

Name _____

Reading Guide: On Writing by Stephen King

Due First Day of Class! Be sure your answers are complete (no one-word answers!) 100 points

1. Do you agree with Stephen King that the desire to write always starts with a love of reading? How much and what do you read? Give details in your answer.

2. What role did Stephen King's childhood play in his evolution as a writer? Did your childhood experiences, especially in elementary and middle school, influence your feelings about writing?

[Type here]

5. King doesn't read in order to "study the craft" but believes that there is "a learning process going on" when he reads. How do you read books? What do you think about as you read? Are you aware of a writer's style and language use?

6. In the first foreword to *On Writing*, King talks about the fact that no one ever asks popular writers about the language. Yet he cares passionately about language and about the art and craft of telling stories on paper. How well do you know grammar and mechanics? Do you think you are a good writer? Explain your answer.

[Type here]

7. Often, King says, "bad books have more to teach than the good ones." He believes that most readers remember the first book they put down thinking "I can write better than this." Can you remember a book that gave you that feeling? Why?

8. King's self-imposed "production schedule" is 2,000 words a day and he suggests that all writers set a daily writing goal. What kind of discipline, if any, do you impose upon your own writing efforts? Do you have a particular place where you go to write? Do you have a routine that you follow?

[Type here]

9. King tells a story about getting his fantasy desk, a massive oak slab that he placed in the middle of his spacious study. For six years, he sat "behind that desk either drunk or wrecked out of [his] mind." After sobering up, he replaced the desk with a smaller one that he put in a corner. "Life isn't a support system for art," he figured out. "It's the other way around." Discuss King's "revelation" and the symbolism of the placement of the desk.

10. What do you expect to get out of Writing 101? Why are you taking the class?