

# This is How

*An introduction to creative writing*

# Module 1

# Workbook

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## Introduction to the Course

This workbook is designed to complement the *This is How* series, an introduction to the online creative writing courses coming soon by Fantasy and Mystery/Thriller author Jeff Spence. *This is How* takes aspiring novelists through the basics of the craft and contains modules, exercises, and tips for the aspiring writer wanting to know how to start, or for the more experienced writer making first forays into longer fiction. The series is primarily aimed at those desiring to write novel-length fiction<sup>1</sup>, and mainly uses techniques for (and examples from) the Fantasy and Mystery-Thriller genres.

Although it is possible to gain insight and benefits from the workbook alone, it is not meant to function that way. The videos, texts, and selected writing samples used in combination with the workbook will enable you to get writing. Use the workbook to take notes and record your ‘aha’ moments. We recommend you keep it on hand and complete exercises immediately after viewing the videos, if possible.

For those wanting to further develop their confidence and competence in the writing process, with the intention of producing high-quality, commercially marketable works, the online creative writing courses will take a deeper dive into various aspects that develop these skills in writers. Please contact the author for more information.

Good luck, and *good writing!*

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<sup>1</sup> Novels in these genres are typically from 60,000 to 140,000 words per book.

## Module 1 - Considering genre

There are expectations on the part of the readers of each genre. Because of this, there are obligations on each writer to either conform with them, or to deviate in a purposeful way in order to create a specific effect. This dynamic is further complicated by the fact that genres overlap and combine to create subgenres, and sub-subgenres, etc.

In order to ensure that you know what your readers' expectations are, and that you keep them in mind when planning and writing your book, complete the following exercises.



Choose a movie or series you have recently watched and enjoyed. It can be similar to what you plan to write, or something totally different. Note the title here.

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What is its primary genre?

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What do you like most about this story?

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What about it indicates its primary genre? (Use your own examples from the work itself, not labels from the credits or information pages.)

[illegible]

What is its secondary genre?

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What about it indicates that this is the secondary genre?

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Is there are tertiary (third) genre?

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What are the indicators of this genre?

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Choose a movie or series you have recently watched but you DIDN'T enjoy. It can be similar to what you plan to write, or something totally different. Note the title here.

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What is its primary genre?

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What do you dislike about this story?

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What about it indicates its primary genre? (Use your own examples from the work itself, not labels from the credits or information pages.)

[illegible]

What is its secondary genre?

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What about it indicates that this is the secondary genre?

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Is there are tertiary (third) genre?

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What are the indicators of this genre?

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Now consider the book you want to write. What will your primary genre be?

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What about your story will indicate this genre to your readers? (Give a few of the most important traits.)

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Your secondary genre might be obvious, or it might be subtle, but it will be there. What will it be?

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How is it expressed in your story?

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What expectations will your reader have of your story, based on these genre choices?

[illegible]

Will you deviate from these? If so, how? (Or if not, why not?)

[illegible]



What is the purpose of this deviation?

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What about your chosen genre(s) is most different from your real life?

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How will you create this difference in a realistic way? (Check/Tick the two most applicable answers.)

- ◇ Pure imagination
- ◇ Research – reference books and websites
- ◇ Research – from reading books of the same genre
- ◇ Research – from watching movies of the same genre
- ◇ Research – from people who are experts in this area



Notes:

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