



AUTHORS & WRITERS BOOK CLUB KENYA

EVENT REPORT

4th Book Club Meeting — First Virtual Session

May 30, 2026 | Microsoft Teams

EVENT OVERVIEW

Facilitator	Doreen Khamala — Author, Book Coach & Literary Convener Marketing and Communications Expert
Format	Book Review + Masterclass + Open Q&A
Theme	Book in Spotlight (Infant Church by Celestine Ajiambo) & Non-Fiction Writing Masterclass

ATTENDANCE

 **Authors and Writers Book Club - 4th Meeting**  External

30 May 2026 10:54 - 12:37 ▾

 More

14

Attended

10:54 - 12:37

Start and end time

1h 42m 49s

Meeting duration

50m 37s

Average attendance time

MEETING OBJECTIVES

01	Examine the book in spotlight (Infant church) as a case study in non-fiction writing.
02	Explore book architecture, voice, research, and structure.
03	Equip participants with practical tools for planning and writing non-fiction books.
04	Encourage participants to begin developing their own manuscripts.

01 — BOOK IN SPOTLIGHT: INFANT CHURCH

About the Author — Celestine Ajiambo

- Kenyan Christian Author

Book Description
Infant Church is a non-fiction Christian guide addressing deception in the Body of Christ. Written in 7 structured chapters, the book guides believers from salvation to spiritual maturity, with real-world examples drawn from Shakahola, Jim Jones, and the Kanungu Massacre.

Key Themes

- Deception & Spiritual Protection
- Salvation & Spiritual Growth
- Overcoming the Enemy
- The Mature Church

Writing Style: Expository-Pastoral.

The author revealed that the initial draft of *Infant Church* was largely a collection of ideas and information. It was during the second draft, with the guidance of an editor, that the manuscript was reorganized into the structured format presented in the final published book.

02— KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

The participants analyzed the book’s architecture, noting its deliberate progression in chapter mapping:

Section	Title	Function
Intro	Deception Has a History	<i>Hook</i>
Ch 1	Foundations of a Relationship with God	<i>Foundation</i>
Ch 2	Abide	<i>Practice</i>
Ch 3	Spiritual Infancy & Transformation	<i>Growth</i>
Ch 4	Strong Men – Overcoming the Enemy	<i>Warfare</i>
Ch 5	Ministry	<i>Service</i>
Ch 6	Obstacles & Resistance	<i>Trials</i>
Ch 7	A Spiritually Mature Church	<i>Destination</i>

The facilitator walked through the arc in detail:

- The Introduction grabs the reader by the collar: this problem is real, it is old, and it is killing people.
- Chapter 1 lays the foundation: before anything else, you need to know how a relationship with God begins.
- Chapter 2 says: now that you have the foundation, you must Abide: stay, remain, bear fruit.
- Chapter 3 is honest about the fact that we all start as spiritual infants, and that growth is necessary.
- Chapter 4 says once you are growing, you will face battles: you need to become a Strong Man.
- Chapter 5 introduces Ministry: now you are strong enough to serve others.
- Chapter 6 warns about Obstacles: things that will try to stop you.
- Chapter 7 is the destination: A Spiritually Mature Church.

That is a complete journey. From “you are in danger” all the way to “here is what a healthy church looks like.” That is intentional architecture, and as writers that is exactly what you need to plan before you write a single word.

Members discussed how each chapter serves a specific function in the reader’s journey and highlighted the principle of ‘one chapter, one idea’ as a key lesson for non-fiction writers.

03 — MASTERCLASS: WRITING YOUR NON-FICTION BOOK

The session included an in-depth masterclass covering the complete journey from Concept to Final Manuscript.

Step 1 — Your Concept: The Big Idea

Every non-fiction book must answer four foundational questions:

Question	What to Address	Example (Infant Church)
WHAT?	What is your book about in ONE sentence?	<i>How to avoid deception by pursuing spiritual maturity</i>
WHO?	Who is your reader? Be specific.	<i>New & young believers in Kenya & the African church</i>
WHY NOW?	Why is this book urgent today?	<i>Shakahola, Kanungu — deception is literally killing people</i>
SO WHAT?	What will change in the reader's life?	<i>They'll be spiritually mature enough not to be deceived</i>

Step 2 — How to Structure Your Non-Fiction Book

- Identify your book type: Reference/Dip-In or Sequential/Transformational
- Define the ONE transformation your reader will experience
- Choose a framework: Problem-Solution, Chronological, Thematic, or Step-by-Step (Read more about Step 2 here: <https://doreenkhamalabooks.ke/how-kenyan-authors-should-structure-non-fiction-books/>)

Chapter Framework — Story → Theory → Example → Action → Summary:

- STORY: Open with a human moment: case study or relatable problem
- THEORY: Research, expertise, statistics and frameworks
- EXAMPLE: Use Kenyan contexts (especially for non-fiction books)
- ACTION: Tell readers what to apply, rethink or avoid
- SUMMARY: Key takeaways, reflection questions or a short recap

Three proven book structures discussed:

- Journey Structure: Reader moves from problem → discovery → transformation
- Pillar Structure: 3–7 key concepts, each a chapter, all supporting one central thesis
- Problem → Solution: First half diagnoses the problem; second half gives solutions

Step 3 — Research: Building Your Credibility

In non-fiction, your reader must trust you before they follow you. Four types of sources were discussed:

- Primary Sources: Scripture, interviews, court records, official reports
- Secondary Sources: Other books on your topic (theology, psychology, history)
- Lived Experience: Your own testimony and the testimony of others (survivors, experts, pastors)
- Journalism & Reports: News articles, research papers, documentaries on your subject matter

Key lesson from *Infant Church*: The book uses scripture brilliantly but references real-world events without sufficient depth. Writers should anchor in scripture AND give case studies their full weight: name names, cite dates, describe what happened. That is what makes non-fiction powerful.

Step 4 — Finding Your Voice as a Writer

Element	Question to Ask	Example from <i>Infant Church</i>
TONE	Are you the wise elder? The fellow traveller? The researcher? The friend?	<i>The pastor-teacher - explains, warns, and guides.</i>
REGISTER	Formal, conversational, academic, prophetic?	<i>Mixes prophetic and pastoral - works for its audience.</i>
PRONOUN	I / We / You — each creates a different reader relationship.	<i>The Infant Church Author uses 'we' brilliantly: 'We have heard. We have witnessed.' - inclusive.</i>
SENTENCE RHYTHM	Short punchy sentences create urgency. Longer ones build thought.	<i>Some of the Author's sentences are very long - occasionally breaks reading flow.</i>
KENYA IN YOUR WRITING	Are you writing as a Kenyan, for Kenyans? Cultural reference is an asset.	<i>Name the matatu, the uji, the baraza. Don't sanitise your context.</i>

Step 5 — Drafting: From Blank Page to First Manuscript

The **C.R.A.F.T. Method** for each chapter:

- **C — CLAIM:** State what this chapter will argue or teach. *"By the end of this chapter, the reader will understand/believe/know that....."* A weak claim is vague ("This chapter is about forgiveness"). A strong claim is specific and arguable ("Forgiving others is not about excusing them, it's about freeing yourself"). If you can't state your claim in one sentence, you're not ready to draft yet.

- **R — REASON:** Give the biblical and/or logical basis. For a faith-based writer, this might be a theological principle or a passage of scripture that grounds the chapter. For a general non-fiction writer, it's the logic, framework, or research that says *here's why this is true*. This section answers the reader's first instinct: "Says who?"
- **A — ANECDOTE:** A story, case study, or real example. Human beings don't connect with arguments, they connect with stories. Your anecdote can be your own experience, a client's story (with permission), a historical figure, or even a well-known public example. The story should *illustrate* your claim, not just loosely relate to the topic. Ask yourself: *if a reader forgets everything else in this chapter, will they remember this story?* If yes, you've chosen well.
- **F — FACTS:** Data, scripture, quotes that support your claim. the evidence that moves your book from opinion to authority. Facts can be statistics, research findings, scripture verses, expert quotes, or case studies. The goal isn't to overwhelm the reader with data; it's to give the thinking reader a reason to *trust* your claim. One powerful, well-sourced fact often does more than five generic ones.
- **T — TAKEAWAY:** What must the reader do or think differently? Readers pick up non-fiction because they want *transformation*, not just information. The takeaway answers: "So *what do I do with this?*" It might be a reflection question, a practical action step, a prayer, a decision to make, or simply a new way of seeing something. Without this, your chapter educates but doesn't change anyone.

Practical Drafting Tips:

- Write ugly first. Fix it later.
- Set a word target per day, even 300 words counts.
- Each chapter should be 1,500–3,000 words for non-fiction.
- Don't research and write at the same time.
- Read your chapter aloud when done, you'll catch everything.
- Have one ideal reader in mind as you write.
- A chapter that cannot be summarised in 2 sentences is too broad.
- End every chapter with a question the next chapter answers.

Step 6 — Revision: Where the Real Writing Happens

"The first draft is you telling yourself the story. Every draft after that is you telling it to your reader."

Level	Type	Focus
Level 1	Big Picture Revision (it requires you to read your manuscript almost like a stranger would. Detached from how hard you worked on it. You're looking at the entire book as one argument.	Ask yourself: Does the book flow? Does each chapter deliver on its promise? Does the argument build logically? (At this level, you may move whole chapters, cut one entirely, or realize you're missing a

		chapter the book actually needs. This is normal.)
Level 2	Chapter-Level Revision (Now you zoom into one chapter at a time. Every chapter should function like a mini-book. It pulls the reader in, takes them somewhere, and leaves them satisfied.)	Check for 3 things: Does each chapter have a clear opening hook, a logical middle, and a satisfying close?
Level 3	Paragraph & Sentence (This is where good writing becomes <i>tight</i> writing. Read each paragraph and ask: if I deleted this sentence entirely, would the reader lose anything?)	Practical things to look for: Remove every sentence that doesn't earn its place. Cut adjectives. Vary sentence length.
Level 4	Line Edit & Proofread (This is the final pass, the polish. Only do this after the other three levels are complete, because there is no point perfecting a sentence you might later cut.)	At this level you are checking: Grammar, spelling, punctuation, consistent Bible verse formatting, style guide compliance.

As the Author of *Infant Church* did, many writers hire a professional proofreader for this level specifically, not because they're bad writers, but because **your brain auto-corrects your own mistakes**. Fresh eyes catch what yours cannot.

04 — OPEN Q&A & DISCUSSION

Discussion Questions Posed to the Room:

- As a writer, what did you admire most about Celestine's approach?
- What would you have done differently if you wrote this book?
- Which chapter structure in your own book will you use?
- What is the one thing holding you back from starting?
-

DOWNLOAD FULL PPT: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ThckSHw72oov-3vyXFYzdnTmBsCeND9C>

CLOSING NOTE

*"The world needs your book.
Celestine Ajiambo wrote hers.
Now it's your turn."*