the elements of poetry, technique, and suggested subjects for writing, each followed by distinctive writing exercises. The ups and downs of writing life—including self-doubt and writer's block—are here, along with tips about getting published and writing in the electronic age. On your own, this book can be your "teacher," while groups, in or out of the classroom, can profit from sharing weekly assignments.

Book Information

Paperback: 284 pages

Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company; 1st edition (September 17, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0393316548

ISBN-13: 978-0393316544

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.9 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars See all reviews (92 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #13,159 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Writing > Journalism & Nonfiction #81 in Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Writing > Fiction #150 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry

Customer Reviews

I've grown a little cynical at the plethora of "How to Write Poetry" books that are out there - I've either read or bought well over two dozen of the things. Most of them are simply saying the same thing over and over and over, and leave you wondering whether the writers are all reading and recycling each other's How To books ...But this one is different. It is incredibly readable for a start, manages to be warm and friendly and funny at the same time as showing new ways to look at the craft of writing. The best example I can give you is the chapter on grammar ... a terrifying ordeal for a great many of us. But somehow this pair have managed to make it INTERESTING and INSPIRING! They are like the sort of English teacher you wish you could have had at High School. Remember Robin Williams in "Dead Poets Society"? Now you get the picture. Look, I could go on for hours on this book. Beg, borrow or steal a copy for yourself. This book brought me to tears - all I kept thinking was that it was exactly the book that I needed right now. Try it. You'll agree.

I almost ruled out reading this book when I read the author's (to me) bold statement on page 225: "Can you write a poem in 20 minutes? We seriously doubt it." Being, at times, a very fast poet, I *gasp* when I read that assertion! (Don't ask me how I got to page 225 before I read the rest of the book but nonetheless, it stuck out to me!) I kept at it, though, and found my way through the original assessment and into many of the glorious exercises, the truth in words that I so resonate with such as "We don't believe in writer's block. We believe there are times when you are empty and times when you are full." The section on Metrical poetry is truly magical - I enjoyed learning about how Free-Verse as a form blossomed as well. There are also many, many valuable resources in the appendices such as Books on Poetry and Writing, Finding Markets for Your Poetry and More Resources for Writers. Finally, this book is chock full of exercises so that you can continue picking it up and revisit, use, revisit, use some more, revisit over and over again. Definitely worth the investment AND I am so glad I didn't toss it all because of one difference in opinion.

I picked this book up by coincidence and am very pleased with it. The authors take a very low key, non-intrusive style combine with their extensive knowledge and experience. There is an inviting style to the book that made it immediately appealing. What I liked most was that the book focused on its basic theme, the pleasures of writing good poetry and then stuck to it without either going away on tangents or repeating their points over and over again as some other authors tend to do. Each chapter ends with exercises that appear simple and are designed to be so - but allow you to explore specific areas and concepts. They have also selected sample poems to illustrate specific points (they are terrific poems to boot!). My favorite chapters were the ones on rhyme, rhythm and repetition. I was worried that since modern poetry has become so free form that there was no more place for rhyme, rhythm or repetition and the authors do a fine job of explaining their role in today's poetry. I fully expect to be using this wonderful book as a guide and inspiration for a long time to come.

Excellent book. The exercises are phenomenal. I tried the exercise that gives you about 14 words you must use in the body of your poem. From this exercise I wrote two poems. One abstract and one long. Each poem was published. I also did the exercise with a suggested title, this was published. Kim and Dorriane give you clear examples of different types of poetry. The authors knowledge is so deep you learn the inner life of quality poetry and what makes a poem resonate to others. I recommend this book to any aspiring poet. This book is priceless.

It comes as no surprise (since Dorianne Laux is a great poet and Addonizio is one of the best of her generation) that this is a great guide to writing poetry (I love the subtitle: "A Guide to the Pleasures of Writing Poetry"-- note the pleasures). And it's good for any level of experience. It has a lot to teach the beginner, a help to the intermediate, and even the advanced student of poetry can get some ideas from this book. The first section of the book covers some subjects for writing, including family, death, and the erotic. Most of the book discussing the craft of poetry. The chapters deal with images, simile and metaphore, the line, voice, dreams and experiments, meter and rhyme, repetition and rhythm, the villanell, panotoum, and sestina, grammr, and revision. Then they have a section titled "The Writing Life" which deals with self-doubt, writer's block, getting published, and the internet. Most of the chapters end with writing exercises, to help give you ideas for poems and practice at writing. And at the end of the book they have their "Twenty-Minute Wriitng Exercises." Addonizio and Laux chose, in general, great poems to illustrate whatever they are discussing. And the book even has several useful appenices: Books on Poetry and Writing; Anthologies for Further Reading; Finding Markets for Your Poems; and More Resources for Writers. It's a great guide and useful teaching tool, and told in a conversational, interesting voice. It's a purchase no poet will regret.

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