

The Proof Angel Summary of

Resources for authors: March 2015

Why do you need a copy editor?

Some people these days think that editors are a thing of the past. With all the help you get with grammar and spelling from software like Word, why do you need to pay someone to look through your work?

Because there is a whole lot more to it, that's why. One author covers some of the ground in this post: [In praise of copy editors, publishing's unsung heroes.](#)

How to reach more readers by harnessing retailers' algorithms

It is always easier to get the right result if you know how the system works. This post looks inside on-line retailers' systems to show you how to [get better results](#) from your book marketing.

Strategies for publishing a best seller

This post is titled "[How To Publish A Best-Selling Book](#)", which we all know is just a little optimistic. Still, it is worth a read!

Are you setting up a literary event?

If you are organising a literary event such as an author fair, this could be useful for you. It covers what [you need to succeed](#).

Creating conflict

We all have our faults, and those faults influence the pattern of our lives. Sometimes we long for a simple life in a perfect world, but we know that it would be dull if that wish came true.



We talk about the perfect story book hero, but if that hero really is blemish free, the story will be bland. Your hero's bad points help to liven up the story. [Find out how here.](#)

The Proof Angel is the trading name of Sarah Perkins, freelance editor and proofreader.

Do you submit your writing overseas?

If you limit your submissions to your own country, you could be missing out. [Read more here.](#)

Are you a writer looking for new income streams?

If you are, [this podcast](#) might help.

The most popular plots

Sometimes it is interesting to analyse successful writing. Just out of curiosity.

You might find inspiration in these plot lines used by [Booker Prize nominees](#). Is this the key to success by imitation? Is it the key for spotting a gap in the market?

Given that it is impossible to come up with a blueprint for successful writing, I think the usefulness is probably limited to the curiosity value.

Too much information: why writers should conceal their research

Researching a book often takes a lot of effort. Sometimes people get really into their research, and are really keen to share all their fascinating knowledge.

The crucial thing is to remember that there is a place for sharing, and it usually isn't in the book. Yes, that research should shine through, but your reader should be unaware of it.

Suppose you have a dispute with your neighbour, and you go to talk to a solicitor about it. Do you want to hear a string of fascinating stories about court cases involving hedge height, or noisy music, or whatever the problem is? No. You want a professional who clearly knows what they are talking about to tell you how the problem will be sorted out. You sense the rest of the knowledge is there, but you don't have to know the detail.

For writers, just like other professionals, it can be [difficult to know how much is enough](#), but it is important to strike that balance.

Now repeat after me. The place for the back story is in the background.

And if you must show off your knowledge about whatever it is, why not offer your services as a speaker to a local group? Anyone who has to organise a monthly speaker will be interested in a new act, and you might get yourself some new readers.

How image systems can supercharge your novel

Here is a post about how a technique from the world of film can [help you with your novel](#).

Posts about the writing process

Today's post is a collection of links:

- [How to create memorable characters.](#)
- [How to tell a scary story](#)
- [How to move things along](#)
- [One simple thing to become more productive as a writer.](#)
- [3 reasons you should use Scrivener for your book.](#)
- [Five ways to make good writing great.](#)
- [Wait a minute while I procrastinate.](#)
- [Using patterns: scene and sequel](#)
- [Writing when no one is listening.](#)
- [10 secrets to write better stories.](#)
- [The REAL secret to writing a bestseller.](#)
- [What writing a horrible first draft reveals about you.](#)
- [What to do about your first draft.](#)
- [Discover the healing power of writing your own story.](#)
- [Six provocative ways to become a 'Real' writer.](#)

Confused about beta readers?

Editors and beta readers are different people, doing different jobs. Some people think beta readers are a substitute for editors. You can usually spot that in the final product.

Find out about [the difference here](#).

Finding the time to write

Clearly, this post is intended to be inspirational, and help you to find time to write. It does include common sense ideas, & tells you about [famous people for whom each idea worked](#).

The problem is that most of the ideas are hard to maintain. I find getting up earlier only works in the short term!

If you really need to milk some more productive time out of your day, there is a useful chapter in [No plot, no problem](#), by Chris Baty.

Some tools for Twitter

If you want to get a tighter grip on your Twitter account, some of these may be useful. There are [57 Twitter tools](#) on the list, so there must be something for everyone there, even though the focus is on the needs of authors.

How to get your characters into trouble

Is your story too nice & peaceful? Traditionally we are used to everything ending happily ever afterwards, but there is always turmoil first. That is where the interest comes from. So how do you get your characters into trouble? [Find out here](#).

Tips from Tolkien

We haven't had any tips from famous writers for a while. Let us rectify that now with this [list from Tolkien](#).

Moving from Scrivener to Word

Do you use Scrivener for your writing projects? It is a very popular tool, but once you've finished drafting, it is useful to have a Word document.

This post explains the process of [moving from Scrivener to Word](#).

Connecting with book shops

Book shops can be another weapon in the marketing arsenal of an author. But they are delicate flowers, and need careful handling. This post explains [how to approach your local book shop](#).

How to revive your story

Is your story flagging? Try these [revival tips](#).

The facts about self publishing

When I saw a post called 6 key facts about self publishing, I thought it might be a quick summary of what a self publisher really needs to know. It turns out to be rather more like material for a quiz at a convention of authors. [Still, it is quite interesting](#).

Are you making your mind up about self-publishing?

If you are considering self publishing, have a look at this list of the [main benefits and challenges](#) of the brave new world. It may help you to reach your conclusion.

What makes a good short story?

It is dangerous to attempt a formula for success, but there are certain features that good short stories have in common. Here is a brief summary of [the main points](#).

Handling rejection

To be successful, you need to be more widely known. To be more widely known, you need to get yourself out there. Unfortunately, pursuing more opportunities also increases your chance of receiving rejection letters and emails.

Read of [one author's experiment](#) in going for everything.

Using colour and sounds in your novel

Thinking about colour and sounds when you are writing is a good way to make sure you are showing your reader what is going on, rather than telling them. The technique can liven up the story considerably, and is definitely worth a go. [Find out more about the strategy here.](#)

Blogging for authors

This post lists 25 pointers for authors who want to increase their [audience by blogging](#).

I do wonder how many authors can really come up with a good quality, well written & researched post every day, including relevant images. After all, they need to write, do the other tasks associated with being an author, and still have enough time to run their life. On the other hand, there are some sensible suggestions on this list.

Creating a pop up book shop

Pop up shops and cafes are common these days in our towns and cities. I've not seen a pop up book shop yet, but there isn't really any reason why it couldn't work. If you think it is worth a try, [this post will tell you more](#).

Book marketing links

Here is a crop of useful links:

- This is a long list, but it has [a lot of common sense](#).
- This one focuses on getting [media attention](#).
- And finally, if you feel you are banging your head against a brick wall, [try this one](#).

Why writers need to be readers

Many people are book lovers before they become writers. Some people say that they don't have time to read once they get serious about writing. Those people are missing a trick. According to this post, [7 of them](#).