



## Making Shapely Fiction

By Jerome Stern

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**Making Shapely Fiction** By Jerome Stern

**A deft analysis and appreciation of fiction?what makes it work and what can make it fail.**

Here is a book about the craft of writing fiction that is thoroughly useful from the first to the last page?whether the reader is a beginner, a seasoned writer, or a teacher of writing. You will see how a work takes form and shape once you grasp the principles of momentum, tension, and immediacy. "Tension," Stern says, "is the mother of fiction. When tension and immediacy combine, the story begins." Dialogue and action, beginnings and endings, the true meaning of "write what you know," and a memorable listing of don'ts for fiction writers are all covered. A special section features an Alphabet for Writers: entries range from Accuracy to Zigzag, with enlightening comments about such matters as Cliffhangers, Point of View, Irony, and Transitions.

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#### Review

Useful on the most practical level.... [Stern] plunges his readers into the middle of things.

Stern's book offers a raft of examples that explain the techniques used by novelists from Flaubert to Updike an eminently helpful and engaging writer's guide.

Jerome Stern's ?Making Shapely Fiction? is a complete original. The warm, witty, wise voice draws you in, and you leave the book wanting to write and knowing how. --Jesse Lee Kercheval, director, Wisconsin Institute for Creative Writing, University of Wisconsin

Jerome Stern has done us all a favor with this canny little book. If you are interested in writing, ?read it now?. This is an expert writer and teacher sending his notes from the trenches. Never has caution been so exhilarating, advice so wry. I will use this book. --Ron Carlson, author of The Hotel Eden

Making Shapely Fiction clarifies the mumbo-jumbo. For serious students of fiction, Jerome Stern is the Alpha crow. Follow him and shave the miles off your flying time. --Bob Shacochis, author of Swimming in the Volcano

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A complete original. The warm, witty, wise voice draws you in, and you leave the book wanting to write and knowing how. --Jesse Lee Kercheval, director, Wisconsin Institute"

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#### From the Publisher

This book is different from other books on writing. You can start writing serious fiction from the first page -- because, as Jerome Stern makes clear, learning to write spontaneously is the first step to writing well. As you begin to grasp the principle of momentum, tension and immediacy, you'll find your fiction has shape and form. You'll discover how to "write what you know," and avoid the traps and pitfalls awaiting fledgeling authors. A cross-referenced Alphabet for Writers includes incisive entries for such writerly concerns as Anti-Heroes, Dialogue, Sex, and Style. Whether you're a beginning, a seasoned professional, or a teacher of the

craft, you already know there are no rules in writing fiction . . . but Jerome Stern will inspire you to find your personal path.

#### From the Inside Flap

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