

## PREMISE TO PROPOSAL

Final Lesson

By Mary Griffith

Yes, you've made it to the last lesson! Just when you thought I'd be teaching this class into your old age. LOL

We talked some earlier in the week about the Comparative Title Analysis, a title I use loosely because the thought of books being compared to each other makes me shudder. However, it happens everyday--in bookstores, at Wal-Mart--readers go to their sections and pull out books and read the backs, all while budgeting in their heads. The point of this section is to convince the publisher (and yourself) that your book will be in the right place and be one of those on the want-to-buy stack the reader considers.

Thankfully, in Christian fiction and in Christian living it is only Christ himself that we compare ourselves to. Striving to be like Him takes all the dread out of this section. Forget measuring up to Mr. or Mrs. Bestseller! We're trying to measure up to the King of Kings! LOL

### **BOOK SELECTION**

That said, let's move forward today and find 3-5 books that are both similar and different to the title(s) in the proposal. As I've stated, Amazon can be a great tool for this (if you stay focused. It's easy to get sucked in to clicking-for-no-reason-land). Martha, for example, mentioned Mary Higgins Clark, Terry Blackstock and some others as favorites on her bookshelf. A search on any of their books or "suspense" "crime" "adoption" might give a desired result. If not, try to think of one book you've read (and liked) that had some similar thread.

Once you have your books, write a short graph for each, including the title, author, publisher and year of release (unless it's a classic, try and stay relatively current if you can). Then write a sentence or two about what the book shares with your title and what separates the two. Again, choose books with similar settings, subjects, genre, issues, etc.

Here are some links to help with today's assignment:

<http://www.junecotner.com/May2003PTM.htm> Though June works exclusively with nonfiction, her suggestions work for fiction as well.

<http://www.routledgecurzon.com/proposal.asp> An English nonfiction publisher, but there's a paragraph on the Book Comparisons and a short explanation of the editorial committee process.

<http://www.bigscoreproductions.com/Submission.htm> My agency. They do require this section for submitting to them and explain it briefly here.

That said, this section is NOT mandatory and is most often used in nonfiction proposals.

It could be done for your own use, for interviews or other marketing needs, such as packages for booksellers. As I stated at the beginning, there really is no one way to do a proposal, as long as you answer the big questions. What is this book about? Why is this book needed? When will it be ready/released? Who will buy this book? (And who is the person writing it?) Why should you be the one to write this book? Why are they the publisher to buy it? How will it compare to other books on the market?

If you sign with an agent, he or she will most likely have a format of their own, but I hope this class has given some insight into both the creative and marketing sides of creating a selling proposal. Please submit this last assignment and any previous assignments as we close today. See you tomorrow for "graduation"!

Blessings,

Mary [www.marilyngriffith.com](http://www.marilyngriffith.com)