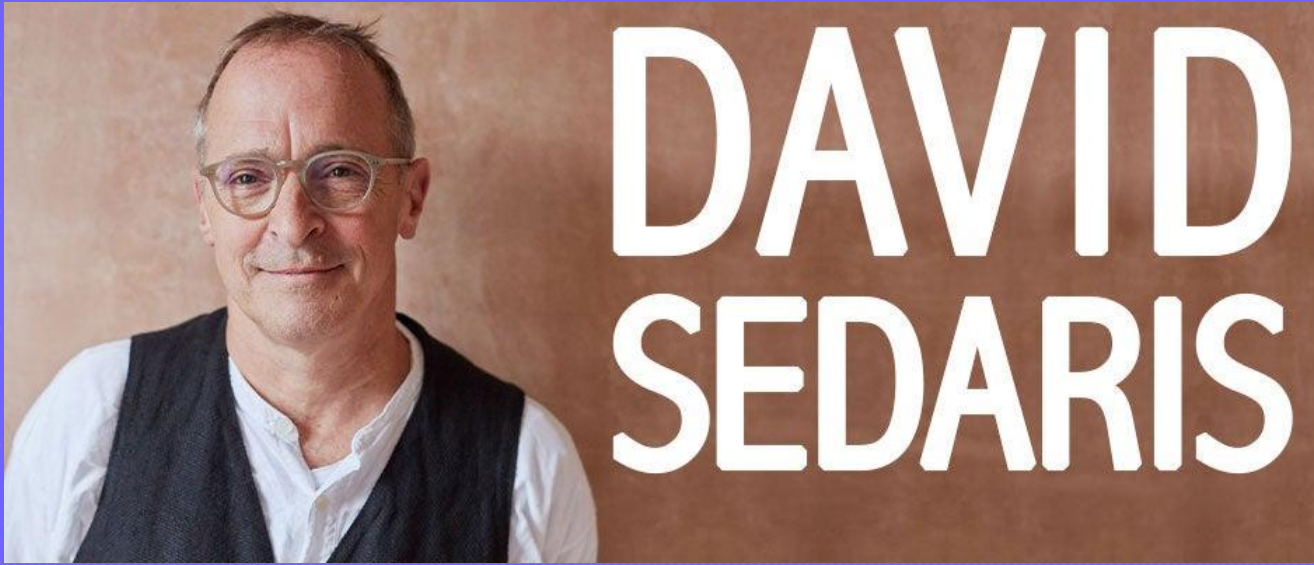


Enjoy Reading Your Work in Public

...even when you'd rather get root canal.



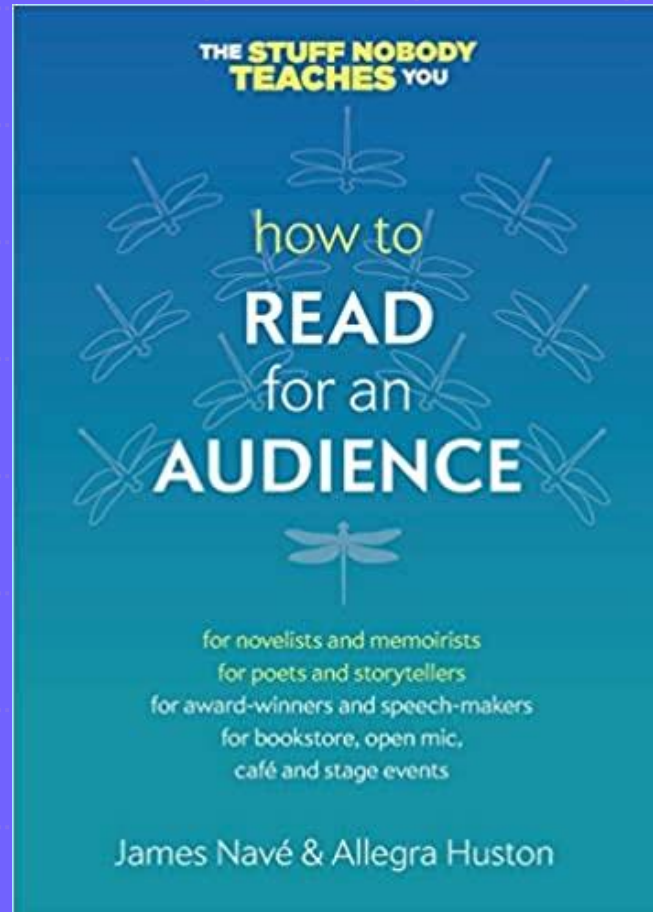
**Why read your work
aloud?**



Reading your own writing can help develop your writing voice. It forces you to pay more attention to the words.

“When the audience laughs, I make notes...when the audience coughs, it’s like they’re throwing skulls at you. They’re telling you that if this was on the page, they would be skimming now.”

Reading your work aloud is a valuable step in the editing process because you feel the words.



Why read in public?

- Gain exposure
- Build your author platform
- Gather newsletter subscribers
- Sell books!



After attending a reading, why do listeners buy books, follow on social media, and sign up for newsletters?

- Listening creates a shared emotional experience.
- When you feel the emotions of what you're reading, the audience will too.
- The audience begins to empathize with the characters and connect with the author.

Choosing Your Content



Emotional Connection ... “the strongest connection you make when reading aloud is emotional, not intellectual.” -Nave and Huston

- Pick passages that make you laugh or cry . . . your favorite poem or section of a story . . . Something that makes your heart sing.
- Look for contrasting pieces: sad/happy, dramatic/comedic, love/hate.
- Begin with a strong, intimate piece. Building an alliance with the audience, so don't start confrontationally.
- Finishing on an upbeat note sells more books and the audience leaves happy.

Betsy Graziani Fasbinder-Writer's Digest

- Avoid exposition and limit backstory
- Select emotionally engaging passages
- Choose an excerpt that can stand alone
- Reflect the collection or novel – don't read all funny pages if the book isn't lighthearted
- Don't give away the farm – too much, and they don't need to read the book

Keep in mind:

- Ultimately you want to have several pieces selected , rehearsed, and ready.
- Work can be edited for a reading. Cut out exposition. Trim description. Clarify dialogue tags. Rearrange paragraphs.
- Stick with the main plot line or theme.
- Don't read the climax or ending.
- It may be wise to print out each selection (with any edits) on separate papers, so you can re-arrange quickly. You can mark your pages more easily than in the book.

Group Readings

- Rehearse and stay within the time limit.
- If there's a theme, honor it.
- Not all material is appropriate for all audiences. Select something with children in mind. Edit wording.
- Consider which piece best follows someone else's.
- Stay and listen until the end.

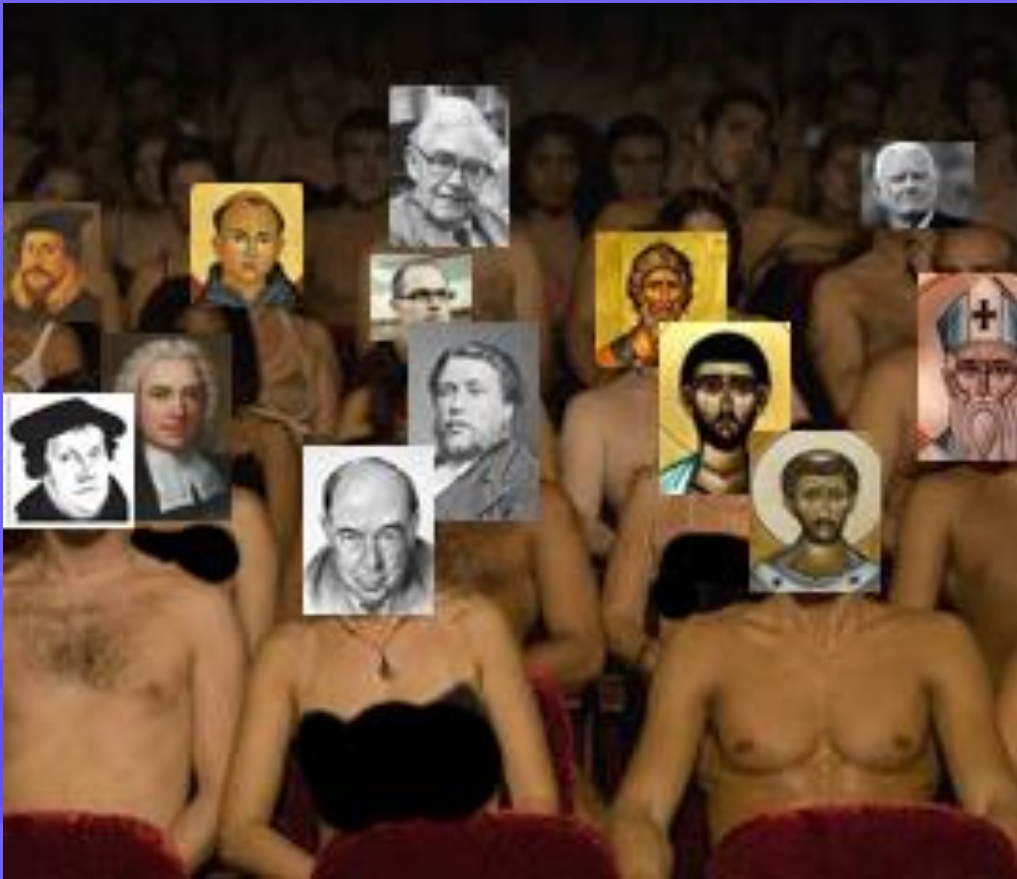


NERVOUS?

Some Dos and
Don'ts



The worse advice is to picture the audience in their underwear.



**DON'T PICTURE
THEM IN THEIR
UNDERWEAR.**

Don't think of the audience as your enemy.

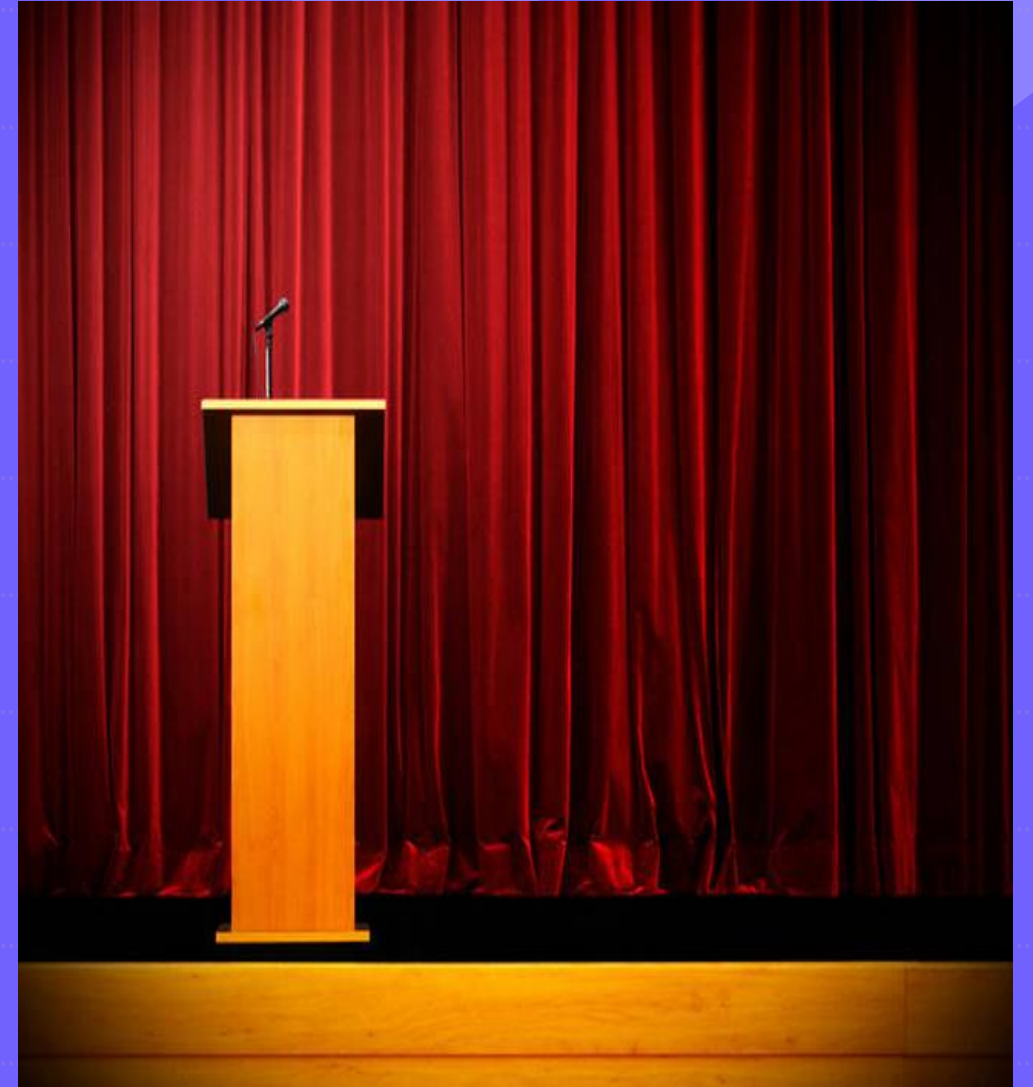
- They have nothing to gain if you don't do well.
- They took time out of their day to hear you.
- They traveled and maybe paid to hear you.
- They are your fans/potential fans.
- They are on your side. Think of them as allies.

Do:

- Take ten or more deep, diaphragmatic breaths. It will calm your nerves, and you use diaphragmatic breathing to project your voice. They need to hear you.
- Start reading to small audiences of friends and writer groups.
- Attend other writer readings.
- Read in front of others often-each time gets easier.
- Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse...

Rehearsal Will Make You More Comfortable!

- Commit to the Rehearsal Process.
- Rehearse aloud. Slow down. Work on words that cause you trouble.
- Practice reading work by others.
- Time it and if you go over, shorten the piece. Don't read faster.
- Create a “moment before” for each piece.
- Explore vocal choices and emphasis.
- Don't shuffle or tap you foot. Put that nervous energy onto the lines.



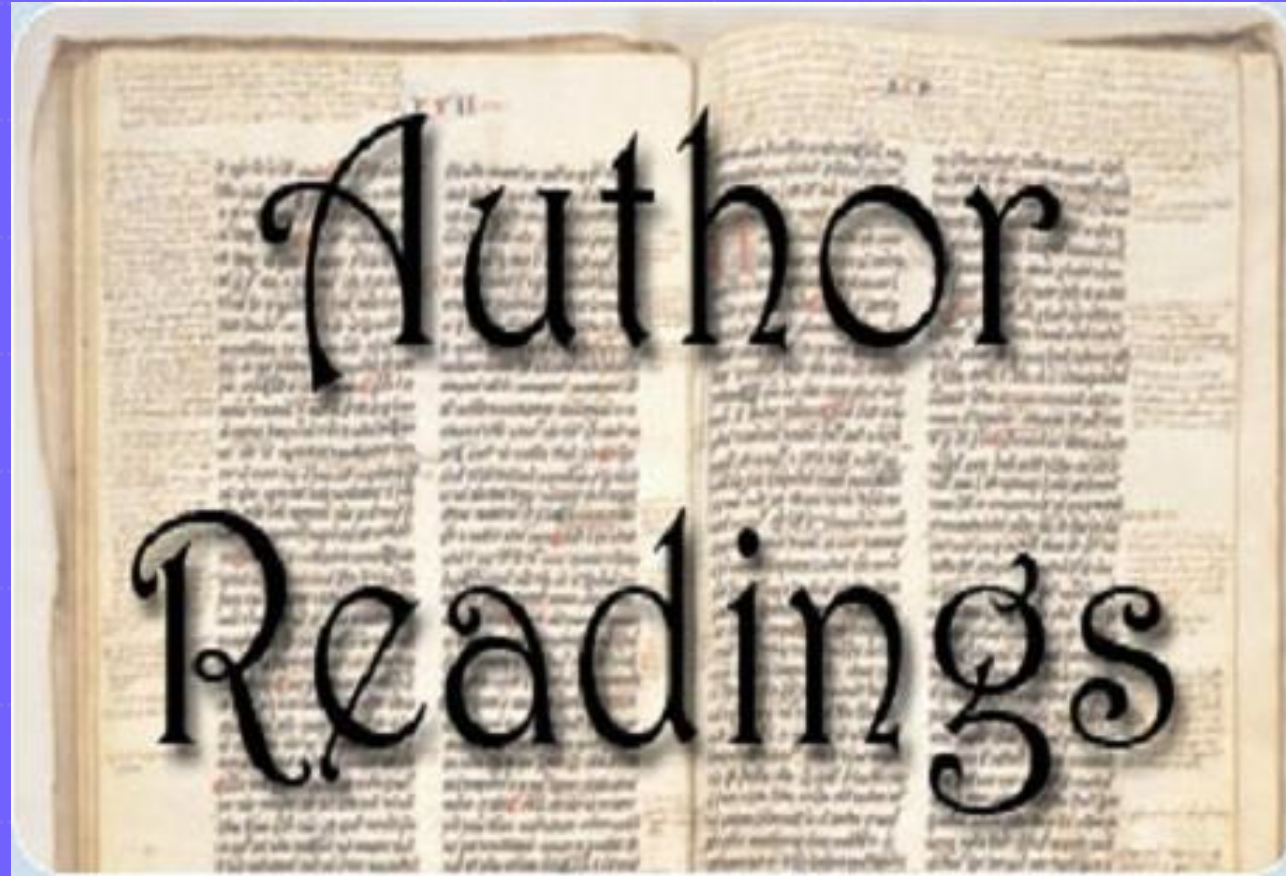
The Reading!

- Visit the venue before and/or arrive early to check out everything.
- Give yourself plenty of time to prepare the space.
- Display your books, newsletter sign up, and any prize(s).
- Place a bottle or glass of water where you can reach it.
- Practice a few lines in the room before others enter.
- When you are introduced, enter with confidence and smile.
- Stop moving, take the “stage”, pause before saying your opening remarks.

- Read slowly and with connection.
- Remember to look up when reading.
- Be yourself and engage the audience. Break into antidotes/personal stories between pieces.
- Say “Thank you” when you are done.
- Q and A

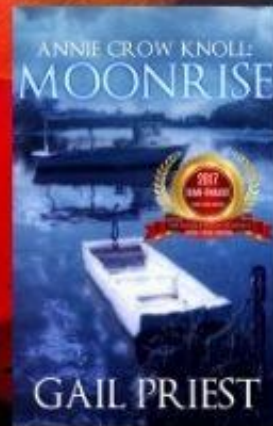
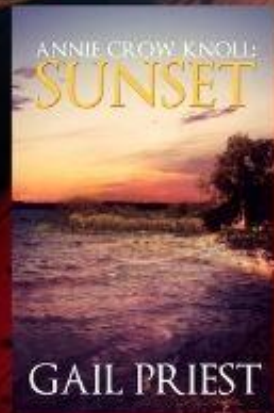
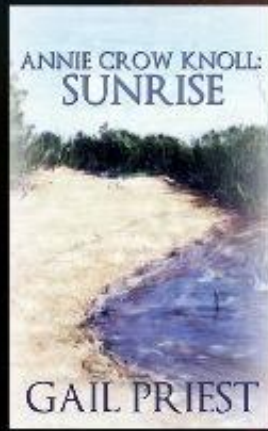


Now, let's have you try it!



Gail Priest

Author of the Annie Crow Knoll Trilogy and Eastern Shore Shorts



"Don't just buy this one volume;
get the whole set, because once
you get to the knoll, you are going
to want to stay for awhile!"
-5 Star Amazon Review

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