



Coping with Rejection

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Every writer will admit that they have been rejected. One of the first rules of becoming a writer is learning to face rejection. It might make it easier to know that:

- *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was rejected 14 times.
- *Johnathan Livingstone Seagull* was rejected 18 times.
- *Carrie* by Stephen King had over 30 rejections (read Stephen King's *On Writing*)
- *A Time to Kill* by John Grisham was rejected 45 times.
- *Gone with the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell was rejected 38 times.
- *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter was so completely rejected, that Ms. Potter decided to self-publish.
- George Orwell's *Animal Farm* was rejected with the words: 'It is impossible to sell animal stories in the USA.'
- Rudyard Kipling was told by the San Francisco Examiner 'I'm sorry Mr. Kipling, but you just don't know how to use the English Language.'
- *The Diary of Anne Frank* was rejected because 'the girl doesn't, it seems to me, to have a special perception or feeling which would lift that book above the curiosity level.'

Here are three tips for coping with those inevitable rejections:

1. **Take them on the chin.** Those who missed out on Harry Potter are still kicking themselves. You'll have your moment.
2. **Learn from every rejection.** Did you send your manuscript to the right person? Does the opening chapter need more work? Did you get any feedback you can act on? If you have received comments from an editor or agent, think long and hard about them and adjust your manuscript accordingly. This advice is gold dust, listen to it.
3. **Don't put all your eggs in one basket.** Have a submission strategy, plan the next move before you've even posted your submission and always have the next project underway. Enter short story competitions, start the next book. Be positive, be forward thinking.

Remember, literature is subjective. The first agents or publishers you try may not like what you write, but somewhere out there, there is someone who will.

To view The National Emerging Writer Programme online go to www.writing.ie.
The full DVD is available to borrow from your local library or to purchase from Amazon.