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# INTRODUCTION

Here are the twelve points in the order I shall be dealing with them. These are the points that after a long time in writing popular romance fiction (over 30 years) and over 60 books published I've learned are essential to creating a novel which grabs the reader and holds them with that vital **PTQ – Page Turning Quality**. They are the elements that appear in every good Romance and they remain the same over time, no matter in what decade or even what century the novels are published.

The twelve points I want to cover are:

1. Emotion
2. Conflict
3. Dialogue
4. Sharp Focus on Hero and heroine
5. Sensuality
6. Passion (and no - these two are NOT the same thing!)
7. Hero
8. Heroine
9. Plotting
10. The question WHY?
11. Intense Black Moment
12. Believable Happy Ever After

This book is intended as a practical workshop as well as a 'how to write' guide. So in each chapter I will be providing:

1. **Something to read**

- an explanation of one of the 12 points with a discussion of why it's important and how I approach it

2. **Something to think about**

- ideas/questions/discussion topics etc.

3. **Something to do.**

- This is why this book is a WORKbook, - not just a guide. I want you to do some writing!

Now don't panic. I won't ask for much - you're not going to have to produce a complete 55,000 word novel by the end of this. Most of the exercises will only take no more than a couple of pages or so of writing - 1000 words or less. But if you actually do the exercises then hopefully you'll learn more than just reading the lessons.

What I've found works well when I've taught this in writing classes, is for people to have a separate notebook/computer file or whatever and make notes as we go along.

- Note the topic, and your thoughts on that
- Note the question and write down some ideas and thoughts on that - especially if they surprise you
- Do the exercise - and write down your reactions to it.

Your reactions and thoughts should be as helpful to you as my lessons. You'll learn a lot by looking at your own assumptions, the new ideas that you've come up with as a result of challenging or confirming them; the different ways that you might now think of handling problems as a result of what you've learned. And by the end hopefully you'll have a series of notes/ideas/thoughts that you can take further

Finally, no 'how to' guide can ever actually teach you to write. It's not the case that checking off the points and thinking 'I've done that - and that. . .' will automatically mean that your submission will be published. What I've tried to do in this book is to highlight the areas that, after years of writing and publishing my own novels, working with editors and assessing manuscripts for other writers, I think are important and to give pointers to the way they can be handled successfully. Read through the book, do the exercises, and then try to apply what you've learned to your own work. Hopefully you'll then be able to see where your own personal strengths are and learn more about any weaknesses you have and how to correct them.

Okay? So let's begin!



What other writers say about

## KATE WALKER'S 12 POINT GUIDE TO WRITING ROMANCE

This book is a must-have for any aspiring romantic fiction writer. Everything you want to know/understand about romantic fiction is covered right here. Brilliant. You can tell that Kate Walker knows her romantic fiction inside out. A page turner all on its own.  
**Michelle Reid** (*Mills & Boon Modern/Harlequin Presents*)

Kate's book is full of sensible, practical, realistic advice - it's down to earth and kind, much like Kate herself.  
**Kate Hardy** (*M&B Medicals /Cherish/Romance*)

Kate Walker has come up with another keeper. Her 12-Point Guide to Writing Romance is clear, comprehensive and practical and jam-packed full of the kind of inside information it would take a stack of rejection/revision letters to learn the hard way. The checklists are wonderful for any writer published or yet to be. A fabulous resource, almost like having the multi published Kate sitting alongside sharing her experience and wisdom with you as you write.

If you write romance, do yourself a favour and get this book. You won't be disappointed.

**Trish Morey** (*Mills & Boon Modern Romance/Harlequin Presents*)

Kate Walker knows romance and she knows writing. Want to put the two together? Read this book.

**Anne McAllister** (*Mills & Boon Modern/Harlequin Presents*)

The 12 Point Guide is a must buy for anyone seriously interested in writing romance, Kate Walker is a veteran of well over 60 novels and she is the exception to the rule that those who can't, teach. She most certainly can and does! This book has to be compulsory reading for any aspiring author.

**Abby Green** (*M&B Modern/Harlequin Presents*)

Kate is a wonderful and inspirational teacher and her wisdom shines through in this incredibly useful book.

**Julie Cohen** (*Author of Dear Thing etc for Random House and Creative Writing tutor*)

Kate Walker's 12 Point Guide gives a master class in how to write series romance and should be on the bookshelf of anyone who is interested in writing in the genre.

**Michelle Styles** (*Harlequin Historical*)

What a wonderful resource for not only novice writers, but for those of us who have a few books under our belts. Reading about the craft, about why we do what we do, about what makes a story work...it helped invigorate my current book. Kate has such an easy way, a gift of explaining what's what. From finding your voice, to plot, to characters...it's all there!

**Holly Jacobs** (*Harlequin Superromance*)

I regularly recommend the Twelve Point Guide to Writing Romance to my Creative Writing Students. I'm glad to say, they all agree it is one of the most helpful books they've read on writing and works for all types of fiction. I think writers from beginners to experienced writers get solid practical advice from this book which is both clear, logical and jargon-free and as one of my more down-to-earth male students said, 'makes you actually get on and write.'

**Dr Karen Maitland** (*Creative Writing Tutor, Adult Education and author of Company of Liars, The Gallows Curse etc*)

The 12 Point Guide was the first romance writing book I bought and has been invaluable on my journey to publication. A must for anyone wanting to write romance.

**Rachael Thomas** (*Top 10 in So You Think You Can Write contest 2013 - and newly signed author with Harlequin Presents*)