

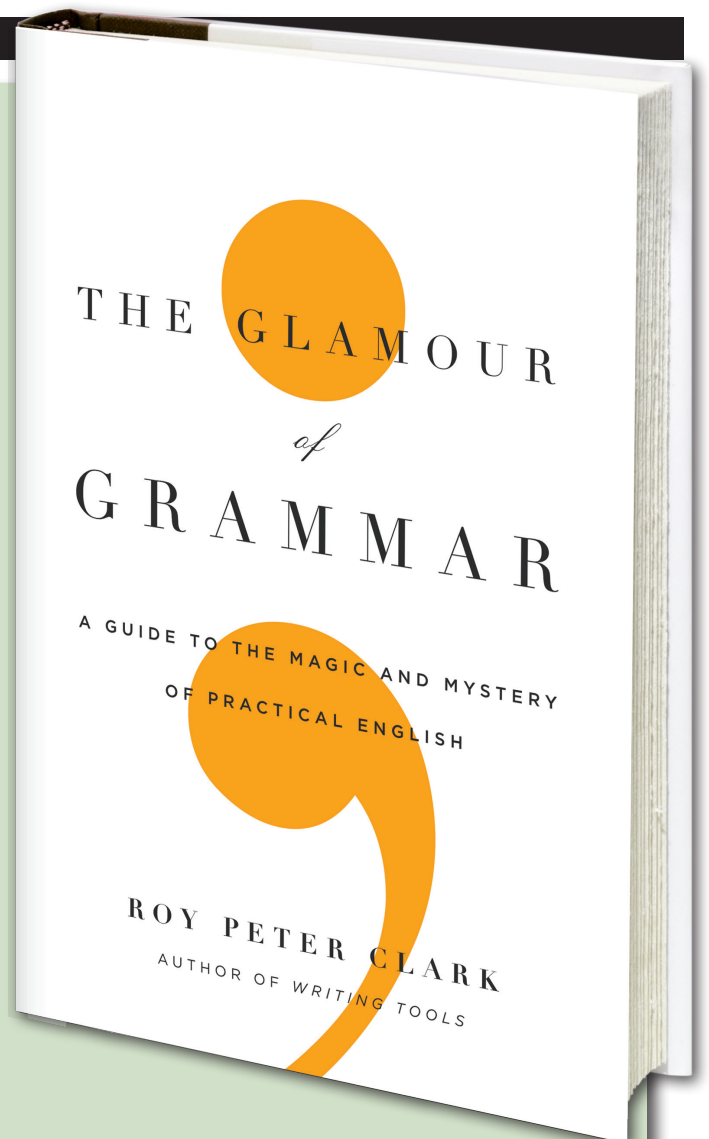
# A MESSAGE FROM ROY PETER CLARK

I can still remember that day in 1974 when I stumbled upon the knowledge that the two rhyming words—glamour and grammar—were once the same word. The same word? How could that be?

The word glamour, a corrupted spelling of grammar, denoted the use of language to create a magical spell. Only later could it be used to describe a “magical” or “enchanted” movie star. Think about it: The knowledge of language is so powerful it can create in an instant words that have never been spoken or written before. Language is power, mystery, and magic.

The reputation of grammar has declined a bit since then, shall we say? Now when people hear the word they think of fussy perfectionists, language bullies, and bored-out-of-their-skulls students. Long gone are the associations with power and mystery.

I’ve written *THE GLAMOUR OF GRAMMAR* to restore some of that power. I hope it will inspire students, teachers, and aspiring writers everywhere to love the English language, to embrace it, to open its doors and windows and cubby holes and climb inside of it, to spend the rest of their days living inside the language, even as it lives inside of them.



AN AUGUST 2010 HARDCOVER



KELLEY BENHAM FRENCH

**ROY PETER CLARK** is vice president and senior scholar at The Poynter Institute, one of the most prestigious schools for journalists in the world, and has spoken about the writer’s craft on *Oprah*, NPR, and the *Today* show. His book, *Writing Tools* (LB, 2006), has a combined total of 65,000 books in print, with strong bulk sales to high schools and colleges. Podcasts of *Writing Tools* have been downloaded from iTunes more than one million times.

Now, in *THE GLAMOUR OF GRAMMAR*, he takes a step back from writing techniques and habits to focus on the building blocks of language. *THE GLAMOUR OF GRAMMAR* gives readers all the tools they need to “live inside the language”—to take advantage of grammar to perfect their use of English, to instill meaning, and to charm through their writing.

# Tips from THE GLAMOUR OF GRAMMAR

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## Use the period to determine emphasis and space.

Build suspense, create pacing, and magnify emotion in your writing.

## Use the semicolon as a “swinging gate.”

This mark can separate and connect at the same time, and it offers writers choices other than the comma, period, or dash.

## Learn to *lie* or *lay* along with principles behind the distinction.

Turn a language problem into a language lesson—remember that “lie” means “to recline” and “lay” means “to place.”

## Place modifiers where they belong.

To avoid misplaced modifiers, double-check your writing to make sure your participle modifies the intended word.

## Help the reader learn what is “essential” and “non-essential.”

A word next to another can either be essential or non-essential to a sentence’s meaning. If not essential, it must be set off by commas. If essential, no commas are required.

## Avoid case mistakes and “hypergrammar.”

Let your ear guide you to avoid usages that are technically correct but stray widely from common usage.

## Master the grammar of new forms of writing.

The brevity of an email, blog post, text message, or Tweet is no obstacle to powerful information, a literary moment, a zinger, a joke. Draw upon formal writing strategies and older writing forms to guide you.


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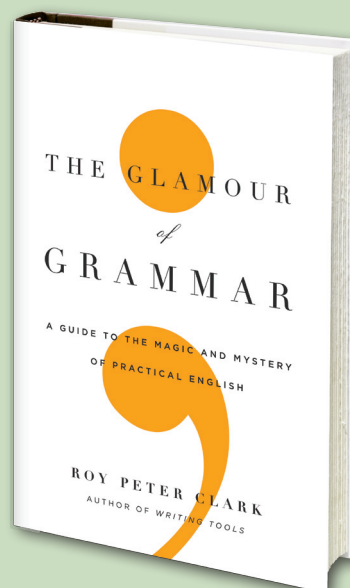
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