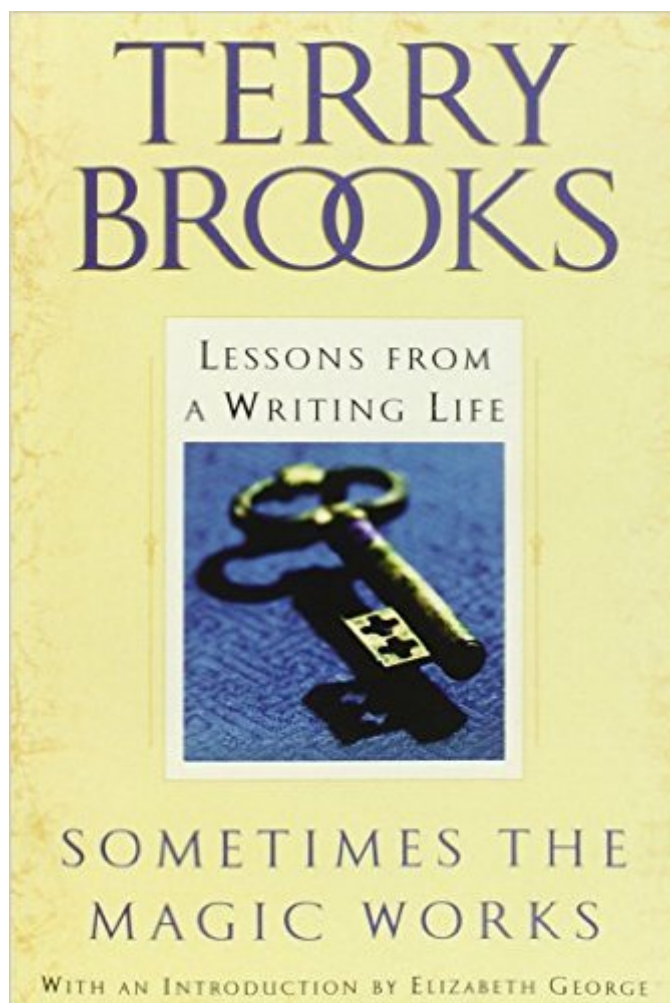


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Sometimes The Magic Works: Lessons From A Writing Life



Synopsis

In *Sometimes the Magic Works*, New York Times bestselling author Terry Brooks shares his secrets for creating unusual, memorable fiction. Spanning topics from the importance of daydreaming to the necessity of writing an outline, from the fine art of showing instead of merely telling to creating believable characters who make readers care what happens to them, Brooks draws upon his own experiences, hard lessons learned, and delightful discoveries made in creating the beloved Shannara and Magic Kingdom of Landover series, *The Word and The Void* trilogy, and the bestselling *Star Wars* novel *The Phantom Menace*. In addition to being a writing guide, *Sometimes the Magic Works* is Terry Brooks's self-portrait of the artist. "If you don't think there is magic in writing, you probably won't write anything magical," says Brooks. This book offers a rare opportunity to peer into the mind of (and learn a trick or two from) one of fantasy fiction's preeminent magicians.

Book Information

Paperback: 210 pages

Publisher: Del Rey; Reprint edition (February 3, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0345465512

ISBN-13: 978-0345465511

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.5 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (55 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #737,019 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 in [Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Writing > Science Fiction & Fantasy](#) #414 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Genres & Styles > Science Fiction & Fantasy](#) #463 in [Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > History & Criticism](#)

Customer Reviews

This is a difficult book to review since it's not quite clear what it is. The back cover calls it a "writing guide" in which Brooks "shares his secrets," his website calls it "200 pages of sage writing advice for the beginning and expert writer alike," and the introduction tells you what a craftsman Brooks is and how "Terry Brooks is going to tell you about craft." But in truth less than a third of the chapters are about craft, and Brooks actually apologizes for them. In fact, there's just one example of writing in the entire book. It's also not a full memoir, but simply a collection of essays on his experiences

with the writing life. In that it's fine. It's very similar (though not as lyrical) as Bradbury's *Zen in the Art of Writing: Releasing the Creative Genius Within You* in that it combines memoir with encouraging people to dream. It doesn't, though, come close to the depth or usefulness of King's *On Writing* or Lamott's *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*, both of which Brooks praises. So the strange thing is, while I expected a book on craft, I actually looked forward to reading each day's chapter. Hardly ever dry or dull, Brooks comes across as sincere, smart, and humble. There's none of the arrogance of Sol Stein's books, but simply someone who got lucky doing the work he loves, and I enjoyed these essays.

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