

Before You Write Your Book:

4 Questions Every Nonfiction Writer Should Answer First

To write your best book, spend time reflecting on these 4 questions—you can print this out, scribble in a paper journal, or type on your computer!

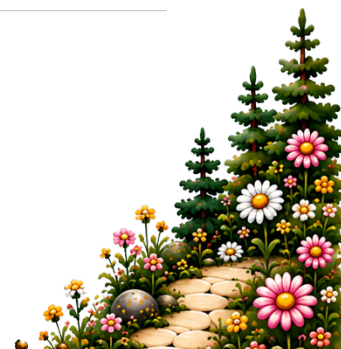
🌸 **Question 1: What problem keeps your reader awake at night?**

This is your reader's **felt need**—the problem they're already hoping someone will solve.

Examples

- I want to feel closer to God.
- I need to get out of debt.
- I don't know how to parent a teenager.
- I'm overwhelmed at work.

👉 **My reader's felt need:**



🌸 **Question 2: Exactly who is your reader?**

This may feel counterintuitive, but the best books are written to *one* reader. When you know who that reader is, you can serve that reader!

Picture one real person you know who needs this book.

👉 **What is your reader's name?** (Maybe you know her, maybe you create her as a composite of a few folks. Either way, give her a name.)

👉 **Describe your reader (age, education, job, fam, hobbies, struggles, hopes etc.)**



🌸 **Question 3: What's Your Premise?**

Your fresh premise is the central idea that makes your book different. It's the thing you're saying that others aren't.

- It's clear and easy to grasp.
- It's unique—something others aren't saying.
- It meets your reader's need.

When a reader reads your premise they say, "This is the book I need because it's solving a problem I have!"

✍️ **Draft your premise.**



Question 4: What promise are you making?

When your reader finishes your book, what will they know, become, understand, or be able to do?

✎ After reading this book, my reader will...

Before You Start Writing...

Can you answer each of these questions in one or two clear sentences?

- ☐ My reader's felt need is clear.
- ☐ I know exactly who I'm writing for.
- ☐ I can explain my premise in one sentence.
- ☐ I know the promise I'm making.

If you checked all four boxes, you're ready to take your next publishing step.



Next step: Find “Paths to Publication”
mini-course at MargotStarbuck.com

screenYou got this! -Margot