

Bird By Bird Summary

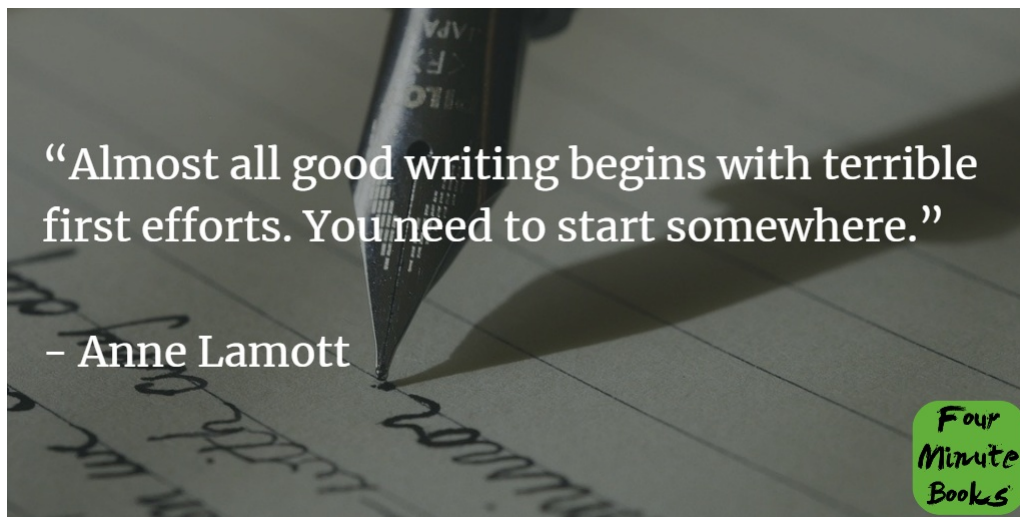


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1-Sentence-Summary: *Bird By Bird* is Ann Lamott's guide to using the power of routine, being yourself, rolling with the punches, and many other principles to become a better writer.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



So you want to be a writer, yeah? Welcome to a wonderful world that has the potential to make you a lot of money. But it's not all fun and games. If you want to write you'd better be ready for frustration, writer's block, and criticism of your work.

As if that weren't difficult enough, it's also really tough to get started because of fear. But one of my best friends gave me this advice when I was thinking about becoming a writer:

“Just begin.”

It wasn't easy, but I did follow his advice and today I'm grateful for where the journey has taken me. Writing is tough, but there are so many good things along the way. You have wins, can make great money, and especially meet some of the best people in the world.

This is why I loved reading Anne Lamott's *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. It's got all the lessons you need to become a great writer, and will help you find the motivation to just begin.

Here are just 3 of the many wonderful and inspiring lessons I got from this book:

1. You may sometimes think that you're not doing a great job, but you must believe in your ability to write anyway.
2. A daily writing routine is vital to becoming a great writer.
3. Beware of the temptation to isolate yourself, success is almost inevitable when you connect with other writers.

Ready? Set? Write!!

Lesson 1: **Believe that you can write no matter how much discouragement you feel.**

When I began writing, I was really afraid of how I was doing. I even wrote about it multiple times. Reading back through those articles, they were awkward. But I've since discovered that great writers don't care if they're good or bad, they just write!

Finding the power in this principle can be as simple as just believing that you are meant to write. That will lead to more writing, and as you practice consistently over time, you'll improve. It's kind of like sleep, if you think about how you want it, it'll never come. But the moment you relax and let your mind go with the flow, you'll get better.

It takes patience and determination, however. **You might not actually be good at first, but if you are persistent, that will change.** One of the best moments in the journey is when you can feel yourself wanting to just write for the sake of it.

The moment you learn to love the process and not worry so much about the outcome is when things really begin to take off.

A common thread here is the word faith or belief. You've got to believe that you can and should write. You get this from an understanding of life, both the good and the bad, the exciting and the boring.

But you also must believe in what you're typing. Nobody will believe in what you share if you don't because that will show in your writing.

Lesson 2: If you want to become a great writer you must establish a daily writing routine.

If you think you're going to have a writing career by doing it only when inspiration strikes, you've got a lot to learn.

But don't worry, it's a simple matter of creating habits each day so that you allow inspiration to come to you. Your pattern of writing will lead to success through the power of discipline, which is another way of saying deliberate practice.

The first step is establishing your writing place and making sure that you are there every day. Do this regardless of how effective you are and you'll soon be on the way to becoming a great writer.

You've also got to set a regular time to write each day and stick to it. **Because of the way that the brain makes connections, doing this consistently will set you up for creativity by fusing the time and place to your creative habit in your mind.**

It might be a bit boring in the beginning, but you must persist. Over time you'll find that these seemingly small habits are making a big difference in your abilities. This is why commitment is so vital.

There's no secret to becoming successful at writing. Lamott says that she didn't just have some password handed down from her family to "crack the code" to being a good writer. Instead, she thought of all the best writers she knew and realized that there was one thing in common-commitment.

Lesson 3: You must find people to talk with about your writing if you want to be successful.

So you've got your routine running smoothly and all is well. But there's a lurking problem with stopping there. While it's good to get away to finish a few chapters of your book, you must not fall for the trap of isolating yourself as a writer.

Start by looking for the people immediately around you and connect with them. Asking questions about their lives is a great way to get new friends and find new ideas for your work. But don't stop there, you also need the power of other writers.

It's a good idea to let others see your work and discuss it with you. Having writers do this is especially helpful because they know the struggles and also the best way for you to improve.

Joining a writing group, for example, is one way to ensure your success. But be careful. Some of these people can be merciless in their reviews. Hearing their harsh words may crush your confidence and fire for writing altogether.

It's best to find people who are good at giving tips without being too hard on you. I was lucky enough to have a great writing mastermind let me into their group and it's made all the difference in my progress.

From experience, I know that if you believe in yourself and work hard, these opportunities will come to you. And it won't be long before you're enjoying your successful writing career!

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Bird By Bird Review

Gosh, I learned so much from *Bird By Bird* that it was really difficult to just pick three lessons! I love being able to relate with successful writers on the writing journey. The advice that Lamot gives in this book is fantastic and really inspires me to keep going even through the tough times!

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Who would I recommend the Bird By Bird summary to?

The 31-year-old who aspires to become a professional writer, the 52-year-old who is in a creative profession that wants some tips to become more efficient, and anyone that is curious if a writer's life is the one for them.