

FREE THE FIRST FIVE PAGES: A WRITERS GUIDE TO STAYING OUT OF THE REJECTION PILE PDF



Noah Lukeman | 202 pages | 01 Aug 2010 | Oxford University Press | 9780199575282 | English | Oxford, United Kingdom

The First Five Pages: A Writer's Guide To Staying Out of the Rejection Pile by Noah Lukeman

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The First Five Pages: A Writer's Guide to Staying Out of the Rejection Pile | Poets & Writers

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If an editor or agent or reader loses interest after a page or two, you've lost him or her completely, even if the middle of your novel is brilliant and the ending phenomenal. Noah Lukeman, an agent in Manhattan, has taken The First Five Pages Editors always tell novice writers that the first few pages of a manuscript are crucial in the publishing process -- and it's true.

Noah Lukeman, an agent in Manhattan, has taken this advice and created a book that examines just what this means, and I have to tell you, it's one of the best I've read. I've written and seen published pretty The First Five Pages: A Writers Guide to Staying Out of the Rejection Pile to a The First Five Pages: A Writers Guide to Staying Out of the Rejection Pile novels in as many years -- some are still to be published and will be out shortly; others are already out of print after four years.

I'm glad I did now. It has helped, immediately. I'm already embarrassed about some of the goofs I made in my writing -- and I've been revising recent prose with his advice in mind. First off, Lukeman is a literary agent who once was an editor, and his editorial eye is sharp.

If every novelist and short story writer in this country had Lukeman as an editor, we'd have a lot more readable prose out there. He writes: Many writers spend the majority of their time devising their plot. What they don't seem to understand is that if their execution -- if their prose -- isn't up to par, their plot may not even be considered.

This bears repeating, because in all the books I've read on writing, this is an element that is most often forgotten in the rush to come up with snappy ideas and sharp plot progressions. You can always send a hero on a journey, after all, but if no reader wants to follow him, you've wasted your time. In a tone that can be a bit professorial at times, Lukeman brings what prose is -- and how it reads to others -- into sharp focus.

He deals with dialogue, style, and, most importantly, sound. How does prose sound? It must have rhythm, its own kind of music, in order to draw the reader into the fictive dream. Lukeman's tips and pointers are genuinely helpful, and even important with regard to the sound of the prose itself. Lukeman also brings in on-target exercises for writers of prose and the wonderful advice for novelists to read poetry -- and often. Those first five pages are crucial, for all concerned.

But forget the editor and agent and reader. They are important for you, the writer, because they determine the sharpness of your focus, the completeness of your vision, the confidence you, as a writer, need to plunge into a three- or four- or five-hundred-page story. The First Five Pages should be on every writer's shelf. This is the real thing. In addition, Clegg is the author of the world's first publisher-sponsored Internet email novel, Naomi.

Get A Copy. Paperbackpages. Published January 20th by Touchstone first published January 1st More Details Original Title. Other Editions 8. Friend Reviews. To see what your friends thought of this book, please sign up. To ask other readers questions about The First Five Pagesplease sign up. John Hannan I'm only a quarter through the book, but: Absolutely not. The title appears as such, but it's written from a potential agent's perspective - which is s...more I'm only a quarter through the book, but: Absolutely not.

The title appears as such, but it's written from a potential agent's perspective - which is something pretty novel for one of these types of books. The book is lists tips to improve the chances of your manuscript both being read and being liked by a potential publisher or agent. It's a refreshing look at the writing craft, and while, as the book's title says, it's focused on the first five pages, most of what I've read so far is practical editing advice in general.

I feel I've learned plenty already. See 2 questions about The First Five Pages... Lists with This Book. Community Reviews. Showing Average rating 3.

Rating details. More filters. Sort order. Aug 24, Kelly H. Maybedog rated it did not like it Shelves: what-i-love-bookshow-hardcopywhat-nonfictionwhat-how-to-advicewhat-writing.

This isn't at all what it claims to be. I was looking for a book that would give examples of what to do and not to do in the first five pages of a book to get an editor to look at the work, the hook.

In fact, he didn't think hooks are that important. Every other writing book I've read said that if you don't grab the editor on the first couple of pages, your book won't get read.

Otherwise it was another general writing book and not a good one at that. It took a long time to get to the meat of the This isn't at all what it claims to be. It took a long time to get to the meat of the book and it would only be useful for someone really new to writing who isn't very good and has no clue. There were even grammar errors! Most of the examples were silly and extreme, made up to prove a point but not showing anything that might really be written in a book.

They only focused on what was wrong, not *The First Five Pages: A Writers Guide to Staying Out of the Rejection Pile* how to do it right. Only occasionally was a real book quoted but they were all similar, mostly classics, and ALL written by men. Some of them were even bad. The opening line of Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* is, "As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect.

The text was long without interruption, no helpful sections, recaps, sidebars, anecdotes, nothing that would make this something other than the try and boring book it was. The section organization made no sense. It was completely focused on print publishing. The stuff about formatting the manuscript was good, *The First Five Pages: A Writers Guide to Staying Out of the Rejection Pile* I've never seen before, but I don't think anybody submits manuscripts by paper anymore.

It did have exercises but in huge paragraphs rather than a list, and they were all verbose, not short and sweet and helpful. This was when the author really lost me: he said that missing dialog tags was a problem. Most dialog tags are completely unnecessary and clutter up the writing! If something is in quotes, it's obviously dialog; "he said" is not needed. The writing should convey who's talking and if it doesn't, that's the problem, not the tags. He didn't differentiate between an agent and a publisher.

He also didn't mention the differences in various genres. For example, he said that we're tired of the description of a male protagonist as brown-eyed and brown-haired. That would be novel in a romance. Another poor recommendation is that you don't need to reveal the plot right away. What about in a thriller or mystery? The plot is the most important thing and key.

If someone looking for suspense has to wade through two or three chapters to get *The First Five Pages: A Writers Guide to Staying Out of the Rejection Pile* excitement, they're going to put it down. Lastly, the beginning of each chapter has a quotation sort of about writing but that doesn't match the chapter at all. I don't recommend this book to anyone.

View all 7 comments. Sep 24, Romie rated it liked it Shelves: read-for-uniread-as-an-audiobookadultnon-fictionabout-publishing. Jan 23, Rain Jeys rated it it was amazing Recommends it for: all writers. So once I stopped beating my wrists and wailing at the utter unfairness of how ruthless editors and publishers can be, I took a deep breath and considered the advice in this book. But I get it.

The First Five Pages

His experience as a literary agent who has read thousands of manuscripts has led Lukeman to this conclusion: The purpose of his book is to show writers how to be their own first readers. *The First Five Pages*. It assumes that if you find one line of extraneous dialogue on page 1, you will likely find one line of extraneous dialogue on each page to come.

Even before he gets to a discussion of such things as dialogue, characterization, and point of view, Lukeman emphasizes the importance of Presentation. By Presentation he means such purely mechanical matters as paper, margins, and enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

No matter how great the artistic merit of a manuscript, careless packaging can keep it from taken seriously.

Such inattention to detail, says Lukeman. I especially like what Lukeman has to say about the importance of an extensive vocabulary in creating a clear, specific, distinctive style. He notes a dearth of vocabulary in the work of modern writers: The chapters are brief, but to the point, and each one is followed by writing exercises.

For the author who has a novel ready to market, *The First Five Pages* is a valuable tool for the final revision. You can find the book on Amazon. Want to improve your English in five minutes a day? Get a subscription and start receiving our writing tips and exercises daily!

Interesting post. I like strange words. Dictionaries are always nice to snuggle up to. We recently got an unabridged dictionary from a neighbor. Old, but interesting. Seems like an interesting book. I think it will help me. It touts itself on not being a book about creative writing, but somehow manages to hit the fundamental nails on the heads in each chapter.

I agree with Noah Lukeman. I feel like often times, authors are so excited to get their work out there that they fail to see their work as readers often do — something that they do not have to read. The first pages should make a reader and the writer want to find out more, even though he or she does not have to. Stop making those embarrassing mistakes! Subscribe *The First Five Pages: A Writers Guide to Staying Out of the Rejection Pile* Daily Writing Tips today!

You will improve your English in only 5 minutes per day, guaranteed! You'll also get three bonus ebooks completely free! Try It Free Now. AravisGirl on June 11, *The First Five Pages: A Writers Guide to Staying Out of the Rejection Pile* I like strange words.

Bennett on February 06, am Seems like an interesting book. Leave a comment: Cancel comment Name required :. Email address required :.
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