

**Amy Harrop**

**Succeed With Content®**

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# Chapter One: Introduction to Public Domain

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Fiction thrives on imagination, *but it also benefits from history*. Some of the most beloved stories of all time are now part of the **public domain**, meaning they are free for anyone to use, adapt, and reimagine. This creates an unparalleled opportunity for modern writers to publish their work online without worrying about copyright restrictions.

## The Public Domain: A Treasure Trove for Creators

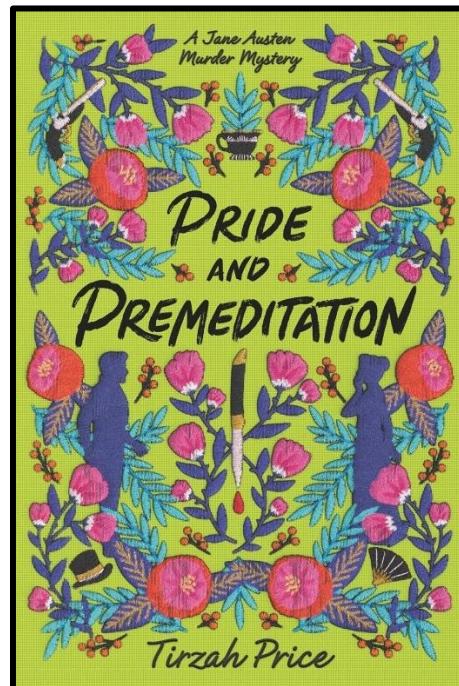
The public domain is a literary gold mine. It consists of works whose copyrights have expired or were never protected under copyright law, **making them freely available for anyone to use**. This includes classic novels, fairy tales, folklore, and iconic characters that have stood the test of time. Writers can take these materials and breathe new life into them, crafting fresh narratives that resonate with contemporary audiences.

We're currently experiencing a renaissance in public domain storytelling. From reimagined versions of Dracula to updated takes on Sherlock Holmes, these well-known characters and stories are being revitalized in books, TV series, films, and even video games. The public's appetite for familiar yet fresh takes on classic tales is growing, making this the perfect time to dive into the public domain and carve out your own niche.

## Why the Public Domain is a Gold Mine

Public domain works offer a perfect blend of familiarity and creative freedom. Established characters already have built-in audiences, making it easier for new adaptations to attract attention. Just consider how many versions of Alice in Wonderland or Frankenstein exist. These stories endure because people want more of them.

Additionally, the public domain allows creators to experiment. Want to turn Dracula into a sci-fi horror thriller? Go for it. Want to reimagine Pride and Prejudice as a murder mystery? Nothing is stopping you. **Unlike copyrighted works, which come with legal barriers and licensing fees, public domain stories are yours to use however you please.**



<https://www.amazon.com/Pride-Premeditation>

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## Why the Timeless Appeal of Public Domain Characters?

Some stories never fade. Whether it's the cunning mind of Sherlock Holmes, the tragic romance of Romeo and Juliet, or the eerie presence of Dracula, these characters continue to capture our imaginations centuries after they were first introduced. Why? **Because they tap into deep-seated human emotions and universal experiences**—our desire for justice, our yearning for love, and our fascination with the unknown. They are mirrors reflecting aspects of our own psyche, making them feel both familiar and endlessly intriguing.

Take Sherlock Holmes, for example. Arthur Conan Doyle's brilliant detective first appeared in 1887, yet he remains one of the most beloved literary figures ever created. The idea of an unparalleled intellect solving mysteries speaks to our innate love of logic, order, and the thrill of discovery. Whether in BBC's *Sherlock* or Netflix's *Enola Holmes*, he continues to be a symbol of rational thinking in a chaotic world, embodying our collective admiration for intelligence and deduction.



<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b018ttws>

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Similarly, Dracula has been adapted into everything from classic horror films to animated comedies. His essence—the immortal vampire—taps into our primal fears of death and our simultaneous attraction to the forbidden. He represents power, seduction, and the unknown, making him a timeless figure who can be reimagined in countless ways. Whether terrifying or comedic, gothic or futuristic, he remains a symbol of both danger and allure, ensuring his enduring appeal.

## What This Guide Will Cover

This guide will help you navigate the world of public domain fiction, showing you how to make the most of available stories and characters. You'll learn how to identify public domain works, how to adapt them creatively, and how to market your adaptations successfully. We'll also explore examples of writers who have struck gold using public domain characters and offer practical tips to help you do the same.

By the end of this guide, you'll have the knowledge and inspiration to start crafting your own unique take on classic stories. Whether you want to explore new genres, rewrite a classic from an alternate point of view, or craft a fresh take on a beloved character, Amazon KDP and the public domain are your playground.

*Let's get started!*



# Chapter Two: Exploring Popular Public Domain Characters

Public domain characters have stood the test of time, captivating readers for generations. Their rich histories and cultural significance make them prime candidates for modern storytelling. **More importantly, they offer a cost-effective way for writers to enter the publishing world without worrying about licensing fees or copyright restrictions.** Public domain fiction is not just creatively fulfilling—*it's also profitable.*

Take a look at just a few examples...



<https://www.amazon.com/Cinder-Marissa-Meyer/dp/1250007208>

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<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B094PGR5YH>

Many public domain-based books have achieved incredibly high sales on Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing, or KDP, including *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, *Pride and Prejudice (Annotated Edition)*, and *Frankenstein*. These books consistently rank among top sellers in their respective genres, proving the market's strong demand for classic stories, whether presented in their original form or with fresh twists.

One of the most successful modern authors to capitalize on public domain works is Gregory Maguire. His bestselling *Wicked* series, which reimagines *The Wizard of Oz* from the Wicked Witch's perspective, has spawned a Broadway musical and a dedicated fan base.

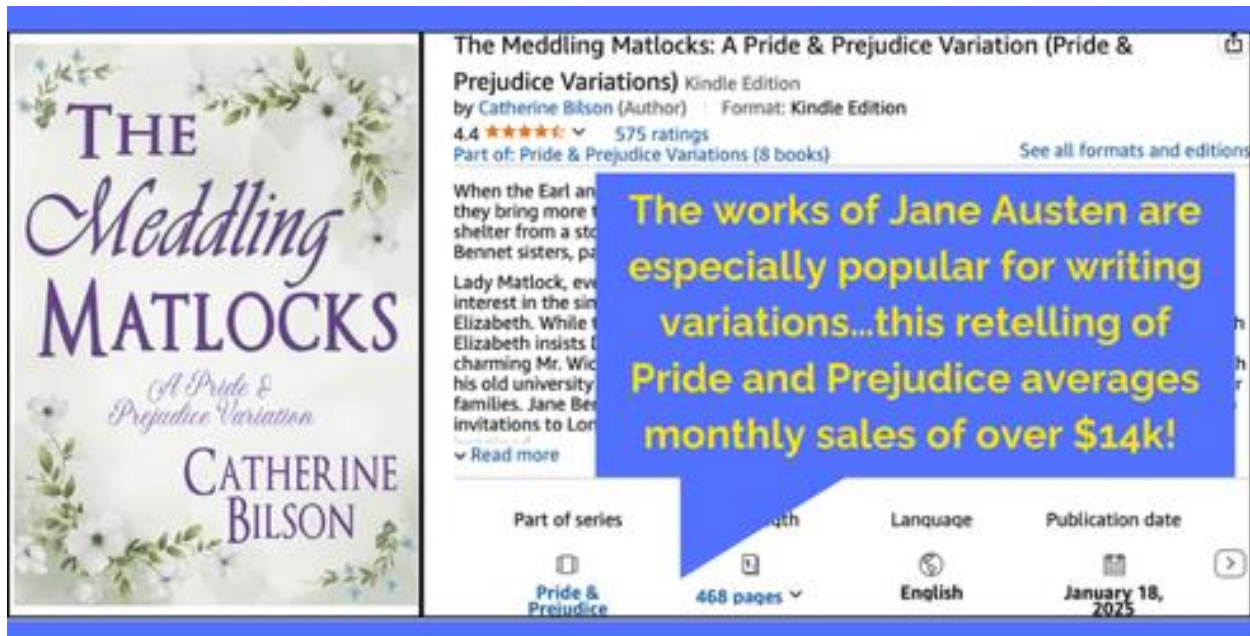


<https://www.amazon.com/Wicked>

Maguire's career demonstrates the endless potential of reinterpreting classic characters. We'll explore his approach and similar success stories in detail in Chapter 7, but for now, *let's take a look at some of the most popular public domain characters and how they can inspire your own fiction.*

## Jane Austen's World: Timeless Romance and Social Commentary

Jane Austen's novels continue to enchant readers, particularly *Pride and Prejudice*, which remains one of the most adapted works in literary history. The enduring popularity of Regency romance ensures that Austen-inspired fiction thrives in today's market.



<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0DR6X8JW3>

Austen's themes—**love, societal expectations, and personal growth**—resonate with readers across generations. Her witty dialogue and keen observations on human nature make her characters timeless.

The historical romance genre, particularly Regency romance, maintains a devoted fan base. Romance readers are voracious, and Amazon KDP's bestseller lists frequently feature Austen retellings, mashups, and spin-offs.

## Reimagining Austen

- **Modernized retellings:** Examples like *Bridget Jones's Diary* showcase how Austen's stories can be adapted into contemporary settings.

- **Genre mashups:** Novels like *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* introduce supernatural elements while keeping the core romance intact.
- **Exploring minor characters:** Books like *Longbourn* offer fresh perspectives by telling the story from the servants' point of view.

## Sherlock Holmes: The Universal Detective

Few fictional characters have had the lasting impact of Sherlock Holmes. Since his first appearance in 1887, the brilliant detective has captivated audiences with his unmatched intellect, keen observation skills, and logical problem-solving. Whether in classic literature, modern television, or new fiction, Holmes continues to thrive as an iconic figure in mystery and detective fiction.



<https://www.amazon.com/dp/139881525X>

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The appeal of Holmes is his ability to unravel even the most perplexing cases, often seeing details that others overlook. His analytical mind and unshakable demeanor make him a character that both writers and readers love to explore. From classic adaptations to new, original cases, the world of Sherlock Holmes offers endless possibilities.

### Reimagining Sherlock:

- **New mysteries:** Writers can craft original cases that stay true to the essence of Holmes' deductive methods.
- **Alternate perspectives:** Stories told from the viewpoint of Watson, Moriarty, or even Mrs. Hudson can offer fresh insights.
- **Modern retellings:** Setting Holmes in the present-day with updated technology and forensic science can bring new intrigue to classic detective work.

## Dracula and Vampires: Gothic Horror's Endless Reinvention

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* introduced one of literature's most enduring figures, and the vampire mythos has continued to evolve ever since. Whether terrifying, seductive, or tragic, Dracula has been reinvented countless times, proving that there's always room for new interpretations of this gothic icon.

Vampires have fascinated readers for centuries because they embody the tension between life and death, power and vulnerability, desire and danger. Dracula's story, in particular, continues to inspire new takes, from historical retellings to futuristic vampire thrillers.

### Reimagining Dracula:

- **New perspectives:** Retelling the story from the viewpoint of Mina Harker, Renfield, or Van Helsing can add new depth.
- **Unique settings:** Placing Dracula in different historical periods or cultural contexts can create fresh intrigue.
- **Genre fusion:** Blending Gothic horror with fantasy, sci-fi, or even psychological thrillers can bring a new dimension to the vampire legend.

## Other Popular Public Domain Characters

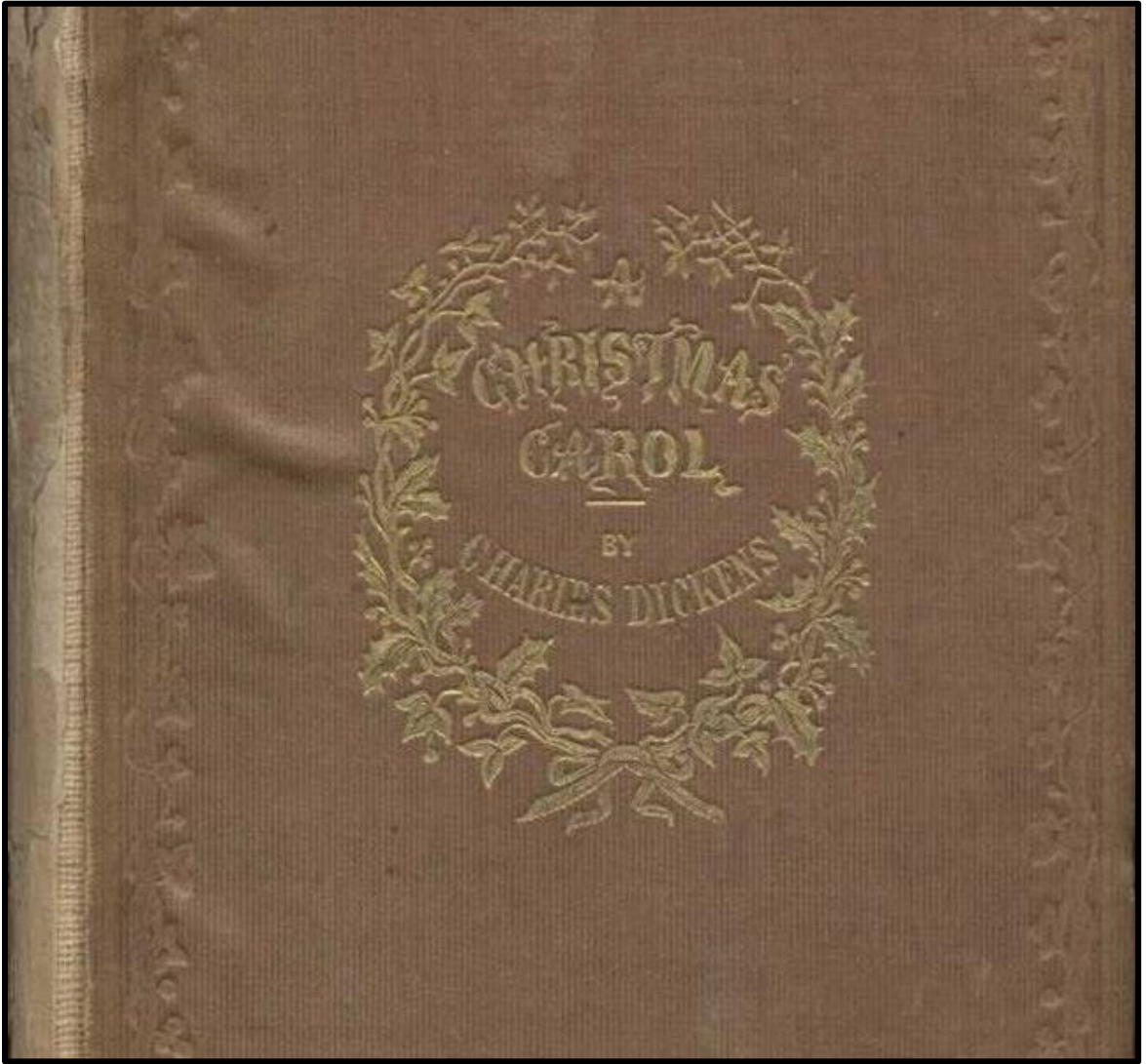
There are *countless* other public domain characters that have found new life in modern fiction, with writers achieving great success by adapting and reimagining them. These familiar figures have built-in fan bases, making them ideal for fresh takes that still resonate with readers.

- **Robin Hood** – Reimagining him as a rogue hacker, modern-day vigilante, or sci-fi outlaw.

- **Frankenstein's Monster** – Exploring themes of artificial intelligence, bioengineering, and moral dilemmas.
- **The Wizard of Oz** – Retelling Dorothy's journey with darker or more whimsical elements.
- **Alice in Wonderland** – A playground for fantasy and psychological horror.
- **Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde** – A foundation for psychological thrillers and modern dual-identity stories.
- **King Arthur and Camelot** – A deep well of inspiration for fantasy and historical fiction.
- **David Copperfield** – A rich coming-of-age story that could be reimaged in contemporary or dystopian settings.
- **Black Beauty** – Exploring themes of animal welfare and human-animal relationships in modern times.
- **Doctor Doolittle** – A whimsical character who could be placed in futuristic or sci-fi settings, talking to alien species instead of animals.
- **Tarzan** – A story of survival and adaptation that could be retold in post-apocalyptic, futuristic, or urban jungle settings.
- **Anne of Green Gables** – A beloved character whose story could be modernized or expanded with alternate historical perspectives.



- **Ebenezer Scrooge** – A timeless redemption arc that could work in corporate thrillers, dystopian fiction, or even supernatural horror.

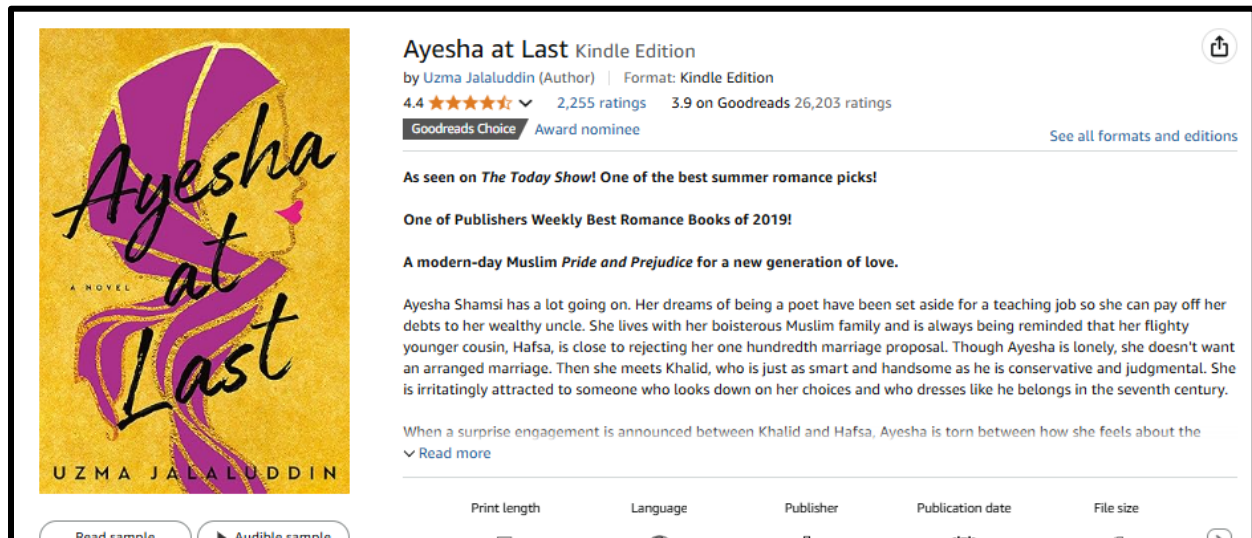


<https://www.laterpress.com/public-domain-books>

Beyond these well-known figures, there are many lesser-known public domain characters that hold immense storytelling potential. Writers willing to dig a little deeper may find hidden gems that allow for greater creative freedom and the opportunity to stand out in the market.

- **The Scarlet Pimpernel** – A masked hero who inspired the modern superhero archetype.
- **Alice Adams** – A character who embodies ambition and social mobility, ideal for modern retellings about career-driven protagonists.
- **Phileas Fogg** – The ultimate adventurer from *Around the World in Eighty Days*, perfect for sci-fi or steampunk adaptations.
- **Gulliver** – A traveler who encounters bizarre lands, making him an excellent candidate for interstellar or alternate-dimension stories.
- **Evangeline** – A tragic love story rooted in Acadian history, perfect for historical romance or drama.
- **Mrs. Dalloway** – A character whose introspective journey through a single day could be adapted into psychological drama or time-loop fiction.
- **Richard Hannay** – A classic action-adventure hero from *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, perfect for espionage thrillers or modern spy fiction.
- **Sinbad the Sailor** – High-seas adventures that can be reimaged in fantasy, sci-fi, or steampunk settings.
- **The Phantom of the Opera** – A gothic antihero who could be explored through new psychological or horror perspectives.
- **Raffles, the Gentleman Thief** – A charming and complex criminal mastermind who fits well in crime and heist fiction.

- **She (Ayesha)** – A powerful, immortal queen whose story can be adapted into modern fantasy epics.



<https://www.amazon.com/Ayesha-At-Last>

Public domain characters offer endless possibilities for creative storytelling. By choosing the right character and crafting a fresh take, writers can tap into established audiences while bringing something new to the table. **The key is balancing faithfulness to the original material with bold, innovative storytelling.**

*In the next chapter, we'll dive into creative approaches to writing with public domain fiction, exploring how to blend genres, write from unexpected perspectives, and completely reimagine classic stories.*

# Chapter Three: Creative Approaches to Public Domain Fiction Writing

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Public domain characters offer an incredible starting point for crafting unique and engaging stories. Writers can use these well-loved figures in numerous ways, from straightforward retellings to wildly inventive mashups. **The key is to build on existing familiarity while introducing fresh elements that excite and engage readers.** Below are some of the most effective approaches, with real-world examples of successful adaptations.

## Writing in the Style of the Original Author

Some writers choose to closely mimic the style and tone of the original creator, making their work feel like a seamless extension of the classic. This approach is ideal for readers who crave authenticity in their adaptations.

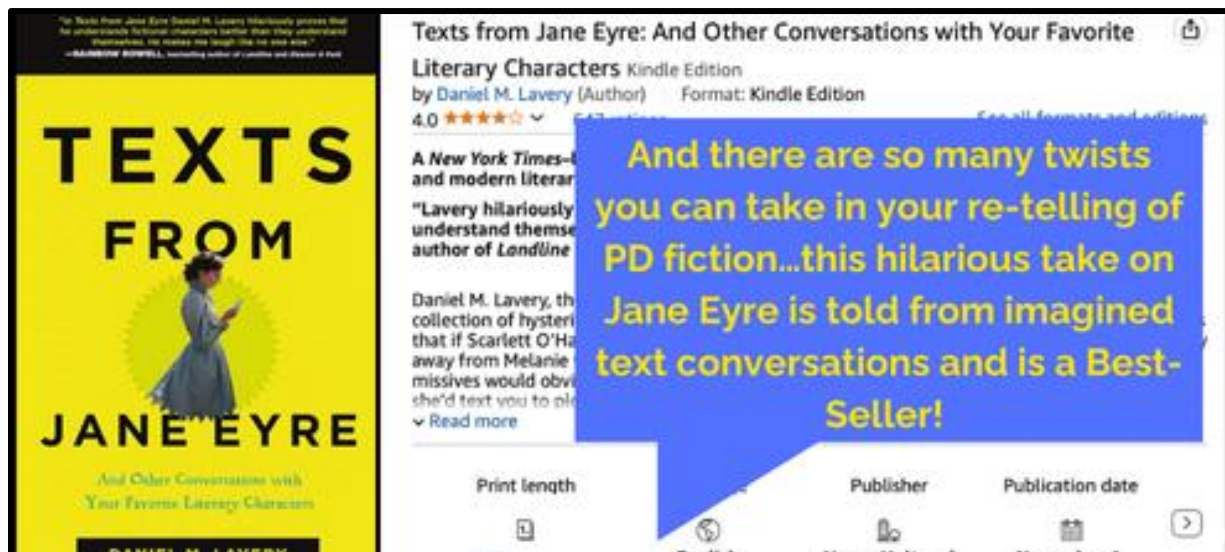
- **Anthony Horowitz's *The House of Silk*:** This Sherlock Holmes novel is written in the voice of Dr. Watson and emulates Arthur Conan Doyle's original storytelling style, making it feel like an undiscovered case from Holmes' archives.
- **P.D. James' *Death Comes to Pemberley*:** A continuation of *Pride and Prejudice* written in Austen's signature style, transforming the beloved romance into a compelling murder mystery.

## Genre Mashups

A genre is a category of literature, film, or art characterized by a specific style, theme, or set of conventions, such as mystery, romance, fantasy, or science fiction. Blending genres can introduce classic characters to entirely new audiences, making them accessible in unexpected ways....and it can be a lot of fun!

- **Seth Grahame-Smith's *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*:** This bold mix of historical fiction and fantasy reimagines Lincoln as a vampire slayer, turning American history into a supernatural thriller.
- **Ben H. Winters' *Android Karenina*:** A steampunk-inspired reworking of Tolstoy's classic, incorporating advanced technology and robotic elements into 19th-century Russia.

And here's something that completely defies labels:



<https://www.amazon.com/Texts-Jane-Eyre>

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## Placing Characters in New Settings

Reimagining characters in **different time periods or locations** can shed new light on their personalities and make their stories feel fresh.

- **Sherlock (BBC):** This modern adaptation of Sherlock Holmes sets him and Watson in 21st-century London, updating the detective's methods with modern forensic science and digital sleuthing.
- ***Dracula 2000*:** Bram Stoker's infamous vampire is resurrected in contemporary New Orleans, proving that Gothic horror can thrive in any era.

## Expanding Supporting Characters

Sometimes, the most intriguing perspectives come from those who weren't center stage in the original work. Retelling a story from a minor character's viewpoint can lead to compelling, fresh narratives.

- **Marion Zimmer Bradley's *The Mists of Avalon*:** This Arthurian retelling shifts focus from King Arthur to the women of Camelot, particularly Morgaine and Guinevere, exploring their roles in shaping the legend.
- **Nancy Springer's *Enola Holmes* series:** Sherlock Holmes' younger sister takes center stage as an aspiring detective, bringing a fresh dynamic to the famous detective's world.

## Alternate Perspectives and Role Reversals

Sometimes, flipping the script entirely can create a fascinating retelling.

- **Gregory Maguire's *Wicked*:** This *Wizard of Oz* reimagining tells the story from the Wicked Witch's perspective, exploring how villainy is often a matter of perspective.
- **Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*:** A prequel to *Jane Eyre* that gives a voice to Bertha Mason, the "madwoman in the attic," providing context and depth to a previously one-dimensional character.

## Balancing Originality and Marketability

It's worth noting that you don't *have to* completely reimagine a public domain character to publish on Amazon KDP. Amazon requires that public domain books offer some form of differentiation if they are to be published under KDP's royalty-paying programs. This can include:

- Annotated editions with original commentary or footnotes.
- Illustrated versions with newly created artwork.
- Translations or significantly edited versions.

If you are interested in dipping your toes in the water first and would like to know more about publishing public domain works with slight adaptations or with supplementary material, I have a complete training toolkit for that!

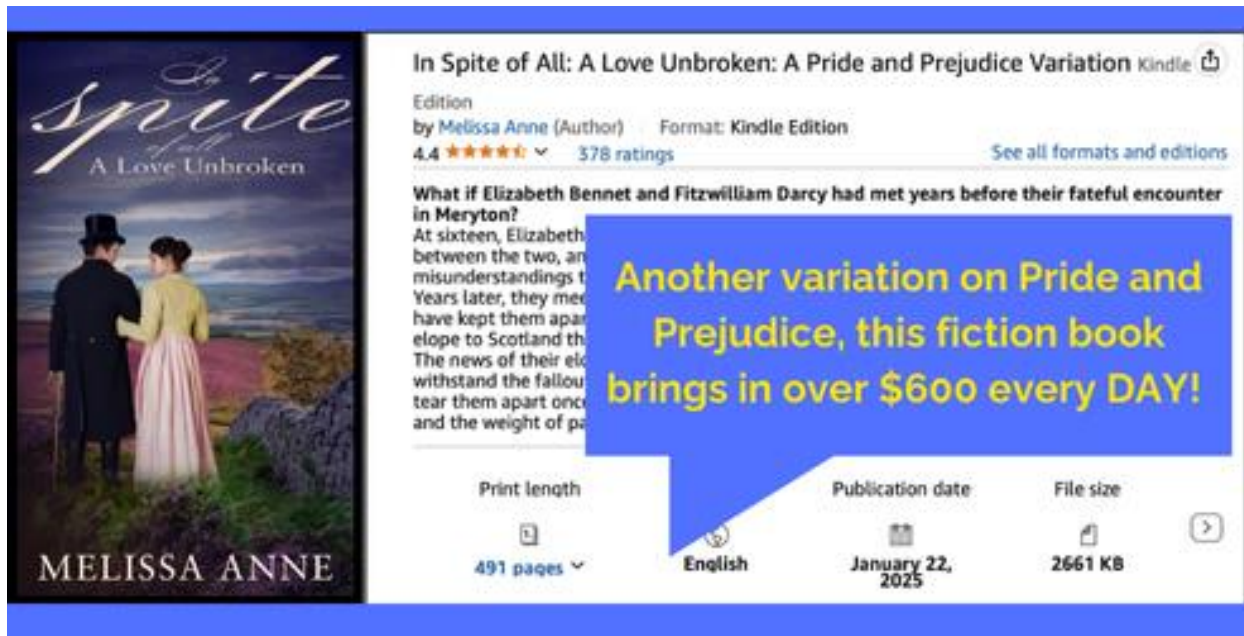


[AI PD Publishing Bonanza](#) walks you through the simple steps of where to find public domain content, how to harness the power of my PD Publisher Helper Bot to effortlessly add the necessary “annotation extras” that Amazon requires, and how to get KDP’s secret free software to format your work for you...you can watch a demo video [HERE](#).

**To be clear, this is a different niche than what we’re covering in this guide...AI PD Publishing Bonanza makes it easy to take already created public domain works and add enough new or supplemental material to make it publishable on KDP. On the flip side, Easy AI Public Domain Fiction is all about creating *new* works *inspired* by public domain fiction.**

For this kind of fiction, simply reprinting or slightly altering an existing text isn’t enough to attract readers. **To stand out and succeed in the competitive self-publishing market, writers should add substantial originality to their adaptations.**

The key to successful public domain fiction writing lies in the balance of respect for the original work and the infusion of fresh, unique elements. By creatively reimagining these classic characters and settings, writers can tap into existing fan bases while offering something new and exciting.



<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0DQM5LHML>

In the next chapter, we'll explore how to research reader preferences, identify emerging trends, and position your public domain fiction for the best chance of success in the market.

*Ready to discover the secrets of **successful** public domain fiction?*

# Chapter Four: Analyzing Market Trends and Audience Demand

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As usual, we need to begin with market research.

Writing public domain fiction is a creative endeavor, but to maximize success, **authors must also consider what readers want.** Understanding market trends allows writers to make informed decisions about which characters to adapt, what genres to explore, and how to position their books for the best chance of success. The key is finding the balance between creative vision and commercial viability—crafting a story that excites you while ensuring there is an eager audience ready to buy it.

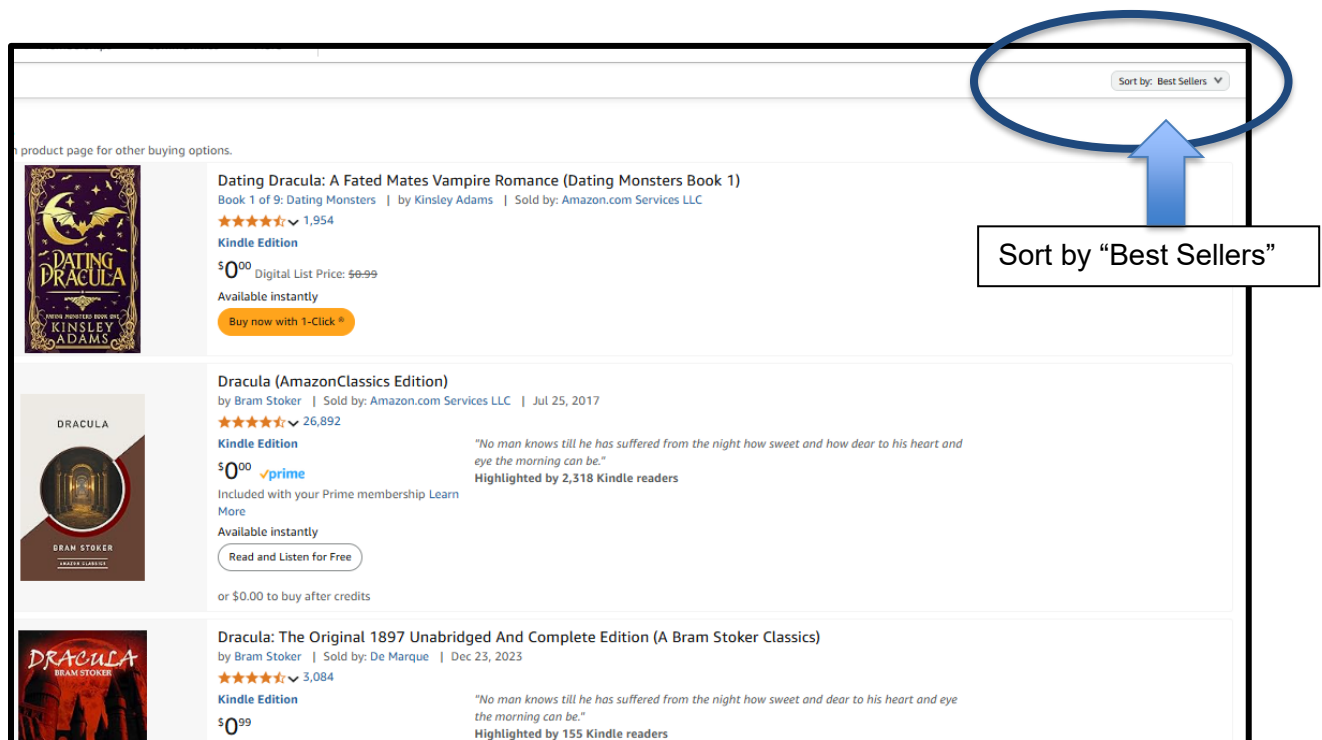
## Identifying Popular Public Domain Fiction Trends

To create a book that sells, you must first determine which public domain characters and genres are currently in demand. While classic stories always have a built-in audience, certain adaptations gain more traction based on media trends, reader preferences, and shifts in publishing platforms.

**One of the best ways to gauge interest in public domain fiction is by researching bestsellers in related genres on Amazon KDP.** While there is no dedicated "Public Domain Fiction" category, searching for well-known public domain titles and analyzing their sales rankings, reviews, and related books can reveal which

adaptations are resonating with readers. Additionally, paying attention to film, television, and audiobook trends can provide insight into what is capturing the public's imagination.

For example, a search for “Dracula” in the Amazon Kindle store yielded over 6,000 results. You can then filter the results by “Best Sellers” to see what kinds of adaptations are currently in demand. As I write this, the top result is *Dating Dracula: A Fated Mates Vampire Romance...a fun romance read positioning Dracula as a love interest in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in New Orleans.*



<https://www.amazon.com/s?k=dracula>

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## Examples of Trends in Modern Media

- **Short Stories and Anthologies:** Collections such as *Echoes of Sherlock Holmes* (edited by Laurie R. King) and *Austen Variations* show that readers enjoy shorter works that revisit classic characters in fresh ways.
- **Movies and TV Adaptations:** Public domain characters continue to thrive on screen, with adaptations like *Sherlock* (BBC), *Dracula* (2020), and *Once Upon a Time* demonstrating their versatility across genres.
- **Audiobooks and Serialized Content:** Stephen Fry's narrations of *Sherlock Holmes* stories and immersive audiobook adaptations of *Dracula* highlight the growing demand for engaging audio experiences.

By understanding these trends, writers can position their own work to align with what's currently popular, increasing their chances of reaching a broad audience.

## Keyword Research for Public Domain Fiction

Discoverability is crucial for success in the digital marketplace. Understanding how readers search for books can help writers optimize their titles, descriptions, and metadata to ensure their work appears in relevant searches.

### Tools for Keyword Research

- [Amazon Search Bar](#): Typing in a character's name or genre-related terms can reveal popular search phrases. Free to use.

- [Publisher Rocket](#): A paid tool that analyzes Amazon search data to show keyword competitiveness and reader demand.
- [Google Trends](#): Tracks search volume for specific terms over time, helping to gauge long-term interest. Free to use.
- [BookBeam](#): A paid research tool that helps authors find profitable keywords and track book trends.
- [KDP Categories Browser](#): Helps authors identify the best categories for their books. Free to use.
- [AnswerThePublic](#): A paid tool that generates commonly searched questions and phrases related to a topic.
- [Ubersuggest](#): Provides keyword search volume, competition data, and content ideas. By strategically incorporating high-demand keywords into book titles and descriptions, authors can improve their book's visibility and attract more readers. Free to use.

I pay for Publisher Rocket and find it invaluable for researching keyword competitiveness and reader demand. I've compiled a table displaying some of the research I've completed on just a few of the popular keywords in this niche...

Keyword	Average Monthly Earnings	Est. Monthly Amazon Searches
Dracula	\$4,452	1,745
Huck Finn	\$4,275	1,486
Jane Austen Classics	\$15,125	1,777
Pride and Prejudice	\$7,988	2,341
Robin Hood	\$1,221	444
Sherlock Holmes	\$9,116	1,398
Vampire	\$18,276	1,738
Wizard of Oz	\$3,721	918

Publisher Rocket

## Reader Expectations by Genre

Each genre has its own conventions, and **readers have specific expectations** when picking up a book. Understanding these expectations helps writers craft stories that resonate with their target audience and will lead to positive reviews rather than disappointed customers.



## Mystery & Detective Fiction

- Requires a well-structured puzzle or crime to be solved.
- Readers expect logical deductions, red herrings, and a compelling sleuth.
- Sherlock Holmes adaptations work best with intricate mysteries and unexpected twists.
- Strong pacing and suspense are key elements to maintain engagement.

## Romance

- A romance novel must have a **Happily Ever After (HEA)** or a **Happy For Now (HFN)** ending.
- Character relationships must drive the plot, with emotional depth and well-developed romantic tension.
- Romance can be blended with other genres, such as fantasy, mystery, or historical fiction, but the love story should remain central.
- Readers expect compelling conflicts, emotional stakes, and satisfying resolutions.

## Historical Fiction

- Historical fiction should include accurate period details, social dynamics, and rich world-building.
- Authenticity is key—language, setting, and cultural norms should reflect the time period.
- Readers appreciate strong characters who navigate historical events or settings with realism.

- Popular adaptations include modernized retellings or mashups with secondary genres like mystery or romance.

## Horror & Gothic Fiction

- Must create a sense of dread and psychological tension.
- Classic horror stories, such as *Dracula*, thrive on eerie settings and supernatural elements.
- Gothic fiction often explores themes of isolation, madness, and the macabre.
- Atmosphere plays a crucial role, with dark, moody settings enhancing the fear factor.

## Fantasy & Adventure

- Fantasy must include **magical elements, mythical creatures, or an alternate world**.
- Readers expect a clear hero's journey with challenges, trials, and a climactic resolution.
- Arthurian legends, Robin Hood, and similar characters fit well into epic or high fantasy.
- Adventure fiction should have a sense of discovery, daring quests, and high stakes.

## Science Fiction

- Requires speculative elements based on futuristic technology, space exploration, or scientific advancements.
- Often explores **philosophical questions about humanity, society, and ethics**.
- Can overlap with dystopian fiction, cyberpunk, or time travel themes.

- Should have internally consistent world-building to maintain credibility with readers.

By understanding and meeting these genre expectations, writers can ensure their books meet reader demand while still offering something unique.

## Competition Analysis: Learning from Other Authors

Studying successful public domain fiction can provide valuable insights into what works in the market. By analyzing bestselling books, authors can identify patterns in book titles, cover designs, and story themes that contribute to strong sales.

- **Study Reviews:** Reading Amazon and Goodreads reviews can reveal what readers love—and what they don't.
- **Compare Covers & Titles:** Successful books often use visually appealing covers and clear, marketable titles.
- **Check Pricing Strategies:** Understanding how similar books are priced can help set competitive pricing for your own work. You should consider various strategies to attract readers and drive sales. Here are a few:
  - Free or \$0.99 Promotions: Great for attracting new readers and boosting visibility.
  - Kindle Unlimited Enrollment: Allows readers to access books for free while authors earn royalties.

- Premium Pricing for Unique Adaptations: Books that offer substantial originality can justify higher price points.
- **Look at Their Marketing**: Learn what successful authors are doing to get the word out there. Common techniques include:
  - Social Media Promotion: Engaging with readers on platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok can help build an audience.
  - Book Launch Promotions: Limited-time discounts and giveaways can drive initial sales.
  - Newsletter & Email Marketing: Building a mailing list allows authors to directly reach their most engaged readers.

By implementing smart pricing and marketing strategies, you can maximize your book's success and reach a wider audience.

## Book Length: Short and Sweet

My recommendation for book length is to write what Amazon calls "Short Reads". These types of books typically fall under 100 pages, which means around 25,000 words or fewer.

### Benefits Of Publishing Shorter Fiction:

- **Meet reader demand**: Modern readers often prefer shorter, focused content they can consume quickly.

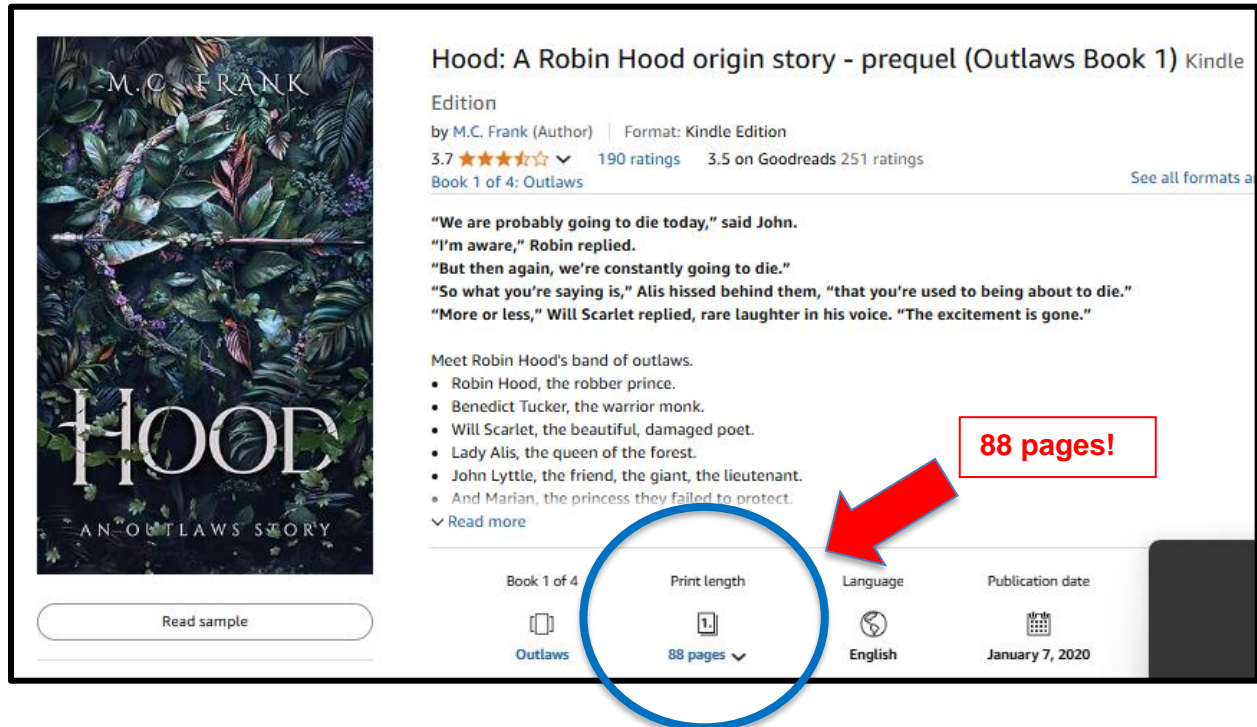
- **Faster production and publishing:** Short books can be written, edited, and published within weeks
- **Increased publishing frequency:** Regularly releasing short reads helps boost visibility on Amazon's platform

Curious about how popular Short Reads are on KDP? Here's a little more research from Publisher Rocket...

Keyword	Average Monthly Earnings	Est. Monthly Amazon Searches
Short Books	\$58,359	17,204
Short Books for Kids	\$10,358	3,993
Short Stories	\$14,720	2,690
Short Reads	\$10,421	1,737
Short Novels	\$6,767	1,122
Short Books Kindle Unlimited	\$22,925	1,875
Short Thriller Books	\$10,303	1,820
Short Stories for Adults	\$7,284	863

Publisher Rocket

The Publisher Bots I'm including are designed to create short stories and this is a great way to get started!



<https://www.amazon.com/Hood-Outlaws>

Writing a compelling public domain adaptation is just the first step—**understanding market trends and audience demand is what ensures long-term success.** By analyzing reader preferences, tracking trends in modern media, optimizing for search visibility, and employing smart marketing strategies, you can position your work for maximum impact.

In the next chapter, this is where it starts to feel real...*you're about to become a published author...how about a little tech help?*

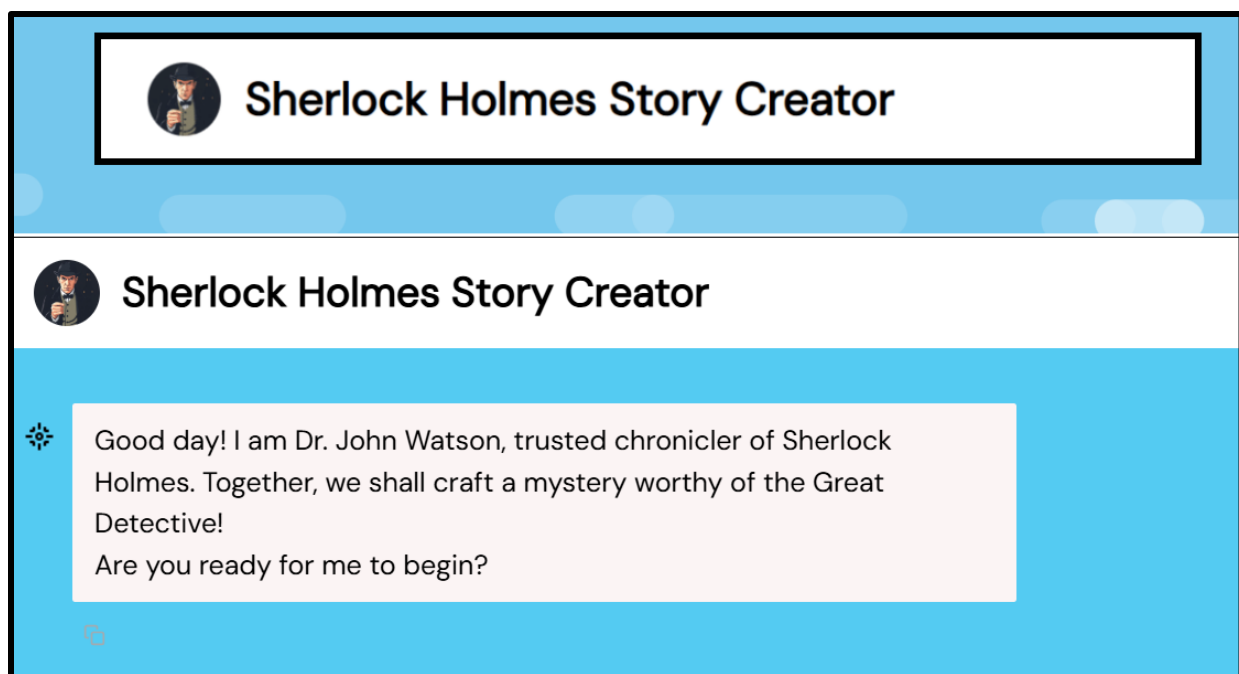
# Chapter Five: Leveraging AI Tools to Create and Enhance Your Fiction

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It's time to start writing. But you're not alone...Artificial intelligence is revolutionizing the creative process, offering writers powerful tools to enhance their fiction. Whether you're using AI for research, outlining, editing, or marketing, these tools can help streamline your workflow and free up time for what matters most—storytelling.

In *Easy AI Public Domain Fiction*, **I've included multiple resources to help you leverage AI effectively, including video training, additional guides, and two specialized AI Writing Bots**—one for Jane Austen-inspired fiction and another for Sherlock Holmes-style writing. Additionally, I've included detailed prompts to help generate compelling titles, marketing-focused book descriptions, and AI-generated art prompts for cover imagery.





Sherlock Holmes Story Creator Bot

In this guide, we'll explore some of the best practices for utilizing AI as a writing partner and I'll share many helpful tools. **AI should be seen as a creative assistant rather than a replacement for an author's unique voice.** With the right approach, AI tools can boost productivity and help create high-quality public domain adaptations that stand out in the market.

*The tools I'm listing include paid tools, free tools, and tools that have a free trial period.*

## AI for Research and Inspiration

AI tools can accelerate the research process by quickly gathering relevant information, summarizing historical details, and ensuring that character portrayals remain faithful to their original works.

## Public Domain Research

Finding and verifying public domain works is a crucial first step. AI can assist in identifying whether a work is free to use, analyzing original author styles, and pinpointing timelines for copyright expiration.

- [Google Books](#) – Search for full-text classic literature with historical publication dates.
- [HathiTrust](#) – A digital library for locating public domain works and manuscripts.

## Historical & Genre Accuracy

If you're writing period-specific fiction, ensuring historical and genre accuracy is essential. AI can help fact-check cultural norms, dialects, and setting details.

- [ChatGPT](#) – Ask detailed historical questions to verify setting accuracy.
- [Perplexity AI](#) – Generates research-based answers with source links for verification.

## Character & World-Building Analysis

AI can break down complex characters, settings, and themes from classic works to help ensure consistency in new adaptations.

**Example:** Using AI to analyze Sherlock Holmes' deductive reasoning patterns to create a new Holmes-style detective.

- [World Anvil](#) – Assists with detailed world-building for historical and fantasy settings.
- [Sudowrite](#) – Helps generate immersive descriptions for world-building.

## AI-Assisted Story Outlining and Plot Development

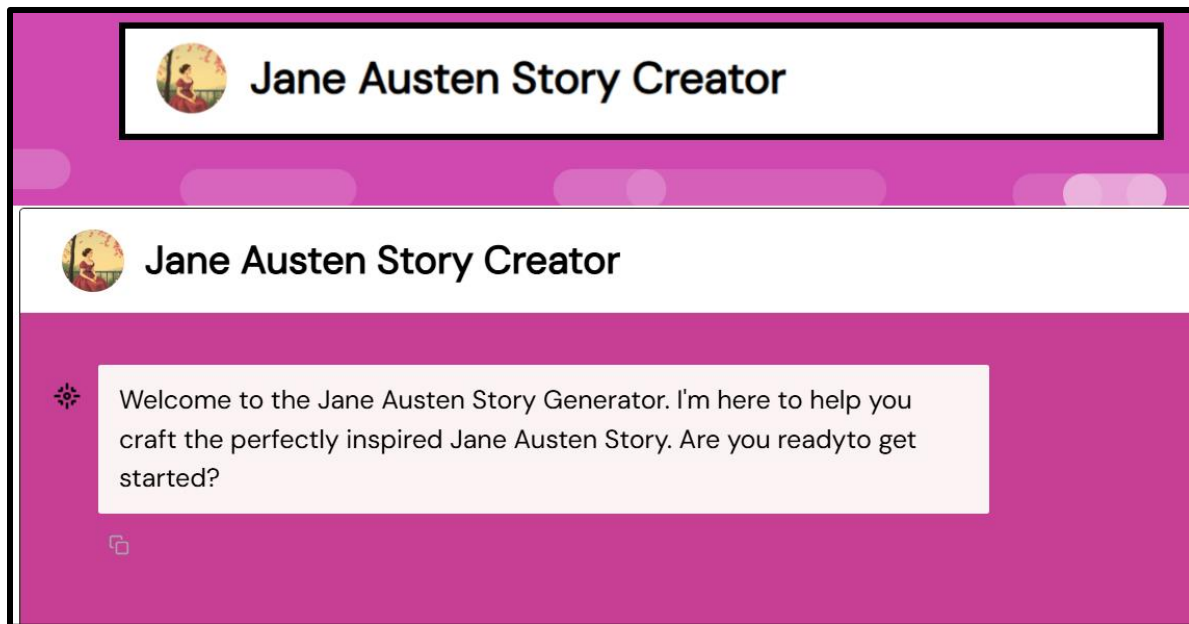
AI can provide structured outlines, generate plot twists, and ensure your story hits all critical beats. Whether you're looking to develop a Dracula-inspired romance or a cozy-style mystery involving Robin Hood, AI tools can help streamline the process.

### Generating Unique Plot Ideas

- [StoryLab.ai](#) – Generates creative writing prompts and story starters.
- [ToolsADay](#) – AI-powered brainstorming for unique twists on classic stories.
- **Example Prompt:** *What if Elizabeth Bennet from Pride and Prejudice was secretly solving murders in Regency England?*

### Creating Detailed Outlines

- **AI Writing Bots (Exclusive Resources!):** I've included two specialized AI bots—one for Jane Austen-style fiction and another for Sherlock Holmes-inspired writing. These will help craft chapter-by-chapter breakdowns tailored to their respective genres.



Jane Austen Story Creator Bot

- [Plottr](#) – A visual plotting tool to structure your novel.
- [Campfire](#) – Assists in mapping out story arcs and character developments.
- **Example:** Using AI to create a structured outline for a Holmesian mystery where Watson is the lead detective.

## AI for World-Building and Consistency

Creating immersive settings and ensuring consistency across your novel can be challenging. AI can help maintain internal logic and assist with world-building details.

- [World Anvil](#) – Helps flesh out historical and fantasy worlds with detailed lore.
- [Campfire](#) – Useful for tracking relationships, timelines, and complex narratives.

- **Example:** Using AI to generate a detailed map of 19th-century London for a Sherlock Holmes pastiche.

## AI for Polishing and Editing

AI can significantly enhance the revision process by improving readability, refining prose, and catching inconsistencies.

- [ProWritingAid](#) – Advanced grammar and style checker.
- [Grammarly](#) – Checks spelling, grammar, and clarity.
- [Hemingway Editor](#) – Helps refine writing for conciseness and readability.

## AI for Marketing and Audience Engagement

AI isn't just useful for writing—it can also help with book promotion, making sure your work reaches the right audience.

### Market Research

- [Publisher Rocket](#) – Helps identify high-demand, low-competition keywords.
- [BookBeam](#) – Tracks sales trends and category rankings.

### AI-Generated Book Descriptions & Keywords

- [Copy.ai](#) – Creates compelling marketing copy for book blurbs.
- [Rytr](#) – Helps generate effective keywords and ad copy.

## Social Media & Ad Copywriting

- [ChatGPT](#) – Assists with ad headlines, social media posts, and promotional content.
- [Canva](#) – AI-powered design tool for creating book covers and promo materials.

## Dictation

For many writers, typing can slow down the creative process, making dictation an excellent alternative. Speaking your story aloud can help you think more fluidly, capture natural dialogue, and increase your writing speed. If you find yourself struggling to type quickly or want to maximize productivity, dictation software can be a game-changer.


[Microsoft Word Dictate](#) is one of the best dictation tools available. Integrated directly into Microsoft Word, it offers real-time transcription with impressive accuracy. It supports multiple languages and even understands punctuation commands, making it an excellent tool for authors looking to streamline their workflow. Simply click on the Dictate button in Word's toolbar, start speaking, and watch as your words appear on the page.

## Steps to Use Dictation for Writing Your Story

1. **Set Up Your Dictation Software** – Open Microsoft Word, click the Dictate button, and select your preferred language.
2. **Outline Before Dictating** – Have a rough outline ready so you can dictate your story in a structured way.
3. **Speak Naturally and Clearly** – Use full sentences, dictate punctuation when needed (e.g., “comma,” “period”), and avoid long pauses.
4. **Edit and Refine** – After dictating, go through your text to correct any errors, refine sentence structure, and enhance readability.

By incorporating dictation into your writing process, you can increase efficiency and reduce fatigue, making it easier to bring your public domain-inspired story to life. You can click the link below this image to discover additional dictation programs beyond Microsoft Word Dictate...

**Top pick**



**Microsoft Word Dictate**  
The best dictation tool

This tool transcribes highly accurate text from spoken dictation and is included with both the free and paid versions of Word on every major computing platform.

**Buy from Microsoft**

<https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-dictation-software/>



## Actual Writing Process

Writing a short story inspired by public domain fiction is an exciting opportunity to put your own creative spin on classic characters and settings. While the AI tools I've shared above can help streamline the process, **they should be seen as assistants rather than replacements.** The originality, depth, and emotional impact of a great story still come from you. AI can provide structure, generate ideas, and refine your prose, but the heart of the story—the voice, perspective, and new ideas—must be uniquely yours.

### Steps to Write Your Public Domain-Inspired Short Story

1. **Use One of the Included Helper Bots for Instant Outlines** – Start by generating an outline using one of the two provided AI writing bots (one for Jane Austen-style fiction, one for Sherlock Holmes-style mysteries). This will give you a strong starting point to build upon.
2. **Decide on Your Writing Approach** – You can either use the expansion prompts I'm also including for AI-generated expansions to flesh out your story or take the AI-generated outline and write the entire piece yourself to ensure it remains fully original.
  - **If you choose to use the expansion prompts - Watch the Video Training** – Follow the step-by-step video guide on how to expand your

outline using the included writing prompts and AI tools. This will help you develop rich characters, dynamic settings, and engaging plots.

- **If you choose to dictate rather than type** – check out Microsoft Word Dictate or any other dictation program and skip the typing.

3. **Enhance Your Story with AI Tools** – Utilize AI tools for brainstorming, historical research, world-building, and line editing. AI can help refine your language, check for consistency, and even suggest period-accurate dialogue.
4. **Polish and Finalize** – Once your draft is complete, use AI-driven editing tools like Grammarly or ProWritingAid for final refinements. Ensure your story has a compelling beginning, a well-paced middle, and a satisfying conclusion.

By using AI tools strategically, you can enhance your efficiency and creativity while maintaining your unique voice. Experiment with AI, refine your workflow, and stay ahead in the evolving landscape of self-publishing. In the next chapter, we'll explore platforms and publishing strategies to ensure your work reaches its audience successfully.

*Let's get your book up for sale!*

# Chapter Six: Bringing Your Fiction to Market

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Now that you have your public domain adaptation written, next comes the challenge of getting it into readers' hands. The goal is to present your work professionally, optimize its discoverability, and ensure it stands out in the crowded book market. **Choosing the right format, platform, and metadata strategies can make the difference between a book that fades into obscurity and one that thrives.** This chapter will guide you through the key steps to successfully publishing your fiction...you *can* do it!

## Publishing on Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP)

Amazon KDP is the most effective and widely used platform for self-publishing ebooks and print-on-demand paperbacks. It provides direct access to **millions** of readers worldwide, offers powerful marketing tools, and allows authors to retain control over pricing and distribution.

### How to Publish on KDP

1. **Create a KDP Account:** Sign up at [Amazon KDP](#) and complete your author profile.
2. **Prepare Your Manuscript:** Format your ebook using Kindle Create, Vellum, or Scrivener to ensure it meets Kindle's formatting standards.

3. **Upload Your Book:** KDP accepts .docx, .epub, and .kpf files for ebooks and PDFs for paperbacks that have images or elements that bleed to the edges of your pages. If your book does not contain bleed, you can upload your manuscript as a PDF, DOC, DOCX, RTF, HTML, or TXT file. KDP will automatically convert these file types to PDF
4. **Set Your Pricing and Royalties:** Research where books in your specific genre tend to be priced. *Also, with public domain works, you are limited to 35% royalties.*
5. **Select KDP Select (Optional):** Enrolling in KDP Select makes your book available on Kindle Unlimited, offering potential page-read royalties and promotional benefits like Kindle Countdown Deals.
6. **Publish and Monitor Performance:** Once published, track sales and reader engagement through KDP's dashboard.

## Other Publishing Options

While KDP is my primary recommendation for public domain fiction, some authors may want to expand their distribution.

- **Draft2Digital & Smashwords:** Distribute ebooks to Apple Books, Barnes & Noble, and Kobo without requiring exclusivity.
- **Audiobook Platforms:** Convert your book into an audiobook using **Audible (ACX)**, **Findaway Voices**, or **Google Play Audiobooks**.

- **Serialized Fiction Platforms:** Consider publishing episodically on **Kindle Vella**, **Radish**, **Tapas**, **Royal Road**, or **Wattpad** to engage readers over time.

## Book Positioning & Metadata Optimization

Publishing your book is just the beginning—*making sure it's discoverable is the next crucial step*. Metadata optimization is how readers find your book in search results, so getting it right is essential for success. **This includes optimizing your book's title, subtitle, description, categories, and keywords to ensure it appears in relevant searches on Amazon KDP.** Proper metadata not only improves visibility but also increases the likelihood of attracting the right audience, leading to more sales and better rankings. Authors should research high-traffic, low-competition keywords and select categories that align with their book's genre and reader expectations.

*Let's take a closer look at each of those elements...*

### Creating an Effective Title & Subtitle

Your title should be engaging and informative, letting readers know exactly what they're getting. For public domain fiction adaptations, a clear subtitle can help distinguish your book from the original work.

- **Example:** Instead of just *Dracula*, consider *Dracula Reimagined: A Gothic Horror Retelling* to highlight what makes your version unique.

## Crafting a Compelling Book Description

Your book description should do more than summarize—it **should sell**. Start with a compelling hook that immediately draws interest. Highlight the unique aspects of your story, whether it's a fresh take on a classic or an exciting twist within a beloved genre. Use emotionally engaging language that resonates with your target audience.

Additionally, incorporating relevant keywords naturally into the description improves searchability and increases visibility on Amazon. A well-crafted description should not only inform but also excite and entice potential readers to click the "Buy" button.

### Here's an example of a compelling book description...

*"A daring new vision of Bram Stoker's classic—Dracula as you've never seen him before. When Jonathan Harker travels to Transylvania, he expects to close a simple real estate deal. Instead, he finds himself trapped in a nightmare beyond his imagination. In this bold reimagining, the legendary vampire is more cunning, more dangerous, and hiding secrets that could shake the very foundation of history. Perfect for fans of gothic horror and supernatural thrillers, this thrilling retelling will keep you turning pages late into the night. Will Harker escape the castle's dark clutches, or is he doomed to become the next victim? Find out in this chilling reimagination of a literary icon."*

## Choosing the Right Categories & Keywords

Selecting the correct categories and keywords ensures your book appears in relevant search results. Amazon KDP allows you to choose two primary categories, but additional ones can be added by contacting Amazon support.

For a book like the Dracula reimagining described above, here's how to optimize categories and keywords:

### Category Selection on Amazon KDP

Choosing a mix of broad and niche categories helps maximize visibility while minimizing competition.

#### Suggested Categories:

1. **Fiction > Horror > Gothic** – A natural fit for a Dracula-based story with gothic horror elements.
2. **Fiction > Fantasy > Historical** – A great option if the book contains supernatural and historical themes.

Authors can also request additional relevant categories, such as:

- **Fiction > Classics**
- **Fiction > Literary Adaptations**
- **Fiction > Thrillers > Supernatural**



## Keyword Optimization for Discoverability

Effective keywords should reflect what readers are searching for while staying relevant to the book's content.

### Suggested Keywords:

1. **Gothic horror novel** – Targets readers interested in atmospheric horror stories.
2. **Dracula retelling** – Appeals to those looking for fresh takes on classic vampire fiction.
3. **Victorian supernatural thriller** – Captures historical and supernatural aspects.
4. **Bram Stoker-inspired fiction** – Engages fans of the original work.
5. **Dark fantasy historical novel** – Expands reach to historical fantasy readers.
6. **Classic horror reimagined** – Attracts those who enjoy modern adaptations of classic tales.
7. **Supernatural suspense book** – Appeals to readers looking for eerie, suspenseful storytelling.

By implementing these strategies, you can significantly improve your book's visibility and increase your chances of reaching your target audience.

*Next, let's examine some of the biggest successes out there among authors who have created popular works from public domain fiction...*

# Chapter Seven: Case Studies and Success Stories

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One of the most powerful ways to understand how to succeed with public domain fiction is to study authors who have already done it—**and done it well**. The three case studies in this chapter highlight authors who have taken public domain characters and stories, reinvented them in compelling ways, and turned them into bestsellers. Their journeys offer valuable insights into creative storytelling, smart marketing, and how to stand out in a crowded market. Whether you're looking to write a fresh take on a beloved classic or create something entirely new within an existing world, I hope these success stories will inspire you to take the leap.

## Gregory Maguire: The Master of Public Domain Reinvention

Few authors have leveraged public domain fiction as successfully as Gregory Maguire. He built an entire career by reimagining classic stories from a fresh perspective, most famously with his *Wicked* series, which reinterprets *The Wizard of Oz* from the viewpoint of the Wicked Witch of the West.

Maguire's *Wicked* took the literary world by storm when it was published in 1995, offering a deeper, more nuanced take on a character traditionally seen as a villain. The novel resonated with readers, earning critical acclaim and eventually inspiring one of the most successful Broadway musicals of all time. *Wicked: The Musical* debuted in 2003 and has since grossed over **\$1 billion** in Broadway ticket sales alone.



<https://wickedthemusical.com/>

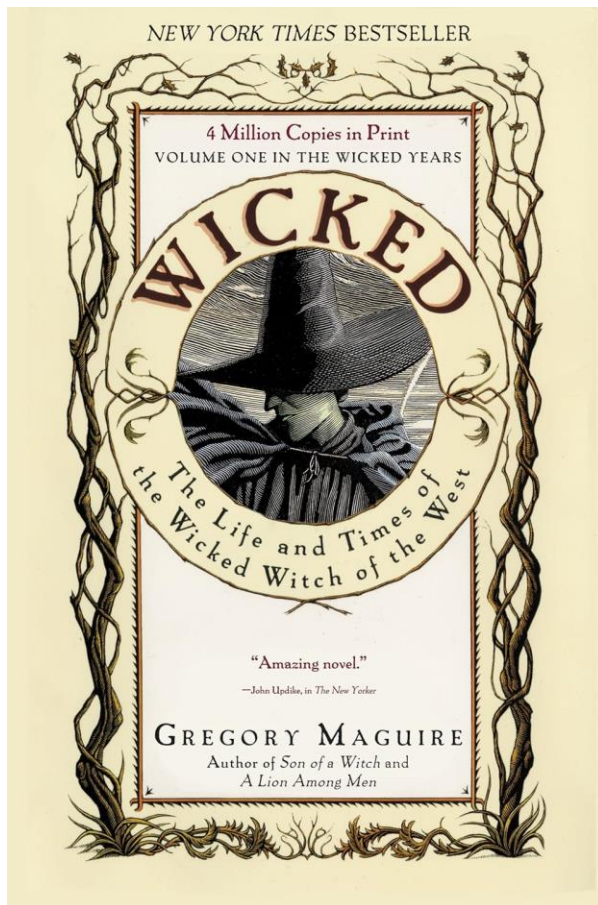
The *Wicked* series expanded into multiple sequels, keeping readers engaged for decades, and in 2024, the highly anticipated *Wicked* movie adaptation hit theaters, further solidifying Maguire's work as a modern classic.



<https://www.wickedmovie.com/>

Easy AI Public Domain Fiction

Maguire's success is a testament to the power of reimagining a well-known story from an unexpected perspective. By adding rich character development, political intrigue, and a complex moral landscape, he transformed a simple fairy tale into a sprawling epic that appealed to both casual readers and literary enthusiasts. His books have sold **millions of copies worldwide**, and with the success of the musical and film adaptations, his earnings are estimated to be in the **tens of millions**.



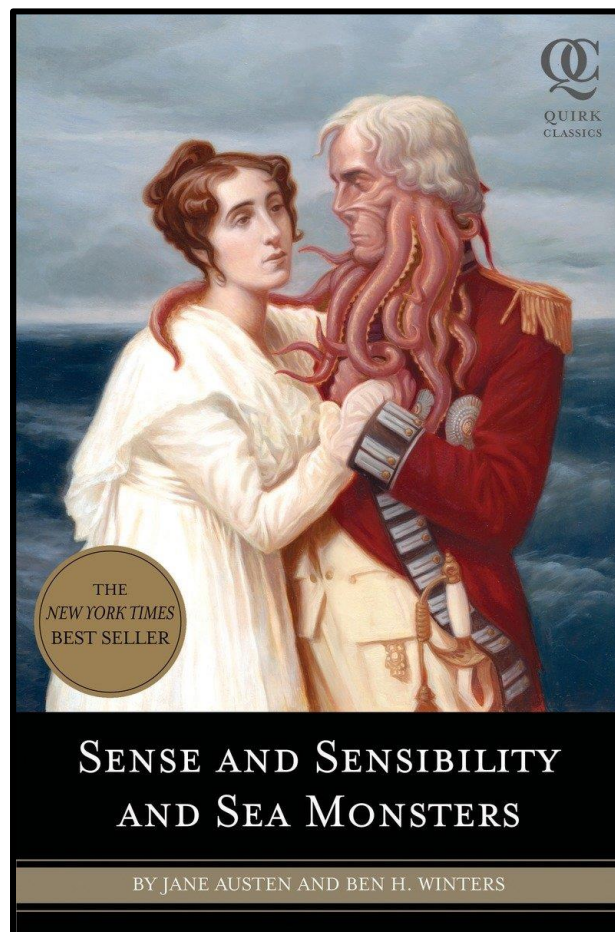
### What He Did Differently:

- Reimagined a classic villain as a sympathetic and complex protagonist.
- Expanded a children's story into a darker, adult-oriented fantasy novel.
- Benefited from multiple adaptations, including a record-breaking Broadway show and a feature film.

 [Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West](#)

## Seth Grahame-Smith: Pioneering the Genre Mashup

Seth Grahame-Smith changed the game by blending classic literature with pop culture horror elements in his 2009 novel *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*. At the time, the zombie craze was at its peak, and Grahame-Smith tapped into that market by infusing Jane Austen's polite society with the undead. The book became a **New York Times Bestseller**, selling over **1 million copies** and paving the way for a wave of similar mashups, including *Sense and Sensibility and Sea Monsters* (By Ben H. Winters).



<https://www.amazon.com/Sense-Sensibility-Monsters-Jane-Austen/dp/1594744424>

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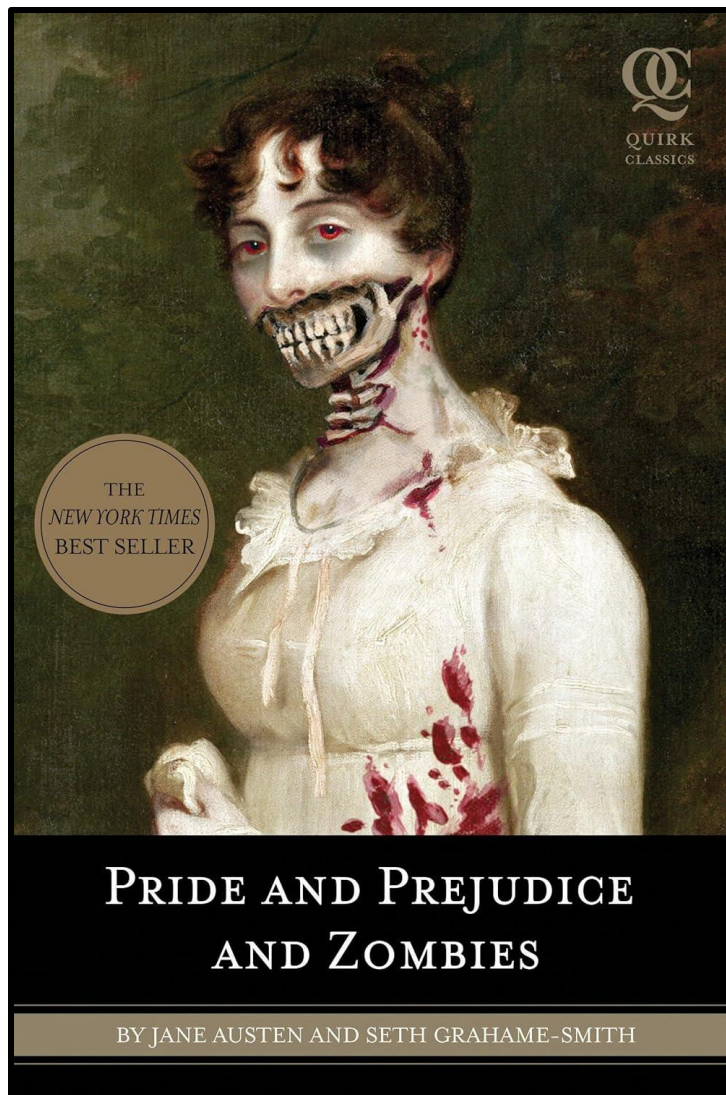


What made Grahame-Smith's approach unique was his ability to seamlessly integrate the horror elements into Austen's original prose, keeping the story's structure intact while adding thrilling and comedic twists. This balance of reverence and reinvention allowed the book to appeal to both die-hard Austen fans and readers who typically wouldn't pick up a Regency romance. The novel was later adapted into a **2016 film**, further increasing its reach and financial success.



<https://flixchatter.net/2016/02/07/flixchatter-review-pride-and-prejudice-and-zombies-2016/>

Thanks to the book's widespread appeal and media adaptation, Grahame-Smith has earned **millions of dollars** from royalties, film rights, and book sales.



### What He Did Differently:

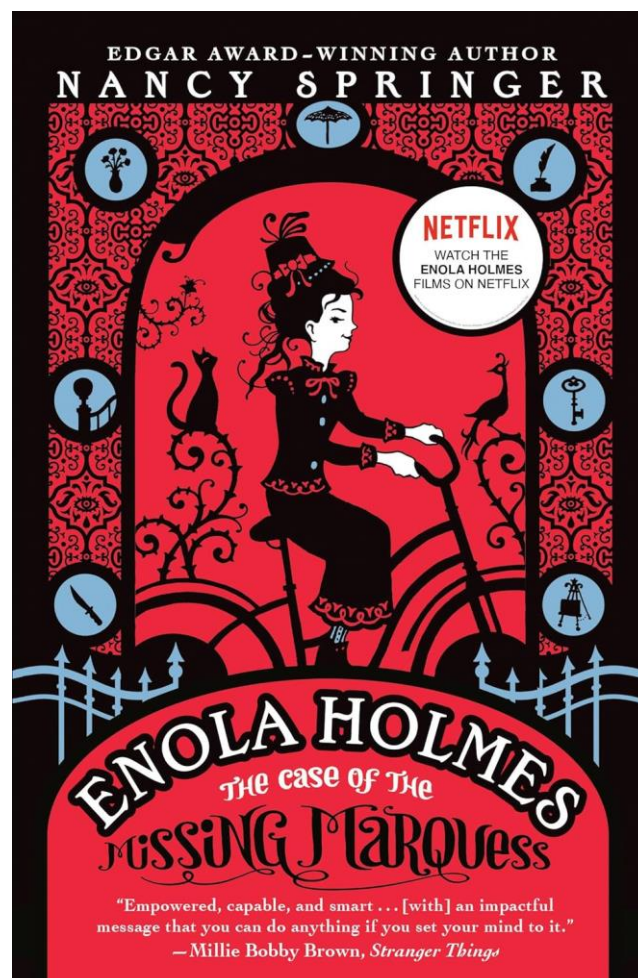
- Created a completely new subgenre by mixing classic literature with horror.
- Took advantage of a major pop culture trend (zombies) to attract a wider audience.
- Used humor and satire to make a traditionally serious work more accessible and entertaining.

 [\*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies\*](#)



## Nancy Springer: Expanding the Sherlock Holmes Universe

Nancy Springer found her success by introducing a fresh character into an already beloved literary world. Her *Enola Holmes* series, which follows Sherlock Holmes' younger sister, gave readers a new perspective on the famous detective's world. The first book in the series, *The Case of the Missing Marquess*, was published in 2006 and gradually built a strong following, particularly among young adult readers.



<https://www.amazon.com/Missing-Marquess-Enola-Holmes-Mystery/dp/0142409332>

Easy AI Public Domain Fiction

The series truly skyrocketed when Netflix adapted *Enola Holmes* into a film in 2020, starring Millie Bobby Brown and Henry Cavill. The movie was a massive success, ranking among Netflix's most-watched films and leading to increased book sales for Springer. Following the movie's popularity, the books were re-released with new cover designs, and Springer saw a resurgence in readership. The film adaptation also secured a sequel, further extending the series' longevity. While exact figures on Springer's earnings aren't publicly available, the success of the books and movies suggests she has earned **millions** from royalties and licensing deals.



<https://inreviewcritics.com/2021/04/11/elementary-my-dear-reader-enola-holmes-2020-netflix-movie-review/>

Springer's genius was in identifying an opportunity within the public domain—Sherlock Holmes' world—and creating an original character who could appeal to modern readers. By making Enola independent, intelligent, and resourceful, she

crafted a protagonist that resonated with younger audiences while still honoring the legacy of the Holmes universe.



### What She Did Differently:

- Created an original protagonist within a well-established literary world.
- Targeted a different audience than traditional Sherlock Holmes stories (young adult readers).
- Benefited from a mainstream media adaptation that introduced her books to millions of viewers.

 [Enola Holmes 9 Books Collection Set](#)



These authors – *and so many others!* – have discovered that public domain fiction is a treasure trove of opportunity. Whether by reinterpreting a villain, blending genres, or expanding an existing universe, they’ve demonstrated that creativity combined with smart marketing can lead to **phenomenal success**. Their stories show that there is no single path to making public domain fiction work—only the need for an original approach and a willingness to take risks.

In the next and final chapter, we’ll discuss **your next steps**—from refining your ideas to putting them into action and launching your own successful book.

*Are you getting excited yet? I am!*

# Chapter Eight: Conclusion and Next Steps

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Throughout this guide, we've explored the vast potential of public domain fiction, from uncovering beloved characters and reinventing them to leveraging AI tools for research, writing, and marketing. The fusion of traditional creativity with modern technology has opened up new doors for authors, **making it easier than ever to craft compelling stories that captivate readers and succeed** in today's publishing landscape.

Public domain fiction offers a unique opportunity to build upon well-known characters and settings while adding fresh twists that make them feel new again. Whether you're writing a direct continuation, a genre-bending mashup, or a completely original perspective within an established world, the possibilities are endless. **And with AI-powered tools at your disposal**, you can streamline the process, ensuring your work is well-researched, polished, and optimized for discoverability.

## Taking the Leap: Your Next Steps to Success

Now that you're equipped with inspiration, strategies, and resources, it's time to take action. **Don't wait for the perfect moment—start writing today.** Experiment with different approaches, test market trends, and use AI assistance where it benefits your workflow.

***The most important step is simply to get started!***

Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) offers a direct path to readers worldwide, allowing you to self-publish both digital and paperback versions with full control over pricing and marketing strategies. By optimizing your book for Kindle's search algorithms, selecting the right categories, and using effective keywords, you can maximize visibility and reach the right audience.

Remember, every successful public domain adaptation began with an idea and an author who was willing to take the leap. You have all the tools you need to craft an engaging, marketable book. The next success story could be yours.

#### **Final Steps to Get Started:**

- **Choose a Public Domain Character or Story** – Find a classic that excites and inspires you.
- **Decide on Your Unique Approach** – Will you retell, reimagine, or expand the original work?
- **Utilize AI Tools** – Enhance your research, outlining, writing, and marketing process.
- **Publish and Promote** – Get your book onto the right platform and reach your audience.

The world of public domain fiction is waiting for your voice. Take what you've learned, embrace your creativity, and start your journey as a published author today...*I can't wait to see what you create!*