



The Elements of Story: Field Notes on Nonfiction Writing

By Francis Flaherty

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“A splendid book for journalists (new or old), fiction writers, essayists, and critics. But it could also be of great use to the intelligent common reader, the man or woman who wonders why it’s impossible to finish reading certain stories and why others carry the reader in a vivid rush to the end.”

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In the spirit of Strunk and White’s classic *The Elements of Style*, comes *The Elements of Story*, by Francis Flaherty, longtime story editor at *The New York Times*. A brilliant blend of memoir and how-to, *The Elements of Story* offers more than 50 principles that emphasize storytelling aspects rather than simply the mechanics of writing—a relentlessly entertaining, totally accessible writing guide for the novice and the professional alike.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Frank Flaherty’s *The Elements of Story* is a model of good sense, a clear, well-lighted path through the jungle of nonfiction narrative. It represents so much accrued wisdom that even veteran writers will want to keep it on hand, and it’s fun to read, too.”

From the Back Cover

Most writing books dwell on common issues of style and grammar. Yet most writers also confront complex problems of story design. This fifty-rule guide by Francis Flaherty, a *New York Times* editor, offers much-needed solutions and sage advice to address these concerns.

"Sometimes, say things sideways," Flaherty writes. "The reader will be grateful." "White is whitest on black," he observes. "Let contrast work for you." Through such hard-won, story-level insights, sprinkled with examples from real stories and leavened with a good dose of newsroom memoir, *The Elements of Story* merits a spot on every writer's shelf.

About the Author

Francis Flaherty has worked for more than seventeen years at *The New York Times*. He has written for *Harper's*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Commonweal*, and *The Progressive* and teaches journalism at NYU. He lives with his wife and two children in Brooklyn, New York.

Users Review

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