

SHOULD YOU WRITE FICTION OR NONFICTION?



When you look at places like Amazon's best-seller lists, they are crowded with fiction. But is nonfiction dead? What would be better for you to write: fiction or nonfiction?

Which Do You Prefer?

Many writers have a preference. For them it is only one or the other, not both. And they would not even consider writing the other.

Stephen King, for example, hesitated for years before he wrote "On Writing." He found it so easy to write fiction, and so hard to write nonfiction. He reveals this inside his book, and it became a classic "must-read" for aspiring fiction writers.

For others, it is out of the question to write fiction. They do well with nonfiction, and they do not know about how to come up with a plot, create characters, or write dialogue.

If you have a clear preference, then the answer is clear: write what you love to write.

But if you doubt it is worth it, then follow along. You will learn the answer soon.

Does Nonfiction Stand a Chance?

Whether you check the general best-seller lists or short-reads, you will find that most books there are fiction. And the majority of those books are romance.

Romance is the best-selling of all categories on Amazon, and probably also in other bookstores.

That does not mean that you have to write romance to sell books. Since romance is that popular, there is also a steep competition, and it will often be worth it to write in a genre or category that is less popular.

If you want to write fiction, you can pick a sub-sub-category to romance, or write in a completely different category, like mystery, or women's fiction. Or you could write nonfiction.

Nonfiction Is Far From Dead, But...

Here is something that may surprise you: lots of writers make a steady high income from writing and publishing books that you will not find on the best-seller lists.

The secret is to write lots of books under the same pen name.

By doing this, it is a lot easier for buyers to find your book.

A good example of a writer who did that already many years ago is Steve Scott.

Whether you search for a book about creating good habits, or one about writing nonfiction books, you will stumble across one of his books. And since he writes excellent books, chances are that you will check his other books and buy some of those, as well.

Steve Scott also wrote many books under the pen name S.J. Scott. Those were books in other categories, but he did not make a secret out of his pen name, and his readers crossed over from one pen name to the other, devouring his books.

If you ask Steve Scott, he will say that nonfiction is far from dead.

But it takes more than one book, and it takes a strong title, a good cover, and a great description.

Which Is Easier? Fiction or Nonfiction?

Some will say that fiction is easier to write, because you do not have to look up facts.

Others will say that nonfiction is easier to write, because you do not have to think about show, don't tell, dialogue, character growth, and many of the other techniques that fiction writers must deal with.

But maybe it is not that important, which is easier, after all. It is more important that you write what you like to write, and then learn the ropes as you go.

Practice Daily

Whether you write fiction or nonfiction, daily practice is so important.

“But I do not have an hour to write,” you may argue.

You do not have to.

Set a goal to write at least five minutes daily. Just five minutes. That is doable for most people.

Let us say that you can type 40 words per minute. Five minutes times 40 words, that makes 200 words.

After a month, you will have at least 6,000 words.

That is a small nonfiction book. Or a short story. Achieved by investing only five minutes daily.

Does that sound doable or what?

Think about it. Instead of dreaming of the day when you will have plenty of time to write, start today.

Get a calendar. A wall-calendar is great, but a table, printed one will work, too.

Then every day write for five minutes and make a mark on the calendar every day after writing.

This will become a long string of marks, and the more marks you have, the more difficult it will be to break the chain.

And the better you will be at writing, whether you chose to write nonfiction or fiction.

Which Can Make You More Money

If you write well, and you publish frequently, then statistics say that you can make more money with fiction.

But if you struggle with fiction, and nonfiction comes easier to you, then just be persistent, and you will make more with the nonfiction you publish, than with the fiction you struggle with.

Can I Do Both?

Yes, there is nothing wrong with writing both fiction and nonfiction. In fact, if you do, you will double your chances of selling books, and you will improve your writing skills even more.

For example, if you have learned how to write fiction well, and you know how and when to show instead of just telling, then you can add that technique to your nonfiction writing.

Your nonfiction will be more interesting to read, easier to understand and to remember, if you add stories to it. And your stories, even in nonfiction, will get better, the more you learn about fiction.

The other way around, your fiction will improve as you learn more about how to research different topics.

So yes, you can do both. And you can even do it under the same pen name, unless you feel it will confuse or anger your readers.

In Conclusion

In the end, it is all up to you. Should you write fiction or nonfiction? Well, which of the two are you really passionate about? If you are equally passionate, then pick the one that falls the easiest to you. Or if you have the time and energy, then write both fiction and nonfiction.

References:

Steve Scott: <https://www.amazon.com/Steve-Scott/e/B0098NFKNM>

S.J. Scott: <https://www.amazon.com/S-J-Scott/e/B00D60KTC0>