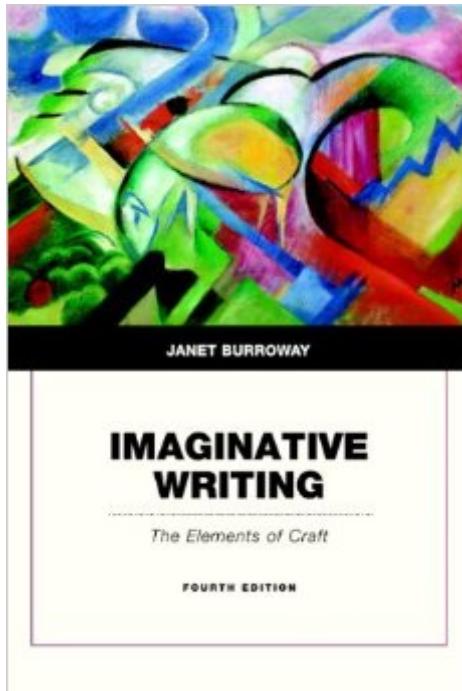


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# Imaginative Writing: The Elements Of Craft (4th Edition)



## Synopsis

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## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft (FOURTH edition)By Janet Burroway'Reviewed by C J Singh (Berkeley, Calif.).I have long used Janet Burroway's IMAGINATIVE WRITING: THE ELEMENTS OF CRAFT as the textbook in my introductory workshops, starting with the first edition. The participants' anonymous evaluations have been highly favorable.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 professionelle' characterized by habitual cynical language.The expository sections of Poetry and Drama are expanded.

Imaginative Writing (The fourth edition), is an outstanding text on the elements of craft, and it includes a wonderful selection of sample works from authors like Annie Dillard, David Sedaris, Jamaica Kincaid,Theodore Roethke, and many more. As a creative writing professor, I have been seeking a strong text that does it all--provides craft readings, prompts, and an anthology that are all consistently good. I have not found that book until now.I will break my review into sections: organization, accessibility, and usefulness.Organization: It is unique. Broken into two main sections, Part I: The Elements of Craft, is dedicated to the elements of craft for each genre (fiction, nonfiction, poetry and drama). What is unique is that Part I is broken down by craft elements, NOT by genre. For example, the "Image" chapter discusses image as related to all genres, and follows the craft discussion with selections in each genre that demonstrate strong use of imagery. Part II: The Genres, follows the more traditional breakdown genre-specific discussion, following up with readings in that genre. This dual structure allows instructors to teach either the elements or the

genres--or both, with a specific focus that suits the class. Accessibility: Very accessible, though Intro to Creative Writing students might find it overwhelming. I am currently using it for Creative Writing I, which has a prerequisite intro class. The students are mostly college freshmen. Some find it dense, but the strong readers benefit from the thorough craft discussion. The book is dense, with pages full of small text that offers little relief to the eye. It does seem to be overwhelming and "boring" to some of my weaker students.

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