

First Step in Publishing Short Stories - Reading by Vivian Gilbert Zabel

When I took composition classes in college, I often became frustrated with all the reading I had to do, story after story after story, many times thousands of pages per assignment. Yet as we discussed the stories and what made them interesting or what didn't, I was learning how to write. Even today, as I read and review, I learn more about what makes a good story and what doesn't.

I used the reading, discussion, and then writing idea when I taught, too. I tried to highlight one or two concepts per story, then had the students write something using those concepts and any others we had already covered. First, though came reading and reading and reading.

As I read the September, 2005, issue of *The Writer*, I discovered an article by Erika Dreifus titled "Learning short-story writing by example." She agrees with my university professors and me: "We learn by reading closely and reading as writers – attending to the ways others employ the elements of fiction: setting, plot, character, theme, and so on."

So where can a person find short stories to study, ones that will help learn correct story writing? Of course books of short stories are found in all book stores. In fact Holly Jahangiri and I have a collection of short stories for sale at Amazon.com or Barnes and Nobles.

Plus many bookstores connected to colleges have anthologies for sale. If someone couldn't afford to buy an anthology or collection, used bookstores or libraries carry them.

Web sites can be found that have stories and advice for writers. The Internet is an interesting and impressive source. Some magazines still publish short stories. Searching in cyber space will locate many that do.

The best help found in reading, though, is to read well-written short stories, and read, read, read.

Sources:

1. Dreifus, Erika, "Learning short-story writing by example," *The Writer*, September 2005.
2. Notes and lesson plans by Vivian Zabel

Vivian Gilbert Zabel taught English, composition, and creative writing for twenty-five years, honing her skills as she studied and taught. She is a author on Creative Writers (<http://www.Writing.Com/>), and her portfolio can be found at Writing.Com/authors/vzabel. Her books, *Hidden Lies and Other Stories* and *Walking the Earth: Life's Perspectives in Poetry*, can be found through Barnes and Noble or Amazon.com.

Other resources:

[The Easy Way To Write](#). Unique And Popular Writers Resource.

[Outside The Square Fiction Workshop](#) Discover New And Unusual Ways Of Writing And Techniques You Did Not Know Existed. Unleash Hidden Chambers In Your Imagination.

[Write A Book In 28 Days](#) Use this system and get amazing results in a short period of time.