

7 Secrets to Fluent English

by Dahlia Miller

Let's quickly review the first 4 Secrets:

- Secret #1: Listen, listen, listen and then listen some more!
- Secret #2: Read. Read often. Read a lot!
- Secret #3: Forget about grammar!
- Secret #4: Speak.

These secrets are simple and they are true. You can use them everyday to improve your English. We know you can do it!

SECRET #5: WRITE EVERYDAY!

It's true! The more you write, the more fluent you will become.

There are two main styles of writing in English: fiction and non-fiction. Fiction writing has few rules; non-fiction writing has many rules. Both types of writing can help you to improve your English fluency.

In this article, let's look at how writing everyday can help you to improve your English fluency. Then we'll look at writing fiction and non-fiction.

But first, let me ask you a question: "Do you like writing?"

Do you enjoy writing in your first language? If you say no, then writing in English may not be easy for you. Relax, don't push yourself too hard. Writing everyday, for just 10 minutes will make a big difference in your writing and in your speaking!

Besides, if you don't like one type of writing, it is always possible that you may like another type. The only way to know what you like is to try all styles of writing.

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How Can Writing Everyday Help You to Improve Your English Fluency?

1. If you write everyday, you will begin to understand English and English-speakers better.

In Day 2 of this article series we said:

“A reason why you should READ is because it increases your exposure to English in general. In other words, you will understand more about Western culture through reading, and if you do, you will understand the language more, including idioms, etc.”

Well, the same thing is true for writing. If you learn how to write well in English, you'll understand more about Western culture. You'll be able to experience the culture from the inside! You'll be communicating in English, so you'll be learning about how English speakers look at the world. You'll also be learning about how English speakers understand the world through their writing and reading!

That makes sense, doesn't it? If you practice writing in many different English styles, you'll be practicing writing like native English speakers. The more that you practice writing like a fluent English speaker, the more fluent you'll become!

2. If you write everyday, you will become very familiar with English.

Professional writers write everyday. If you are going to write well, you will need to write regularly. Just like listening, speaking, and reading, you need to practice, practice, practice your writing EVERYDAY!

"If you would one day renovate yourself, do so from day to day."
Confucius

Even 10 minutes a day will improve your writing. Writing everyday will give you a chance to practice new vocabulary and grammar structures. If you write everyday, you will become more familiar with using English.

Okay, now let's look at fiction writing now and how you can use it to become more fluent in English.

Okay, on to the topic of FICTION WRITING.

Fiction writing is very personal. Fiction writing (poetry, songs, comic strips, short stories, novels, etc.) has only a few rules about style and formatting. It can be serious or it can be fun. It

can be formal or informal. We all have our own way of expressing ourselves. This is true in writing as well: we all have our own way of expressing ourselves through writing.

It's even possible to create your own style and formatting with poetry, songs, comic strips, short stories, and novels. Because you can make up your own rules, fiction writing can be fun and easy.

One of the reasons you are studying English is so that you can use it. Right? Sometimes students feel nervous about writing in English. Either they don't like to write or they are nervous about making mistakes.

If You Feel Nervous About Writing because you don't like making mistakes, here is a kind of fiction writing that can help you: Journaling (writing only for yourself). Even if you don't feel nervous about writing, Journaling is a great way to improve your fluency.

This is how to Journal:

- Find a place where you feel comfortable to write.
- Choose a topic (for example, what you did yesterday, sports, music, travel, etc.).
- Write without stopping for as long as you feel comfortable.
- Try to write as many words, phrases, and sentences as you can.
- Do not think about mistakes or worry about whether your grammar is correct.
- When you are finished, you may choose to read your journaling or you may choose to simply recycle it.

With journaling, you are practicing expressing yourself without an audience. There is no one to tell you if what you are writing is correct or incorrect. No one is listening; no one will read this writing. It's okay to make mistakes in journaling. It's a safe space to practice.

"Take chances. You will succeed if you are fearless of failure."

Natalie Goldberg

If you write without nervousness, you will probably enjoy writing more. You will also increase your writing (and speaking) speed and fluency with Journaling.

Now, on to the topic of **Non-Fiction Writing**

Non-fiction writing is very different from fiction writing. It can help you in different ways to become fluent in English. Did you know that in non-fiction how you write is almost as important as what you write?

How you write is almost as important as what you write!

It's VERY important for you to practice non-fiction writing with correct formatting. If you practice writing non-fiction with correct formatting you will have greater success in communicating.

Here's an example:

Imagine that you want to get a job with an English company. To get a job, you need to give or mail the company a resume. Do you know what a resume in English looks like? If you send a resume that doesn't look like most English resumes, the company might not even read it! You won't get the job because your resume is not written in the correct format and style.

Formatting means:

- The rules about where words are placed on the page. For example, formatting for resumes is different from formatting for letters.

Formatting includes:

- Rules about what paragraphs should look like.
- Rules about where to place the date, your name, a greeting, the contents, and your contact information, etc.

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The best way to learn proper formatting is to read, but if you want to study English formatting, you can. There are many style books and websites with information about formatting. This website has lots of useful information about writing in English:
<http://www.ohiou.edu/esl/english/writing/index.html>

But remember, **THE BEST WAY TO LEARN TO WRITE IS TO READ AND THEN PRACTICE WRITING EVERYDAY!**

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Non-fiction writing for university or business (letters, faxes, essays, resumes, articles, etc.) is usually quite formal. For university and business writing, it is important to use the correct tone as well as the correct grammar, punctuation and formatting.

Don't be discouraged. Learning how to write in English is not that difficult. It just takes practice.

Here Is How To Write Good Non-Fiction:

- Figure out who you will be reading your writing (your audience).
- Decide on the style of writing that you will use.

- Read other examples of the style of writing you have chosen.
- Think of what you would like to say.
- Write down your ideas in sentences.
- Put your sentences together on the page in the correct format.
- Re-read your writing. Check to see if there are any mistakes.
- Look at your writing. Did you use the correct format? Does it look like the other examples that you read?
- Be proud of yourself!

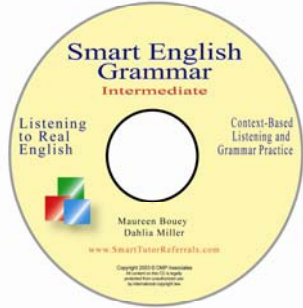
Here Are Some Things You Can Do To Become More Fluent In English Through Writing:

- Write EVERYDAY (for 10 minutes or more)!
- Practice ALL styles of writing. The first time you write a paragraph or an essay, it might not be very good, but the 40th time you write a paragraph or an essay, it probably will be good. Practice your writing!
- Try journaling.
- Find a pen pal
- Write emails. (Email is another form of writing that does not have many rules. So go ahead: relax about following the rules and have fun communicating by email.)
- Read ALL styles of writing.
- Remember that most writing is meant to be read. It is communication. If you want to communicate well, it's a good idea to know who you are writing to.

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