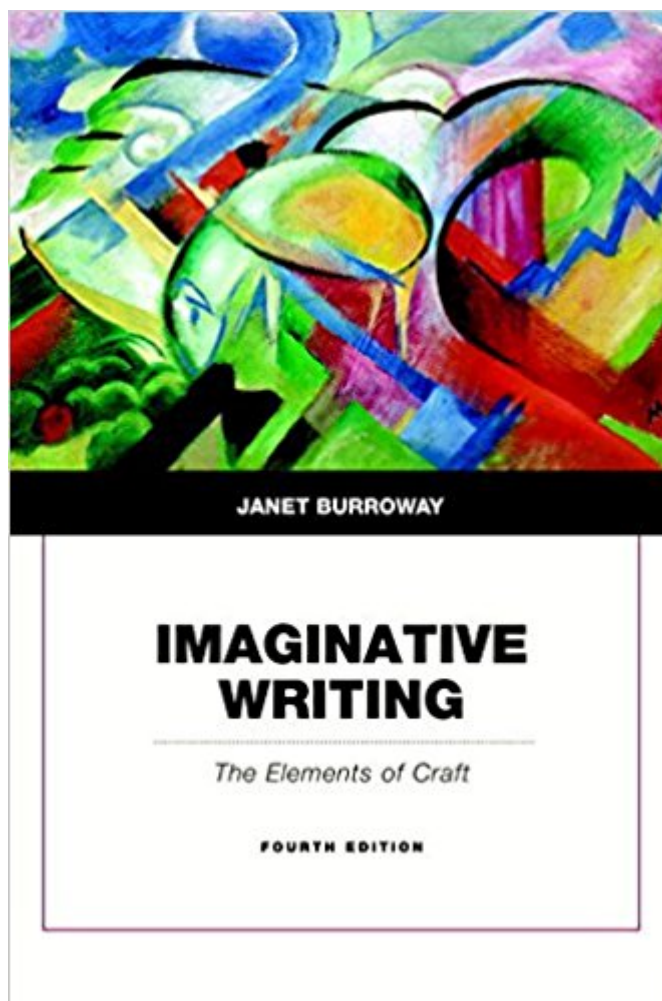


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# Imaginative Writing (4th Edition)



## Synopsis

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-- For courses in Introduction to Creative Writing or Creative Writing in English or Creative Writing Departments

Written by bestselling author Janet Burroway, *Imaginative Writing*, covers all four genres: creative nonfiction, fiction, poetry, and drama. This textbook discusses elements of craft common to all creative writing before delving into the individual genres. After an introduction, the next five chapters each investigate a specific element of craft: Image, Voice, Character, Setting, and Story from a perspective that crosses all genres. Nearly half of the selections in all four genres are new. New "Try This" exercises give students plenty of practice. *Imaginative Writing* is a very popular book for courses on teaching the craft of creative writing.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

JANET BURROWAY is the author of plays, poetry, essays, children's books, and eight novels including *The Buzzards*, *Raw Silk* (runner up for the National Book Award), *Opening Nights*, *Cutting Stone*, and *Bridge of Sand*. Her other publications include a collection of personal essays, *Embalming Mom*, in addition to a volume of poetry, *Material Goods*, and three children's books in verse, *The Truck on the Track*, *The Giant Jam Sandwich*, and *The Perfect Pig*. Her plays *Medea with Child* (The Reva Shiner Award), *Sweepstakes*, *Division of Property* (Arts & Letters Award), and *Parts of Speech* have received readings and productions in New York, London, San Francisco, Hollywood, Chicago, and various regional theaters. Her textbook *Writing Fiction*, now in its ninth edition, is the most widely used creative writing text in the United States. Her most recent books are a memoir, *Losing Tim*, and a collection of essays she has edited, *A Story Larger Than My Own: Women Writers Look Back on Their Lives and Careers*. She is Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor Emerita at the Florida State University in Tallahassee and has most recently taught in the MFA Program in Creative Writing at Northwestern University.

*Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft* (FOURTH edition) By Janet Burroway' Reviewed by C J Singh (Berkeley, Calif.). I've been using Janet Burroway's *IMAGINATIVE WRITING: THE ELEMENTS OF CRAFT* in my introductory workshops, starting with the first edition. The participants' anonymous evaluations of this book have been highly favorable. Why should you have confidence in Burroway's book? Just look at the list of her publications on page (ii) -- every creative writing genre! Moreover, she's taught creative writing for decades. Your study of this book will anchor you into a firm foundation for all of your future creative writing. How? By Re-reading as a Writer its 61 Masterpiece examples and internalizing narrative-craft elements by DOING its Try This Prompts. The fourth edition adds several new short stories, creative nonfictions, poems, dramas and drops some of those in the third edition, keeping the overall page count in the book about the same. The new stories added are by Tobias Wolff, Jamaica Kincaid, Ursula Le Guin and others; new examples of creative nonfictions are from Michael Chabon, David Sedaris, and others. Also new are nearly half of the poems and dramas. Some of the additions are from the most widely anthologized. That's good for beginners: if you haven't read them before, they are great additions; good for instructors: if you have read them before, they cut down your preparation time. Tobias Wolff's "Bullet in the Brain" is an excellent example of innovative craft. The extended use of what the main character did not remember in his dying moments to show-and-tell the back-story and the one childhood event that he did remember to reveal the theme of the story. The theme, in my reading:

the protagonist in his childhood had great love for the music of language, which got vitiated by his choice of profession, that of a book critic - a 'deformation professionnelle' characterized by habitual cynical language. The expository sections of Poetry and Drama are expanded. Particularly helpful will be the first and final drafts of Elizabeth Bishop's poem "One Art" and Patty Seyburn's "Anatomy of Disorder." In the Revision section, Burroway wisely retains an example from her own work because only the author can authoritatively know her changing intentions in the re-drafting process. As in the earlier editions, the author invites instructors to email her with suggestions. This feedback has helped the author clarify exposition and enhance her book with every new edition. It's currently a required textbook at UC Berkeley and numerous other creative-writing programs world-wide. Based on my experience of using this book as the main text in writing workshops, I recommend reading Chapter 6, "Story" first: "As readers, we will always, if the story succeeds, have our capacity for empathy enlarged by having lived in the character's skin for the duration. Every story is in this important human sense a 'love story'." (p 167) Janet Burroway's unique multigenre approach, lucid expositions, and "Try This" prompts make IMAGINATIVE WRITING the top recommendation for learning the elements of the creative-writing craft. For a brief comparison with the earlier editions, please read on. If you are buying this book for self-study, I recommend the THIRD edition as the selection of stories is just as good and a used copy will cost much less at .com.-----.

**Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft (THIRD edition)** By Janet Burroway  
Reviewed by C J Singh (Berkeley, CA)  
27 of 27 people found the following review helpful. (Posted on 1 Feb 2010)

**The THIRD Edition of the Classic Intro to Creative Writing**  
The following is an addendum to my review of the second edition that was posted on 8 April 2007.) Janet Burroway's "Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft, 3rd Edition" adds several new short stories, nonfictions, poems, dramas and drops some of the ones in the second edition, keeping the overall page count of the book about the same. Notably enhanced are the chapters on drama and on poetry. The drama section includes several examples of a newly popular genre, the ten-minute play. Although marketed as a textbook for Creative Writing 101, this book can serve as an excellent primer for self-teaching. On completing the brief "try this" exercises included, you'll acquire a good understanding of the craft elements and be able to judge whether the comments on your work by other apprentice writers in a workshop or your friends are on the mark or not. Beware that even positive, flattering comments ("I loved this image...") can mislead you.-----.

**Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft (SECOND Edition)** By Janet Burroway.  
Reviewed by C J Singh (Berkeley, Calif.). (Posted on 8 April 2007.) Unlike the reviews to date, my review focuses on the current edition, not the first edition. The overall organization of the book is unchanged. The first part comprises chapters on the five elements of craft common to all

genres of imaginative writing: Image; Voice; Character; Setting; Story. The second part comprises chapters on the four genres: Creative Nonfiction; Fiction; Poetry; Drama. Among the new examples in the second edition are the following: contemporary short stories such as Jhumpa Lahiri's "Interpreter of Maladies," William Trevor's "Sitting with the Dead," Ron Carlson's "Big foot Stole My Wife

Exactly what I needed for my class, use it daily.

A nice book... A must have for students of creative writing.

It's everything it was supposed to be. No more, no less. Nothing to say about the product really. The seller did everything right and timely though. I'd buy from them again if needed.

This is a very good overview of the different types of writing. The real gem is all of the excerpts at the end of each chapter and the "Try this" exercises to help build your craft. I highly recommend it.

In great condition, and very useful for my courses online.

This book was helpful in my eng202 class

Excellent guide

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