



Use Your Words: A Writing Guide for Mothers

Kate Hopper

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USE YOUR WORDS introduces the art of creative nonfiction to women who want to give written expression to their lives as mothers. Written by award-winning teacher and writer, Kate Hopper, this book will help women find the heart of their writing, learn to use motherhood as a lens through which to write the world, and turn their motherhood stories into art. Each chapter of USE YOUR WORDS focuses on an element of craft and contains a lecture, a published essay, and writing exercises that will serve as jumping-off points for the readers' own writing. Chapter topics include: the importance of using concrete details, an overview of creative nonfiction as a genre, character development, voice, humor, tense and writing the "hard stuff," reflection and back-story, structure, revision, and publishing. The content of each lecture is aligned with the essay/poem in that chapter to help readers more easily grasp the elements of craft being discussed. Together the chapters provide a unique opportunity for mother writers to learn and grow as writers.

USE YOUR WORDS takes the approach that creative writing can be taught, and this underscores each chapter. When students learn to read like writers, to notice how a piece is put together, and to question the choices a writer makes, they begin to think like writers. When they learn to ground their writing in concrete, sensory details and begin to understand how to create believable characters and realistic dialogue, their own writing improves. USE YOUR WORDS reflects Kate's style as a teacher, guiding the reader in a straightforward, nurturing, and passionate voice. As one student noted in a class evaluation: "Kate is a born writer and teacher, and her enthusiasm for essays about motherhood and for teaching the nuts and bolts of writing so that ordinary mothers have the tools to write their stories is a gift to the world. She is raising the value of motherhood in our society as she helps mothers build their confidence and strengthen their game as writers."

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