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# How Fiction Works

By James Wood



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In the tradition of E. M. Forster's *Aspects of the Novel* and Milan Kundera's *The Art of the Novel*, *How Fiction Works* is a scintillating study of the magic of fiction--an analysis of its main elements and a celebration of its lasting power. Here one of the most prominent and stylish critics of our time looks into the machinery of storytelling to ask some fundamental questions: What do we mean when we say we "know" a fictional character? What constitutes a telling detail? When is a metaphor successful? Is Realism realistic? Why do some literary conventions become dated while others stay fresh?

James Wood ranges widely, from Homer to *Make Way for Ducklings*, from the Bible to John le Carré, and his book is both a study of the techniques of fiction-making and an alternative history of the novel. Playful and profound, *How Fiction Works* will be enlightening to writers, readers, and anyone else interested in what happens on the page.



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