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Techniques to Succeed

In the essay “Shitty First Drafts” by Anne Lamott, “How to Mark a Book” by Mortimer Adler, and in Ray Bradbury's discussion of *Fahrenheit*, each author shared their individual objectives they had for reading and writing books. Although some may find reading and writing tedious, most people find it inspiring and motivating; which is exactly how these writers felt.

When it comes to writing for Anne Lamott, the only way she can write anything is if she writes “really really shitty first drafts” (Lamott par.3). Whether you're a journalist, author, or a student, nobody's perfect and everyone goes through the same process to have a great product. As stated in Anne Lamott's "Shitty First Drafts," it is clear that one has to make mistakes to have an exceptional outcome because "all good writing begins with terrible first efforts" (Lamott par.10). One who writes a "shitty first draft" is how one ends up with an excellent final draft.

For Mortimer Adler, “reading means consuming, as you consume a steak, to ‘get it into your bloodstream’” (Adler par.2). One might think a book is dull because they are not envisioning it the way the author illustrated the book. One has to physically write down, circle, and underline words that are most essential. In the article, "How to Mark a Book," it is clear that a book is not fully understood unless annotated when Mortimer Adler states, "marking up a book is not an act of mutilation but of love” (Adler par.4). One needs to read between the lines to truly interpret the message the author is sending.

Lastly, for Ray Bradbury, reading and writing novels is a form of aspiration. Ray Bradbury went to the library for the first time at the age of seven and got inspired right away by books written by Edgar Allan Poe, Shakespeare, and John Steinbeck. Bradbury then started writing his own novels to enlighten others the way his favorite authors influenced him. In Ray Bradbury's short discussion of *Fahrenheit*, it is perceptible that his purpose was to influence others when he stated, "things that you do should be things that you love, and things that you love should be things that you do" (Bradbury 01:11-01:17). In other words, if one is reading his novel, it should be because they want to not because they have to. Otherwise, it won't be as interesting nor amusing.

An author's purpose is to persuade, inform, and entertain. In the sources listed, Anne Lamott, Mortimer Adler, and Ray Bradbury all shared their own techniques and experiences in how they became and how one can become an exceptional writer and reader. For some, it may not be a fascinating concept, but for others it is everything.

Works Cited

Adler, Mortimer J. "How to Mark a Book." (n.d.): n. pag. Web. 24 Apr. 2017.

Fahrenheit 451. NEA Big Read, n.d. Web. 24 Apr. 2017.

Lamott, Anne. "Shitty First Drafts." (n.d.): n. pag. Web. 24 Apr. 2017.