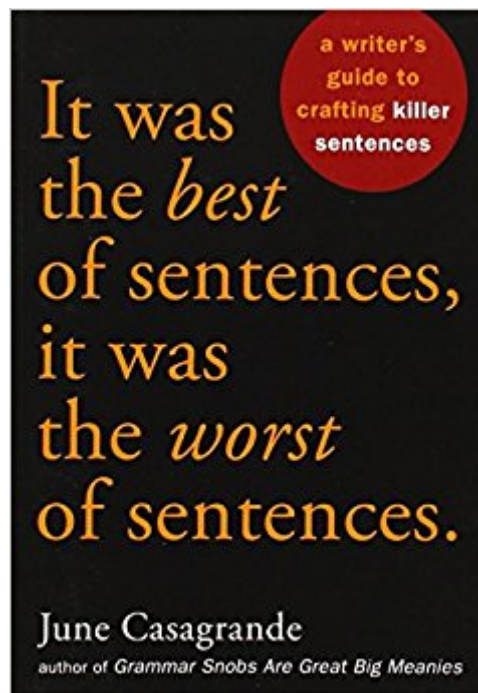




The book was found

It Was The Best Of Sentences, It Was The Worst Of Sentences: A Writer's Guide To Crafting Killer Sentences



Synopsis

In this wickedly humorous manual, language columnist June Casagrande uses grammar and syntax to show exactly what makes some sentences great and other sentences suck. Great writing isn't born, it's built sentence by sentence. But too many writers and writing guides overlook this most important unit. The result? Manuscripts that will never be published and writing careers that will never begin. With chapters on "Conjunctions That Kill" and "Words Gone Wild," this lighthearted guide is perfect for anyone who's dead serious about writing, from aspiring novelists to nonfiction writers, conscientious students to cheeky literati. So roll up your sleeves and prepare to craft one bold, effective sentence after another. Your readers will thank you.

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Customer Reviews

"an editor and grammar columnist's funny but no-nonsense guide to better writing." St. Petersburg Times "Great writing starts with strong sentences. This is your guidebook to mastering the art." DONALD MAASS, literary agent and author of *The Fire in Fiction* "June mixes sassy fun with practical advice. You'll laugh all the way to writing better." MIGNON FOGARTY, author of *Grammar Girl's Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing* "It Was the Best of Sentences, It Was the Worst of Sentences is that incredibly rare breed of book: a guide to grammar and style that is simultaneously smart, engaging, and instructive. By tackling prose composition on a

sentence-by-sentence level, June Casagrande has found a way to provide intensely practical advice for the novice writer—•not to mention unexpected insights for the expert writer. It would make a welcome addition to any language lover’s library. —•ELIZABETH LITTLE, author of *Biting the Wax Tadpole*

June Casagrande is the author of the weekly syndicated “A Word, Please” grammar column and a copy editor for the custom publishing department of the Los Angeles Times. She has worked as a reporter, features writer, city editor, proofreader, and copyediting instructor for UC San Diego Extension. She is the author of *Grammar Snobs Are Great Big Meanies*, *Mortal Syntax*, and *It Was the Best of Sentences, It Was the Worst of Sentences*. She lives in Pasadena, California, with her husband. Visit www.junecasagrande.com.

I can’t recommend this book strongly enough. Not only is it informative, but it’s presented in such a way that it’s not tedious. Dare I even say . . . fun? Though I already knew many of the basics that dealt with punctuation and grammar, I bought this book with the intention of honing my editing skills. Sentence structure is something I’m always on the lookout to improve while editing, so I truly enjoyed the chapters that dealt with word-by-word dissection of ad copy, paragraphs, opening lines, and more. I have to admit, I looked at some of those and thought, “Well, that’s not so bad,” and then cringed at how many things had to change to make the clearest sentence possible. As I continued to read, though, the errors became more and more obvious, and I didn’t feel nearly as lacking in my observational skills. If you’re a writer, you need to read this. Perhaps more than once. It can only help you in making your writing tighter. If you’re an editor, this little book should be on your reference shelf as one of the handiest guides you’ll ever own. The very end of the book, in fact, is one of my favorite parts: an appendix that lists the most incriminating errors you can make—the ones that will brand you as a hack and tell your readers “the writer is out of her element,” according to Ms. Casagrande. They’re the misused words that drive grammarphiles insane, and the very stuff that will drive an Internet argument off-topic and down the road of personal insults in a heartbeat. If you’re a homeschooler, you need to get this for yourself and your kids and start them off right, with an instructional book that won’t bore them to tears. After all, with chapter titles such as “Antique Desk Suitable for Lady with Thick Legs and Large

Drawers,ÃfÂçÃ â ÑÃ Â• how can you go wrong?

This book is a gem. Buy it. Read it. Immerse yourself in it. I've bought several books on writing; this is the only one I've finished reading. In fact, I'm reading it a second time. And when I'm done, I'll read it a third time. In this book, June shows us how a basic knowledge of grammar can improve our writing. Appendix A on the formation of sentences complements the book proper. Each chapter abounds with cogent instruction--examples are provided, errors are pointed out and suggestions given on how to fix them. Great teaching pedagogy for this kind of thing. I do have a quibble, though. For some reason, Miss Casagrande despises the semicolon. So much so, that she omits it from Appendix B--on punctuation. Sure, she does state that a lot of people having trouble using the semicolon. But isn't that all the more reason to explain it? So that we don't continue to misuse it? Furthermore, I have seen deft uses of the semicolon by expert writers; surely, the semicolon has its place. One qualification: I am a novice writer (and I use the term "writer" loosely); therefore, the great benefit that I have gained from reading this book--is because there is much I don't know. However, I suspect that writers who are more skillful than I, can still pick up a thing or two. Regardless, it's always good to review the fundamentals. Overall: Great book. Full of humor. Marvelous read.

You need to buy this book just to read it; you'll learn to write better without studying. I bought a slew of books on punctuation and writing for my two homeschooled children, advanced 7th and 8th graders. This is our favorite! It's not just about writing concisely (technical) or creatively (fiction); it's real-life communication. I did try to give it 4.5 stars for her one slight problem. In a past life I was a tech writer for Nuclear Power Experience; you talk about not changing the meaning of a sentence! A few of her rewrites do "technically" change the meaning of her examples, but 99% of readers would never notice. I say, "Buy the book!" You and your children 6th grade and up will laugh your way to learning.

This was a good reference book, and I found myself highlighting practically everything in it. The author gave good advice, tips, exercises, and examples throughout the book. I wish I had this book when I wrote my first book, and while I was editing another book. I liked her sense of humor, but I hated her strong feelings against using semicolons (even though she gave an example with a semicolon in it. It's the one about an elephant). Personally, I love the semicolon; I have no intention of omitting it! This is definitely a book you will refer to time after time.

For the first time in my life I am thoroughly entertained by and appreciative of grammar rules. Go figure! I have enjoyed this author's weekly column in my Sunday newspaper so much that I sought out this book. It did not disappoint. If you would like to improve your writing, but have always found the rules of grammar tedious and boring, give casagrande a chance- she finds a way to make it amusing, interesting and fun. I also plan to give this as a gift to a family member in college who is a budding editor...

Well crafted sentences are a MUST whether in a book or correspondence. It conveys the mental picture or thought you wish to express, and how you craft your words is key to the success of your endeavor. This little gem for guidance and improvement of sentence structure helps you do just that. It makes your sentences meaningful. It helps you clean up awkward word placement and delves into some critical grammar issues that often destroys the clarity of what you are attempting to say. Example: remember a grammar book that came out a while back titled "Eats Shoots and Leaves"? (most likely still available) What do you see when you read these words-- a person eating a strange lunch, or someone performing an action sequence? It was the best of sentences, it was the worst of sentences, focuses on workable sentences only, and is a very handy little book to reach for while engaged in any writing.

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