

Ambition and Survival: Becoming a Poet

The life of a poet is often romanticized, seen as a life of passion, creativity, and inspiration. But the reality of being a poet is often much more prosaic, involving hard work, rejection, and financial insecurity.



Ambition and Survival: Becoming a Poet by Christian Wiman

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So why do people become poets? What drives them to pursue such a challenging and often unrewarding career?

For some, poetry is a calling. They feel compelled to write, to express themselves in a way that other forms of communication cannot. Poetry allows them to explore their emotions, their thoughts, and their experiences in a way that is both personal and universal.

For others, poetry is a way to make sense of the world around them. In a world that often seems chaotic and incomprehensible, poetry can provide a sense of order and meaning. It can help us to understand our own experiences and to connect with others who have had similar experiences.

Whatever their reasons, poets are a passionate and dedicated group of people. They are willing to work hard and to face rejection in order to share their voices with the world. They believe in the power of poetry to change lives and to make the world a better place.

The Challenges of Being a Poet

Being a poet is not without its challenges. In addition to the hard work and dedication required to write good poetry, poets also face the challenge of rejection. Most poets experience rejection from literary magazines, publishers, and grant committees on a regular basis. This can be discouraging, but it is important to remember that rejection is a part of the process. Every poet experiences rejection at some point in their career.

Another challenge that poets face is financial insecurity. Most poets do not make a living from their writing. They often have to work other jobs to support themselves and their families. This can make it difficult to find the time and energy to write poetry.

Despite the challenges, many poets continue to write and publish their work. They are driven by a passion for poetry and a belief in its power to change lives.

How to Become a Poet

There is no one-size-fits-all answer to the question of how to become a poet. However, there are some things that you can do to increase your chances of success.

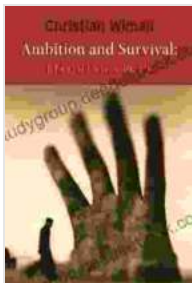
- **Read poetry.** The best way to learn how to write poetry is to read poetry. Read as much poetry as you can, from a variety of poets and

styles. Pay attention to the language, the imagery, and the structure of the poems you read. What do you like about them? What don't you like? What can you learn from them?

- **Write poetry.** The only way to become a better poet is to practice writing poetry. Write regularly, even if you don't feel like it. Experiment with different forms and styles. Don't be afraid to make mistakes. The more you write, the better you will become.
- **Get feedback on your work.** Once you have written some poems, it is important to get feedback from others. Ask friends, family members, or teachers to read your work and give you their feedback. This will help you to identify areas where you can improve your writing.
- **Attend poetry workshops and readings.** Attending poetry workshops and readings is a great way to learn from other poets and to get your work heard. Poetry workshops can provide you with valuable feedback on your work and help you to develop your writing skills. Poetry readings can help you to connect with other poets and to get your work out into the world.
- **Be persistent.** Becoming a poet takes time and effort. Don't get discouraged if you don't achieve success overnight. Keep writing, keep reading, and keep getting feedback. Eventually, your hard work will pay off.

Being a poet is not easy. It requires hard work, dedication, and passion. But it is also a rewarding experience. Poetry can help us to understand ourselves and the world around us in a new way. It can help us to connect with others and to make a difference in the world.

If you have a passion for poetry, then I encourage you to pursue it. Don't let the challenges discourage you. With hard work and dedication, you can achieve your dream of becoming a poet.



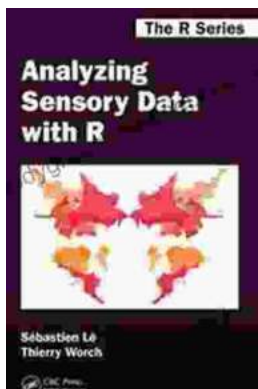
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