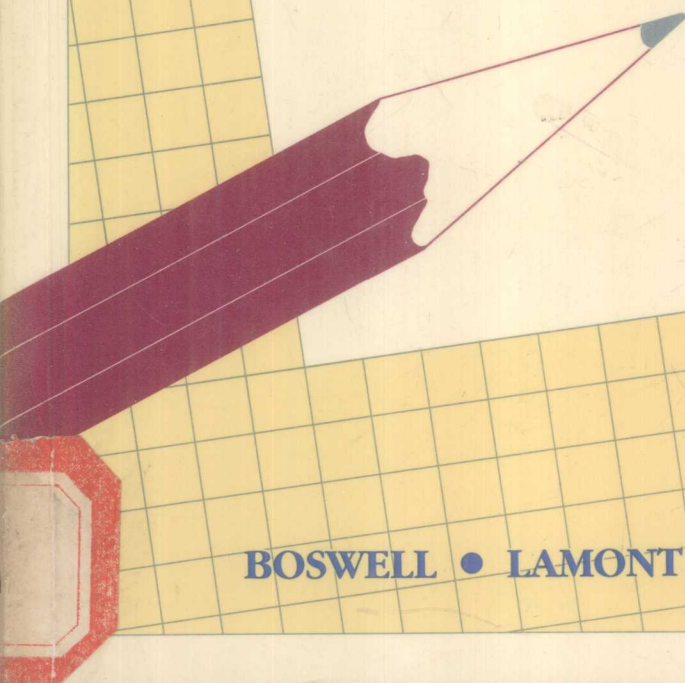


# THE Writer's VOICE

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*Reading  
into  
Writing*



BOSWELL • LAMONT • MARTYN

# **THE Writer's VOICE**

**1**



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1

*Reading  
into  
Writing*

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# Foreword

Young writers often ask me what advice I have for them. I tell them I have two basic pieces of advice. First, they should keep on writing, keep on practising, keep on rewriting, keep on trying to improve what they've set down in words so that their work will come more closely to the idea they had in their minds. Second, they should read widely, not in order to be influenced by anybody else but simply to see what is possible in writing, to see what accomplished writers have done in terms of the portrayal of characters in all their complexity, the evocation of places, the setting down of the genuine sound of human speech in the ways it is spoken in particular places and by particular people, the communication of an underlying stance towards life itself. Of course, what all writers need to do, and all real writers eventually do, is to discover their own voices, their own ways of expressing in writing their unique and individual voices.

*Margaret Laurence*

# Introduction

Each of us is unique. We have all had different experiences, and we see and think about the world in different ways. Therefore, when we write about our ideas, either for ourselves or to communicate with others, each of us is finding an individual voice. No one else has ever expressed the same thought in the same way before.

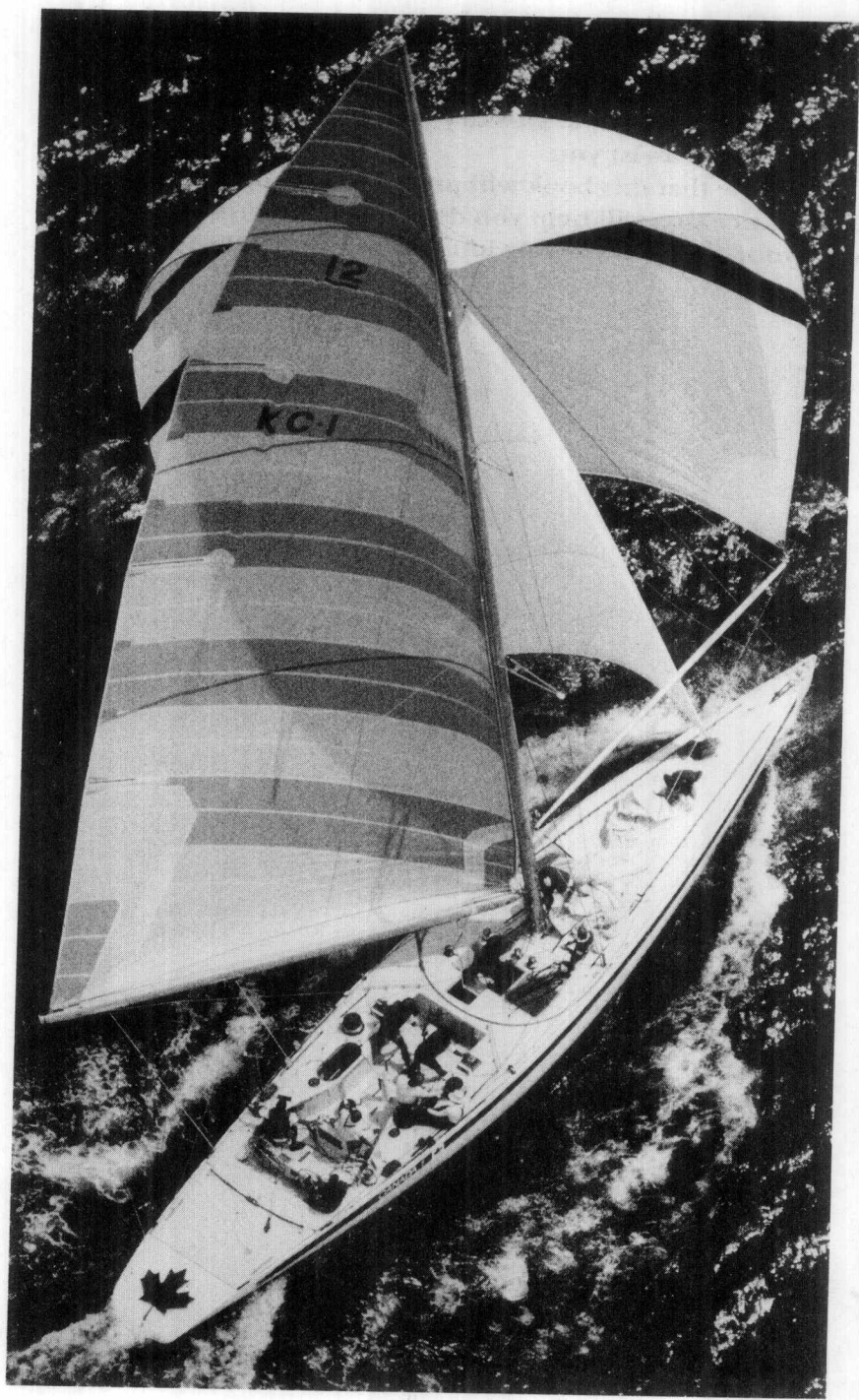
*The Writer's Voice* is based on five main ideas:

- *Writing is thinking.* When you write, you learn as you work with language.
- *Writing is discovery.* It grows out of personal experience and can help your understanding.
- *Writing is linked to listening, speaking, viewing, and reading.* Talking about your ideas, and listening to and reading the ideas of others, will help your writing.
- *Writing is determined by purpose and audience.* Why you are writing, and for whom, will influence what you say and how you say it.
- *Writing is learned by writing.* To be a good writer, you must write frequently. However, not all of what you write needs to be revised or corrected.

*The Writer's Voice* is divided into three sections. In the first section you will be looking at writing as a means of exploring ideas and clarifying your own thinking. In the second section, divided into four units according to the writing purpose, you will be examining various ways in which you can communicate.

**You will be reading selections by other writers, discussing how they expressed their thoughts, and then developing your own thoughts in your own way. The third section is a handbook for writers. It contains a glossary and outlines strategies and guidelines to assist you.**

**We hope that this book will provide ideas and opportunities for practice that will help you develop what Margaret Laurence calls your “unique and individual voice” to its fullest potential.**



# Exploring

- What feelings and ideas does this photograph of *Canada 1* suggest to you?
- What does the word “exploring” mean to you?
- What risks and freedoms are a part of exploring?

Find other photographs that illustrate exploring. Bring them to class and, working in small groups, examine them.



# Introduction

To find our own voice, we need the freedom to discover new ideas and explore our own thoughts. We can say to ourselves, “I wonder”; “Could it be?”; “I didn’t think of that before”; “What if?”; and write down our responses in our own words. In this type of writing, we put aside for a while as a primary concern the “nevers” and “mustn’ts” associated with correct writing and let the ideas emerge freely. We write this way because we have things to say that are important. Later on, these explorations can become a well from which we draw the ideas we will shape for readers other than ourselves.

In the first part of this section you will be exploring the uses of a journal, a notebook in which you can record your thoughts and explore ideas in your own voice. In the second part you will be exploring other uses of language by learning the value of talk as a preparation for writing, building vocabulary, developing powers of observation, and using language to solve problems.