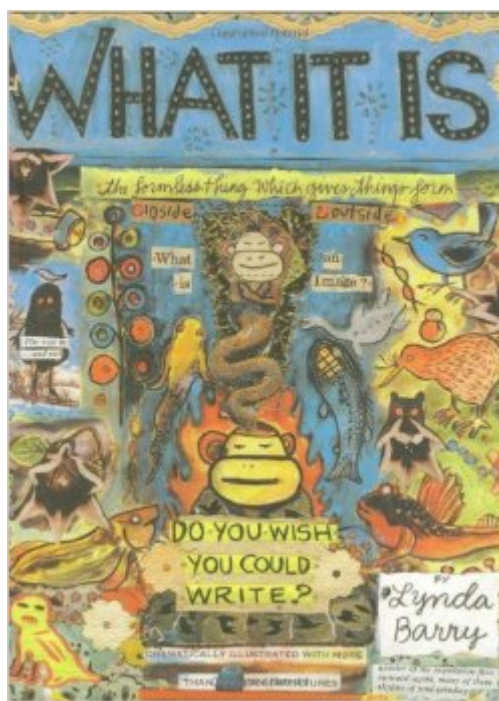


The book was found

What It Is



Synopsis

"Deliciously drawn (with fragments of collage worked into each page), insightful and bubbling with delight in the process of artistic creation. A+" -SalonHow do objects summon memories? What do real images feel like? For decades, these types of questions have permeated the pages of Lynda Barry's compositions, with words attracting pictures and conjuring places through a pen that first and foremost keeps on moving. What It Is demonstrates a tried-and-true creative method that is playful, powerful, and accessible to anyone with an inquisitive wish to write or to remember. Composed of completely new material, each page of Barry's first Drawn & Quarterly book is a full-color collage that is not only a gentle guide to this process but an invigorating example of exactly what it is: "The ordinary is extraordinary."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am an artist-teacher, and I wish someone had presented this information to me sooner. The book has a front section that is sort of an artistic, stream of consciousness, diaristic account of Lynda Barry's own creative life. Followed by a workbook, which I didn't have any specific expectations about, but I was sitting there following the steps, and it was pretty amazing how effective the method Barry advocates is. It took me off guard, and I think I am going to use it next week in the class I teach. Overall this book ranks somewhere around the best books I have ever read because it sort of snuck up on me, and made realize some stuff about myself and my creative process that I may have resisted in a less charismatic presentation.

I ordered this after reading about it on Kelly Kilmer's blog, where she highly praised this repeatedly and made me think that I was missing out on something wonderful if I didn't buy it. So I bought it, and what I found out is that I had been missing out on something wonderful!!! I couldn't be more happy that I bought this book! First of all this book surprised me in that it is nicely sized 8.5 x 11 (approx) and it's much THICKER than I had imaged it, and it's HARDCOVER. (I was expecting a soft cover magazine type book) So, after I admired the outside, and opened it up, I was even more impressed and excited with what I found!! Yes, I thought I was in comic book/collage/art journal/writing prompt heaven!! With so much to look at, I just about wore myself out trying to look at/read everything. -Which is also a nice thing about this book, I am highly doubting that you'd run out of things to look at or read here. This is kinda like looking at one of your school friends notebook, or journal, except SO MUCH BETTER! There are comic book pictures, random thoughts, journal prompts, drawings, ideas, etc, etc, etc. This is an awesome and inspiring book. This tops the list of coolest books that I own!!

This is the essence of the creative writing course Lynda Barry gives around the country these days. It conveys the course stuff beautifully, AND is a work of art in its own right. Not a rehash of her other books in any way, it just worms its way into your mind. Every page is beautiful, every page contains insights into creativity, every page is just plain fun (or just scary fun), and it has everything you need to apply the writing method Lynda uses in your own work. You really can write out of your own memories, and come up with something that isn't drivel. Get the book and try it. And join Lynda in tipping your hat to Marilyn Frasca, who originated the method.

Have you ever needed jumper cables to revive your creative process? This book is essentially just that. I have long been a Lynda Barry fan, but this is what a sense will be an essential reference book for any creative type. It bores down into just what makes one want to create and suggests exercises and steps to get whatever festers inside you out. To say that it has prompted me to fine tune my and understand my writing in much more depth would be an understatement. It also has gotten my to pick up my pencil and draw/sketch for the 1st time in over 15 years. I am pretty sure I will be constantly reading and rereading this as I further hone the creation craft. If you crave creation in any form, this book is a must.

One of the most important aspects of writing anything-- memoir, fiction, poetry--is the ability to remember. Sounds simple, but we forget so much naturally and are actively encouraged to forget

what doesn't suit the needs of any particular group, usually family. Lynda Barry's wonderful primer on how to being to probe the images of your life is just grand and will doubtless serve many artists and writers as they explore their lives and the lives of others. An exercise as simple as try to recall the earliest phone number you had and try to picture that phone seem so simple, but take you to places that you'd long forgotten. Like everything by Barry, it's humane and masterful and compassionate and smart. A wonderful addition to any artist's desk.

I don't think I've ever sat down and read straight through a book of writing exercises. And, at a very basic level, that's what "What It Is" is. And I sat down and read through the whole thing, while taking time to digest it. It's about writing, drawing, images, memory, creativity, a magic cephalopod, and Lynda Barry's life. All done on a yellow legal pad of paper. This is a great book for anyone who's ever felt stuck writing or drawing (or just in the creative process). Barry's collage work in the first half of the book gets you to ask yourself questions about imagery and memory. The second half has writing exercises and tips for how to make more for yourself. They're excellent and I can't wait to start using them. It's also probably the only time I'll ever cry over instructions for a writing exercise. If there's anything that takes away from the book, it's that I wanted to see more about Barry's life. The short passages about her childhood and education are very interesting, but take up only a small portion of the book. It's somewhat depressing to hear that her comics became such a source of concern/depression for her, but I can understand that feeling of it becoming work and the pressure to only make "good" art. And I love her moments where she's talking with her husband and thinking of all the stuff she forgets, but goes over conversation she had years ago where she said awful things. Okay, that's my awkward ending... go read this book.

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