

**Reviewer:** Savannah Gomes

**Quarter:** 2

**School Year:** 2012-2013

**Title:** *Bird by Bird*

**Genre:** Writing

**Author:** Anne Lamott

**# of Pages:** 237

In *Bird by Bird*, Anne Lamott tells about writing by including what got her into it. She shares stories about her life to make the reader relate her lessons to their own lives. Some parts of the book are on perfectionism, plot, how to know when you're done, and even index cards. As for index cards, she mentions how keeping them is a great way to remember things from everyday life. Good writing always comes from experience and a good writer can be content to sit and observe, so using index cards can help you remember what you saw throughout the day. It can be anything from a fight on the street to an interesting guy to use as a character later on. At the end of the book, she praises writing and how it has made her happy.

The entirety of the book can be useful in writing and also in regular life. The lessons were similar in that they can be applied to both situations. She had a section on perfectionism and she said it will, "ruin your writing, blocking inventiveness and playfulness and life force...[It] means that you try desperately not to leave so much mess to clean up. But clutter and mess show life is being lived," (28). She starts out with the premise of writing, but transitions into life. It's the same for both, really, and can have the same consequence: making people bored with you. Every time I see or hear something about perfectionism being bad, I always take it with a grain of salt, but this really hit home for me because I could apply it to something besides myself.

I found the book riveting. There was never a dull moment even though the whole thing was about writing. It was a fun read. In some cases, practice makes perfect, but in writing, practice makes better and *Bird by Bird* made that point very clear. I would recommend it to anyone who usually only reads fiction. It's a break from the imaginary world and gives you a better view of life and the way people write.