



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO WRITING & ILLUSTRATING YOUR FIRST CHILDREN'S BOOK

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The Ultimate Guide To Writing & Illustrating Your First Children's Book



So you want to write an amazingly amazing children's book.

Maybe you have an incredible idea for a children's book that you can't stop thinking about, and now you want to bring it to life. You want to see your daughter's smiling face as you read it together. To surprise your son with a story you wrote just for him.

You sit down to write your masterpiece. But as soon as you want to bring your thoughts to paper, you realize that you have absolutely no clue where to begin.

Most children's books are short and simple. So this should be easy breezy. Right?

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[<https://media.giphy.com/media/d2l4THrgZlXTi/giphy.gif>]

Or maybe you've already completed writing down your little one's favorite bedtime story; the one you made up as you were snuggling together, telling the tale over and over again, night after night.

You feel excited to turn this story of yours into a children's book that will be remembered and loved for generations to come. But you know, just know, that your artistic abilities are not up to the task. hilariously 'dreadful' and 'terrifyingly' funny are the words that come to mind when you think about your last attempt of drawing an animal.



If you had any of these thoughts before, I get it. I totally do!

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Even after hours and hours of research, you still have no idea where to start this seemingly daunting process. But it doesn't have to be this way! There are ways to get this amazing project of yours rolling - WITHOUT taking tons and tons of your time, because we all know that this extra time we're dreaming of may never come (at least not until our little ones have graduated highschool and are off to college).

Now, I love working 1-on-1 with aspiring children's book authors to make their dream of writing their book a reality by guiding them all the way through the book-creation process, but I also understand that not everyone can afford to hire a Book Coach.

So, in order to help as many writers as possible, I drafted this hefty guide. I gathered all of my children's book writing and illustrating-related knowledge and knowhow I've accumulated over the last couple of years and brought it to paper.

Check out the table of content below and if you don't have time to read the entire guide now, feel free to come back to this PDF version at a later point in time, maybe with a hot and steaming cup of coffee or a deliciously fruity tea.

Now, I've read many articles, books, and guides on the children's-book-writing-process; some free, some not; some good, some not so much. We don't have any time to be wasted, so I promise this guide on how to write and illustrate your book specifically for children will be worth your valuable time.

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SELF-PUBLISHING VS. TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING

But before we dive deep, let's address this immensely huge elephant in the room.

Just pretend I'm not here...



[Illustration by Jelena Brezovec]

The number one question I get asked once someone learns I'm a children's book author is whether my books have been published via the traditional route, or have I self-published them?

I always answer the same way: While I did jump through all the hoops of query-writing and manuscript-sending for my very first book I wrote (which resulted in the offer of a publishing deal), I ended up turning it down and instead decided to publish my book on my own.

I weighed my options carefully. And while it was a number of years ago, the reasons for my decision still hold true today.

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Yes – receiving that coveted book deal seems glamorous; prestigious, even. It's the ultimate dream of every author. But it's important to consider the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

You may, of course have your own reasons for choosing one way over the other, but here is the list of factors that led to my decision to go the self-publishing route.

1. One of the most often-cited advantages of traditional publishing is the fact that the publisher is able to distribute your book through bookstores and the like. But even if your book does make its way into your neighborhood Barnes and Noble, it will be pulled off the shelves again shortly after, in order to make room for the next round of newly published reads.
2. Another perceived advantage of being traditionally published is that the publisher will help the author with marketing. As most authors aren't familiar with this side of publishing, in the past it was an important factor in the decision-making process. Nowadays, however, unless you are already a well-established author with a major following, publishing houses no longer pour money into a marketing plan or strategy for your book – they expect the author to do all that on their own.
3. Maintaining control over multiple different publishing aspects is also an important factor to consider. For example, when you decide to self-publish, you are the one setting the price the book will sell for. You are the one who gets to choose the illustrator. And you are the one who sets the publication date. Yes, you are also the one who will have to bear all the costs involved in creating your book, but you will be the one reaping the majority of the benefits.

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4. Royalties. Yes, the publishing platform you choose will take a percentage of your book's revenue, but that percentage is nothing compared to what a traditional publishing house would pocket.

In fact, royalties were such an important factor during my decision-making process that I'd like to expound on this a bit further.

Because of the underlying economic structure of children's books, the earnings of a children's book author are much lower than those of an adult author. In traditional publishing, write for young people, and you are worth half as much as a peer writing for adults.

Not so with self-publishing.

When it comes to ebooks, children's books can make as much, if not more in royalties for the self-published author.

And while a traditionally published children's book author brings in royalties between 10 - 12.5% for a paperback, a self published author can make around 27% per sold book, depending on things such as the price you set for your book, page count, trim size, and the like. That's more than double! (This approximate percentage is based on a sales price that is competitive with similar books.)

And in the children's book market, print is strong. According to a recent Nielsen study, the children's/YA market represents roughly 35% of the overall print market (slightly smaller than the adult nonfiction market, but slightly bigger than the adult fiction market).

Here's Createspace's handy-dandy tool to calculate your royalties per manufactured book. Feel free to play around with the number of pages, list price, and other interior settings to see possible earnings.

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Royalty Calculator*
Use the royalty calculator to figure out how much you'll make every time your book is manufactured.

Print Options	
Interior Type	<input type="text" value="Black and White"/>
Trim Size	<input type="text" value="Select One"/>
Number of Pages <input type="text"/>	

List Price	Channel	Royalty
USD \$ <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Calculate"/>	Amazon.com	\$0.00
	Expanded Distribution	\$0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, suggest GBP price based on the U.S. price GBP £ <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Calculate"/>	Amazon Europe For books printed in Great Britain	£0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, suggest EUR price based on the U.S. price EUR € <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Calculate"/>	Amazon Europe For books printed in continental Europe	€0.00

* Figures generated by this tool are for estimation purposes only. Your actual royalty will be calculated when you set up your book.

[<https://www.createspace.com/Products/Book/>]

If I were given the chance to publish with a traditional publisher, would I take it, knowing what I know now? For the right terms and conditions, absolutely. But for now, I won't spend any more time or energy chasing a deal. Instead, I'll focus on what I love most: writing and illustrating children's books, and teachings others to do the same.

HOW DOES THIS DECISION AFFECT YOUR JOURNEY TO BECOMING A CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR?

I wouldn't necessarily say that deciding to self-publish will affect your ultimate goal of *becoming* a children's book author per se. But it certainly affects the journey of becoming an author.

Allow yourself to see the self-publishing route as an enormous opportunity. An opportunity many didn't have only a few years ago. Fulfilling your dream of becoming a published author has never been easier. It still isn't easy (especially if you'd like to create an income with it), but certainly easier.

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Self-published authors now win awards, sign movie deals, and make the New York Times bestseller list. And there are plenty of self-published authors that take home a bigger and fatter royalty check than many traditionally published authors.

Nowadays, it's no longer about *how* you've been published, but that you took your destiny into your own hands, and had the balls, passion, and perseverance to simply do so. It's about *what* you've created, and *whom* you've created it for.

The medium only becomes relevant if it becomes something that you let yourself be defined by.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO WRITE A CHILDREN'S BOOK IN THE FIRST PLACE? - WHY YOUR WHY MATTERS

We already know that you want to write a children's book. After all, why else would you be reading this hefty guide right now?

But it's worth pinpointing why you want to do so?

In his New York Times article, Joseph Epstein states that about 81 percent of Americans want to write a book. But only around 1-3 percent actually end up doing so? Why is that?

Writing a book is far from easy. It requires dedication, time, and most importantly, passion. But with a little bit of preparation, we can beat those odds of being one of those that never start (or never finish) their book.

I believe that your *WHY* will be your ultimate driving force behind you beginning AND finishing this dream of yours.

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According to New York Times bestselling author Simon Sinek, *WHY* is your purpose, cause, or belief that inspires you to do what you do.

In order to put in the work that the writing of your children's book will require, we will have to feel inspired. We simply have to.

Working Hard For
Something We Don't
Care About Is Called
Stress; Working Hard
For Something We Love
Is Called Passion.

~Simon Sinek

We don't need more stress in our lives. We need more passion. And that's where your *WHY* comes in.

If you're working on something that is dear to your heart, you're much more likely to finish it. You're much more likely to make time for it. And you're much more likely to work hard for it.

Dreams
don't work
unless
you do

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Dreams don't work unless you do. This motivational quote hangs right above my desk. My eyes can't help but fall on it whenever I look up from my computer. It captures what I'm working for. It encapsulates what I'm working towards - my dreams.

Ask yourself, why do you want to write this book? What are you trying to accomplish with it? What is your driving force behind it?

Define your *WHY* and you'll always have something to fall back onto whenever the going gets a bit tough.

BUT WHO THE HECK AM I? AND WHY DID I WRITE THIS GUIDE?

But who the heck am I to tell you all of this? What qualifies me to write this guide? Why should you listen to me?

Hi, I'm Eevi. I have written and illustrated more than a dozen children's books, ranging from baby books to middle-grade chapter books, half of which have made it onto Amazon's bestseller lists.



I've been featured in places like Scary Mommy, Huffington Post, Military.com, and Stars & Stripes.

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I'm fortunate enough to be able to make a living doing what I love most. I truly adore what I do, and with this guide I'm trying to give back to the wonderful author community, so children can benefit from its wealth of creativity – because the greatest gift we can give our children is a passion for reading.

*The greatest gift
we can give our children
is a passion for reading.*

While other aspiring children's book authors are experiencing years of frustration, you'll be able to experience the excitement and joy of writing your story and preparing your illustrations for your children's book.

Having put in hours and hours of work, made a lot of time-consuming and expensive mistakes, wasted quite a lot of money on illustrators, software, and other unnecessary things, you can learn from my mistakes. I'm in the perfect position to provide you with the help and support you need to get started with this dream of yours of writing and illustrating your very own children's book.

I have interviewed and surveyed close to a hundred aspiring children's book authors to make this guide as relevant and actionable as possible, addressing the major pain points felt by someone that is trying to write and illustrate a successful children's book.

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This guide is for you if you want to learn how to:

- **WRITE** your very own book for children aged 2–12
- **FIND** and develop an enticing story idea
- **CHOOSE THE BEST SETUP** for different age groups
- **CREATE** a storyboard, and
- **FIND & HIRE** an illustrator

But this guide isn't for you if:

- You want to write young adult fiction (YA). If you're looking to write books for ages 12 and beyond, check out Chandler Bolt's [Self-Publishing School](#), where he teaches you to do just that.
- You've already written multiple successful children's books.
- You are not willing to put some work into this amazing dream of yours.

You've taken the first step. You're reading this guide. Your desire has moved up to the next level. You've taken the initiative and the first steps toward fulfilling your dream. And I am so excited for you!

Always remember, the number one thing that will set you apart is taking action.

So let's get started.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT ARE CHILDREN'S BOOKS?

First off, we need to clarify what children's books are, and what kind of children's book we are talking about in this particular guide?

You may be tempted to think that writing for kids is similar, if not the same, as writing for grown ups. This, however, couldn't be further from the truth.

The writings (both in style and type) differ very much; something that is often underestimated.

Australian author Mem Fox sums it up perfectly:

"Writing a picture book is like writing 'War and Peace' in Haiku."

You may be an excellent writer, an engaging blogger, maybe even an already accomplished author of adult fiction or nonfiction. But when it comes to writing for little ones, we'll have to adopt a whole new mindset. We'll have to transform the way we're thinking, and put ourselves into the shoes of those we want to write for.

The smarts of Wikipedia provide the following definition for children's literature:

"Children's literature or juvenile literature includes stories, books, magazines, and poems that are enjoyed by children. Modern children's literature is classified in two different ways: genre or the intended age of the reader."

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As such, 'children's books' is a very broad term, as it covers many years of our little ones. These are the years they develop cognitively the most, so each stage requires a different structure and setup of our books. Adapting to each stage and the cognitive ability of this stage is important if we want our book to be meaningful, educational, and fun.

Spelling it out, this makes total sense. So isn't it interesting that we want to write a children's book, but don't even know what age group we're targeting? After all, isn't a book for 2-year olds written exactly the same as for 6 or 7-year olds?

We certainly know when our little ones like a book. But what makes it so? What causes them wanting to read a certain book over and over again (you so know what I'm talking about here! I know you do!)?



(<https://media.giphy.com/media/26gR18cQ8jGXXwkOk/giphy.gif>)

So, for the purpose of this guide, children's books refer to books written and illustrated for 2 to 12 year olds and does not cover young adult fiction.

Now you might ask why I'm focusing on this particular age group. There are plenty of books, courses, and tutorials out there that address the writing of fiction that does not involve illustrations. Books for 2 to 12 year olds, however, focus heavily on imagery, which is precisely the area many aspiring children's book authors have the most difficulties with.

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Based on certain characteristics and differences, most children's books can be divided into multiple sub genre. To only name a few, there are

- Board books
- Picture books
- Trade books
- Chapter books
- Middle grade chapter books
- Young Adult books

Although typically based on different topics, sub genres here imply a difference in targeted age group, the average number of pages, the number of images, and the overall word count.

My advice within the guide is based on Createspace's and KDP's dimensions and guidelines, simply because that's what I've been using and because they are the most popular and most cost-effective choices at the time of writing.

Because Createspace currently does NOT offer a hardcover or boardbook choice for any of its books, I won't be covering any specific guidelines and information regarding these two formats.

Below, I've created this table to illustrate the differences for the most common types of children's books, using an actual example for each.

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	CATEGORY	AGE	WORDS	PG	EXAMPLE	# OF ILLUSTRATIONS
1	Picture book	0–3	0	32	<i>Good Night, Gorilla</i>	Every page
2	Young picture book	2–5	200–400	32	<i>Jamerry</i>	Every page
3	Trade picture Book	4–8	400–800	32	<i>Knuffle Bunny</i>	Every page
4	Picture story book	6–10	1,000–3,000	32	<i>Ocean Commotion</i>	Every page
5	Chapter book	6–10	3,000–10,000	50	<i>Amelia Bedelia</i>	Almost every page (b&w)
6	Middle-grade book	8–12	15,000–40,000	82	<i>The Magic Tree House</i>	12+ illustrations (b&w)

Picture books for ages 0–3 tend to focus on basic concepts such as color, shapes, sounds, and so on. These types of books are often referred to as “concept books,” because they convey concepts or simple information rather than complex stories.

Young picture books for ages 2–5 are picture books that cater to very young children. They are often counting books, novelty books, or bedtime books. They are often written in rhyme, using between 200 and 400 words. This type of book can be quite challenging to write, because the use of very simple vocabulary can be limiting. This is one of my favorite categories.

Trade picture books for ages 4–8 are the standard picture books you see in bookstores. With a word count of 400–800, these books are perfect for kids who are ready to explore the world. The stories often address issues they will face in their everyday lives.

Picture story books for ages 6–10 are trade picture books catering to older kids. In most cases there are images on every page, and the word count is now between 1,000 and 3,000.

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Chapter books for ages 6–10 are transitional books, broken down into short simple chapters to prepare children for reading novels. With a word count of 3,000–10,000, these books contain only a few illustrations and tend to be written in series that repeat a simple plot format. They are almost never written in rhyme.

Middle-grade books are written for kids approximately 8–12 years old. As with all children's books, the language should complement their vocabulary level. Middle-grade stories tend to have strong themes with plenty of adventure. Parents are generally absent, happy endings are the norm, and the protagonist is always in the age range of the reader, or slightly older.

As you can see, the various types of children's books differ greatly in both their use of images and the number of words. This makes your decision on what age group you are planning to write for very important, as every subsequent decision will depend on what type of book you're choosing to write.

It's generally a great idea to find a book (or a number of books) similar to what you have in mind, and use the word count, number of pages, and number of illustrations as a guide for your own book.

The website <https://www.renaissance.com> (for teachers) is a great resource for researching the word count of published books.

BOOK ORIENTATION

When it comes to picture books, there are a number of different orientations to choose from. (These don't apply to chapter books or books for older children, as those usually feature the 5½" x 8" format.)

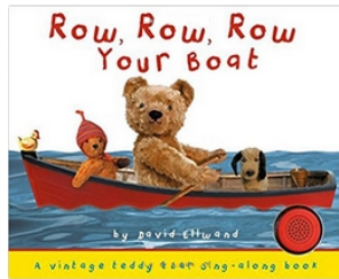
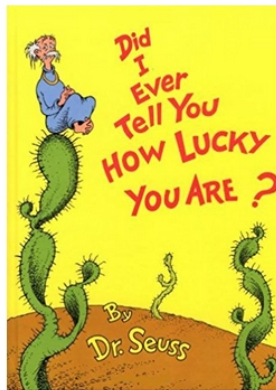
There is no set rule, however. Rather, it's an oversimplified observation. I personally prefer the square format for my picture books.

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VERTICAL: good to use for character-based books

LANDSCAPE: to illustrate a journey-like story

SQUARE: instructional books



CHAPTER 2

WHAT AGE GROUP ARE YOU GOING TO WRITE FOR? AND WHO REALLY IS YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE?

Writing for children brings a completely new set of challenges with it; something that an author for grown up fiction and nonfiction doesn't have to be concerned about.

According to literary agent Stephen Barbara, children's books are the only type of literature defined by their audience. And it is never possible to forget this as an artist or writer in the children's category, because the imagination and inner landscape of your readers — whether toddler, child, or teen — impose strict discipline on the forms of storytelling available to you.

Children's books are generally selected by parents, grandparents, teachers, and other caretakers of our kids. In short, children's books are being purchased by grownups. Grownups are also often the ones reading these books aloud to their kids.

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In essence, the book will have to appeal to two completely separate and different groups of people: the children that consume the book, and the grown-ups that purchase and read the book with their kids.

Children's books come from inspiration. But inspiration is only part of the story.

Aspiring children's book authors often forget that they're essentially creating a book that a parent is going to buy; so make sure you have a particular audience in mind. Not all books are for everyone, but the more relatable the book, the more popular.

The age of the main buyer of children's books is between 30 and 44. Females make up more than 70% of these buyers. They are also more likely to discuss and recommend a book they and their kids enjoyed. In fact, buyers of children's books are more easily influenced by the recommendation of family and friends than any other book category.

When drafting your story, ask yourself questions like these:

1. Who will buy your book?
2. Who will read your book? (child or parent)
3. Will your book appeal to girls or boys or both?
4. Where do they do their shopping?
5. What classrooms would use your book and why?
6. What grade is your book appropriate for?
7. What lessons would parents/ teachers want to draw from your book?

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The best way to identify your audience is to research them. Even if you already have a particular audience in mind, spend some time learning more, because the more you know, the more relatable your book will be.

You could spend time within age groups you're targeting, or talk to parents and teachers. Remember that your book will have to please parents and teachers just as much as children.

You could search for age group trends and consumer trends in general via sites like Slideshare (<https://www.slideshare.net>), or frequent the US Census (<https://www.census.gov>) that provides detailed demographic data.

And sites like

Or you could conduct a survey within your social media channels via surveyMonkey.com and ask your friends & family to complete it.

Why am I telling you all of this? I believe that setting this very basic foundation of knowledge on the differences of audiences will set you miles and miles apart from those that simply start writing a children's book. Having a general idea about who purchases, reads, and consumes the books you're planning to write will help you reach and address your target audience.

If you're trying to create something for everyone, you create something for no one.

With the right planning and understanding of your marketplace and your audience, you can place yourselves several steps ahead of everyone else and build a path to success.

So let's take some time with this very fundamental step and define who it is you're trying to reach, influence, and impact with your writings.

CHAPTER 3

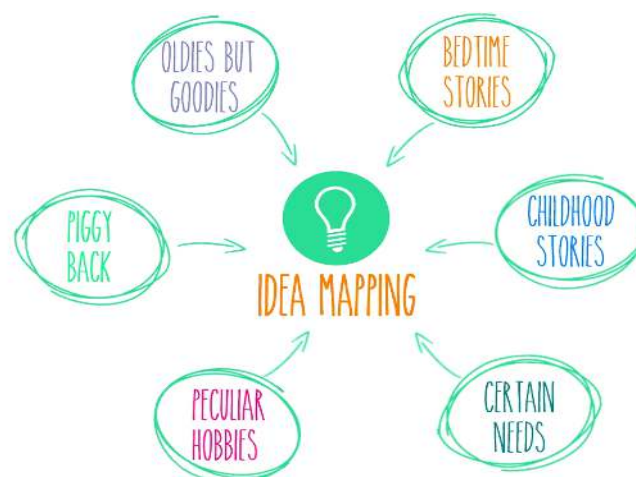
FINDING AN AMAZING STORY IDEA

You're reading this guide, so it's very likely that you already have an idea for your book in mind. Maybe an entire story has been developing within you for the longest time. Maybe you thought of a character during those long nights you were trying to get your child to sleep. Or maybe you remember stories from your childhood; stories that you now wish to breathe new life into. If that's the case, congratulations! You can skip this part and move on to the next.

If you don't yet have a story in mind, there are a number of ways we can get your creative juices flowing. It's important to keep in mind the age group you'd like to write for, as this will greatly influence the use of illustrations and the amount and type of text you'll write.

But for now, let's focus on finding the right story for you to write. Below are some of the ways I've found topics for my own children's books.

HOW TO DISCOVER STORIES WITHIN YOU



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1. **PERSONAL CHILDHOOD STORIES:** The way things used to be ... With the rise of technology, things change at a much quicker pace. Are your little ones curious about your childhood? I know mine were. They kept asking me what it was like growing up in former East Germany, so one day I decided to write down my most precious childhood memories in a book. It was so popular among my family and friends that I published it, and *Growing Up In East Germany* was born.
2. **CERTAIN SITUATIONAL NEEDS:** Did something happen that prompted you to make up a story? Back when my two-year-old was having difficulties transitioning from his potty chair to the toilet (he was already potty trained), I looked for a book that would help him. As there were none that addressed this particular problem, I decided to write and illustrate my own, and *Teeny Totty Uses Mama's Big Potty* was born.
3. **PECULIAR HOBBIES / UNUSUAL INTERESTS:** Does your child have a hobby, interest, or passion that you can't find a book about? Use this as an opportunity and write your own! Chances are there are many other kids out there obsessed with the exact same thing. My youngest was absolutely crazy about lawn mowers, for example. I didn't like the selection I saw on Amazon, so I wrote *The Little Mower That Could*.

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4. **PIGGYBACK:** Ask yourself, what animals/ topics/ toys are really big right now? Of course you can't just copy characters directly, due to copyright rules, but you can create similar ones. Let's say Disney just released a new movie about dinosaurs. Chances are you'll see a lot of little die-hard dinosaur fans walking around right after the first screening. You can piggyback on that opportunity and create your very own dinosaur story. In fact, that's what I did after the movie *Monster Trucks* was released in 2016 – I wrote and illustrated *Lil Foot The Monster Truck*.
5. **OLDIES BUT GOODIES:** If a theme has proven itself over and over again, why not revamp and reuse it? People do this all the time, for example in mysteries and thrillers. You could do the same for children's books. How about a mighty little girl, like Pippi Longstocking? Or a kind machine, like Thomas the Tank Engine? The possibilities are truly endless.
6. **BEDTIME STORIES:** Do you make up bedtime stories for your children? These stories often feature the most beloved of all characters, and are treasured by both you and your child. For example, in the Winnie-the-Pooh stories, A.A. Milne brought to life his son Christopher Robin's toys, including a chubby bear, a donkey, a tiger, a kangaroo, and a piglet.

As you can see, I took some of these opportunities that presented themselves and grabbed them by the horns. I had a ton of fun writing these stories, and my little ones were over the moon reading the books with me (over and over again).

Jot down all ideas you come up with during your brainstorming sessions. Write down anything that comes to mind – even if you think it's really silly, write it down. You can always cross them off later.

To help you get started with your brainstorming session, I've compiled a list of **300 THINGS CHILDREN LOVE**.

[GET IT HERE](#)

Consider the people who are actually buying your books – parents! Think about what would help them. What do they want their kids to learn? What fits with their worldview? What would they tell other parents about or leave a good review for?

CHAPTER 4

WRITING YOUR STORY

Now that you have an exciting story idea in mind and a number of helpful tools to work with, we can begin to write your story.

Your unique and inspired story idea is only as strong as the way in which you tell it. Be sure to be clear about your core message. Always ask yourself what you want your core message to be.

In children's books, characters reign supreme.

The plot is simply a series of obstacles that get in the way of a single objective. And much about setting, plot, and character depend on the age group. In general, kids want to relate to kids that are just a bit older than them.

5 STORY ELEMENTS

Good stories are carefully designed. And they tend to be simple. It's about composition. There's a beginning, a middle, and an end; there are actions, scenes and emotions. The elements aren't always the same, but these are the five that top authors often use:

1. Unforgettable characters: The best characters have strong personalities, make bold moves, and go after their dreams against all odds. Children fall in love with them and want to be like them. Children always want to be able to relate to the character in some way. Almost every person has felt like an outsider or has had their morals questioned. Characters who remind kids of themselves are the most memorable.

2. Suspenseful action/hook: Many authors shy away from beginning their story with an action, such as a shocking or unexpected event, but this is a very effective way to draw in young readers. Other ways to hook the reader at the start include:

- description of a strange character
- an interesting or unusual setting
- surprising dialogue
- a problem

Consistent action throughout your story is key, as it will hold the reader's attention. Chapter books, for example, usually end each chapter with a cliffhanger, to ensure the reader keeps turning the pages.

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3. Realistic dialogue: Children like to read stories that sound like they talk. Listen to conversations you hear around you; none of them will sound like the nicely flowing, full sentences you learned to write in school. Make sure you're using age-appropriate language that kids will understand, connect with, and relate to. If you are unsure about the language level of your target audience, be sure to spend some time among kids of that particular age. Go to libraries, visit friends with kids, or simply read children's books to get a feel for the language used.



4. Story line: Be sure to provide obstacles and challenges for your characters; some sort of escalation. Also note that little ones like happy endings and a solution to a problem. If your story lacks a happy ending, you risk upsetting the reader, or at least leaving them dissatisfied.



5. The instant recall factor: You want your book's character to remain in the minds of your little readers long after they've read your book. If kids ask to read it over and over again, you can consider your story a success.

Kids crave memorable stories and captivating characters that empower them. You can achieve this first and foremost by writing an amazing story; then you can include great illustrations, perhaps rhyme. The sky's your limit.

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HOOK → PLACE → PROBLEM → INCIDENT → ESCALATION → RESOLUTION → RECALL

While the sequence and rhythm of events is very important, please keep in mind that not all stories have the same structure. There is no one formula, because following a formula would rob stories of their true potential. Yes, it's important to have an intentional structure, but if it doesn't fit, don't force it.

Children value creativity and individuality. There is no one way to draw. No one way to paint. No one way to write. It's about being uniquely you, lending your unique voice to your unique story. That's why you shouldn't be afraid of the way YOU write and YOU draw, because that's what sets you apart. Diversity is important. Tell YOUR story.

CHAPTER 5

GIVING YOUR BOOK A TITLE

Once your book is completed, it's time to think about a winning title for your book!

I'm quite certain you already have a title for your book in mind. In fact, it's probably something you've been thinking long and hard about for some time.

Yes, we want a clever, funny title that lets your story's personality shine through. But something we want just as much (if not more) is for readers to actually find your book! And this will be very hard to do if you don't name it properly.

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Now don't get me wrong. There is no one proper way of naming a book, but there is a right approach and a wrong approach. Unless buyers already know about you, your book, and its title, most will search for a book using keywords. So in order for our book to be found more easily, we will need to include the most descriptive and most fitting keyword(s) in our book's title.

To illustrate, I have included some of my own book titles as examples.

KEYWORD	TITLE
Garbage trucks	<i>The Garbage Trucks Are Here</i>
(Lawn) mowers	The Little Mower That Could
Monster trucks	<i>Lil Foot The Monster Truck</i>

I could have named my garbage truck book something more creative, like *What Rumbles Through The Streets?* But this title alone wouldn't tell people what the book was about. And without the keyword in the title, it would make searching for it a lot harder as well. On the other hand, the title *The Garbage Trucks Are Here* will show up if potential buyers enter "garbage truck" in Amazon's search bar.

Remember that we can give the book a subtitle, so we can include a synonym of our keyword here as well. The title and subtitle of my own book are a great example:

KEYWORDS	Children's Book, Writing, Illustrating, Publishing
TITLE	How To Self-Publish A Children's Book
SUBTITLE	Everything You Need To Know To Write, Illustrate, Publish, And Market Your Paperback And Ebook

While we want to pay attention to including the right terms in our title, we also need to make sure we don't include any awkward wording, something that a potential reader would never use to search for a book like yours.

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Numbers, unusual spelling, or unnecessary punctuation marks such as a hyphen, colon, or brackets should be avoided. I wish I'd known this before deciding on the title of my first book, as my title broke all kinds of rules, making it much harder to be found and discovered by a potential reader.

KEYWORDS	Military Families, Soldiers
TITLE	<i>Closing the Gap: Understanding Your Service(wo)man</i>

My keywords are nowhere to be found within my title. It also contains a colon and brackets. Honestly, would you ever think of entering "Service(wo)man" into Amazon's search bar when you're looking for a book about military families? Probably not. Lesson(s) learned!

TESTING YOUR TITLE

Want to know if you've got a killer title for your novel? With [Lulu.com's Title Scorer Test](#) you can put your title to the scientific test and find out whether it has what it takes for bestseller success.

Lulu Title

What Do I Do?
Enter your novel title in the field at the top of the page.
Use the drop-down menus to choose the variables which best describe the attributes of your title.
Click "Analyze my title!"
Score represents the percentage chance of its being a number one hit. Results are between 9% and 83% chance of bestseller success.

Book title
0 words, 0 characters. First letter:

Title is
☒ Literal ☐ Figurative [Help](#)

Title grammar type is a
Grammatically complete phrase

Title first word is a
Preposition, article [Help](#)

Title second word is a
Preposition/article [Help](#)

Does the title include the name of a person or place?
☐ Yes ☒ No

[E-mail this page to a friend](#)

[Learn more about Lulu](#)

Analyze my title!

Or you can employ the old-fashioned way and simply ask your friends, family, social media channels and communities what they'd prefer. For example, create a poll within Facebook and let others vote on the title choices you provide them with. Your friends and family will love to help you with this.

To summarize, when creating your book's optimized title:

1. Use keywords that potential readers might use when looking for a book on your topic.
2. Make your title as clear and direct as possible.
3. Make use of a subtitle, including a synonym of your keyword.
4. Try to refrain from using numbers, unusual spelling, or unnecessary punctuation marks.

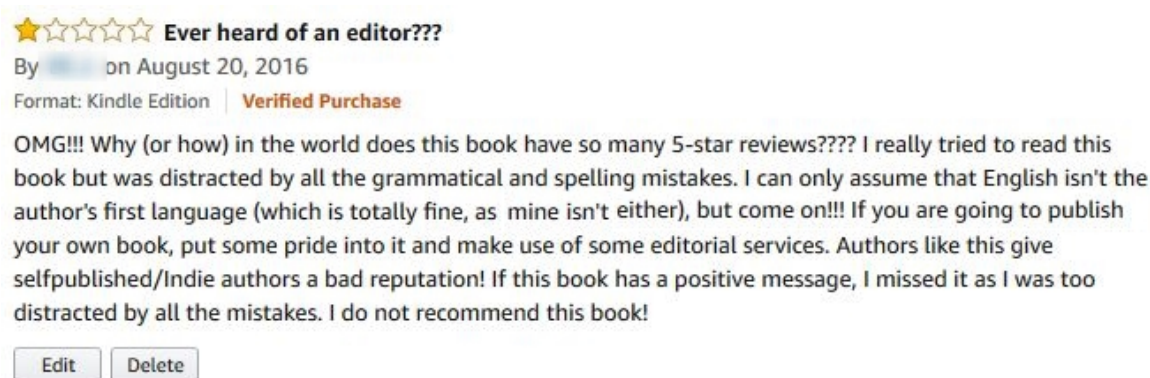
CHAPTER 6

A PROFESSIONAL EDITOR - DO YOU NEED ONE (OR TWO)?

Editing is a valuable investment in your book, as a good editor can turn your story from *okay* into *amazing*! Sadly, many aspiring authors believe they don't need an editor. But I'm a firm believer that a good editor is instrumental in making your book a success, because poor spelling, grammar, and book structure will reflect badly in your book's sales and reviews.

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Your book and its message might be great, but if too many errors slip through, your readers will notice and voice their opinion in a review like the one below, which ultimately will lower your overall rating. No matter how many 5-star reviews you may have, many people also look at the lower ratings in order to decide whether or not to buy a book.



If your book is more than 600–800 words long, you should send it off to a professional editor. Even if your book has fewer words than that, having a picture book edited is fairly inexpensive and brings so much value with it, so why wouldn't you? Yes, you can go over it yourself. And yes, you can let your significant other read through it as well, but a third unbiased, independent, and professional person will make your manuscript so much better.

An editor usually charges for his/her services in one of three ways:

1. Cost per word
2. Cost per work/ flat rate
3. Cost per hour

I much prefer when an editor charges by cost per word, because I know exactly how much I'm going to be charged, as I am in control of the manuscript's word count.

However, cost per work (or a flat rate) sometimes makes more sense for very short works, such as picture books, where charging per word wouldn't make much sense for the editor.

Most editors who charge by the hour will quote based on a sample, and then stick to that quote as a fee. Hourly rates can also make sense for longer works, because a badly written book can take twice as long to edit as a clean manuscript. This then also favors writers who take the time to get their manuscript in good shape before submitting.

EDITING TYPES

There are three different types of editing, each requiring a different level of editorial feedback. Prices often differ slightly between these three types as well. When it's time for you to connect with an editor, you must clarify what is and isn't included in their services.

EDITING TYPES

1. Content editing
2. Copy editing
3. Proofreading

CONTENT EDITING

This is sometimes called substantive, development, or structural editing. It aims to ensure that the structure, content, language, style and presentation of your book are suitable for its intended purpose and readership.

COPY EDITING

Copy editing addresses accuracy, clarity, and consistency in a document. It does not involve significant rewriting, providing a single authorial voice, or tailoring text to a specific audience – these belong to a substantive edit outlined above. Copy editing covers:

- grammar
- punctuation
- subject-verb agreement
- spelling
- capitalization
- repeated words
- syntax
- inconsistencies
- omission

PROOFREADING

Proofreading involves checking that the document is ready to be published. It includes making sure that all elements of the document are included and in the proper order, all amendments have been inserted, a unifying set style has been followed, and all spelling or punctuation errors have been rectified.

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Since there is usually a small amount of text (less than 1,000 words) in picture books for younger kids, you may only need a proofread rather than a copy edit, to make sure there are no spelling or punctuation errors. I personally go with a combination of editing and proofreading if my manuscript is more than 800 words. It doesn't cost a lot more, and it's absolutely worth it.

If you are still not sure which editing service you need, simply ask the editor and he/she will help you figure it out.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN AN EDITOR

There are several things to consider when choosing book editors:

EDITOR CRITERIA

1. **GENRE:** As children's books differ greatly from adult books, you will want to make sure that the prospective editor has experience in editing children's books. He/she needs to understand what vocabulary is appropriate and suitable for each age group.
2. **RATE:** Definitely take rates into consideration, but don't select an editor solely on price. The highest rates don't necessarily mean the best editor, and the lowest rates could be a complete waste of money.
3. **RECOMMENDATION:** I personally put a lot of stock into recommended services, as this will help me understand another author's experience and what it is like to work with that particular editor.

When contacting a prospective editor, you'll want to inquire about the following (if this information isn't already specified on their website):

1. No-obligation quote
2. Time required to edit the entire manuscript (if payment is per hour, ask for estimated required hours)
3. Number of read-throughs included
4. Payment process
5. Sample edit

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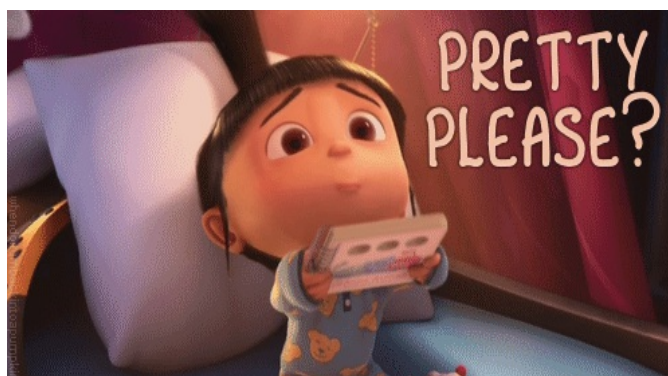
If this is your first time working with this editor, be sure to ask for a sample edit to make certain that you like his/her editing style, depth, and feedback. For regular books, I usually request a sample edit of a piece I have written of around 800–1,000 words. Since most children's books are much shorter, you will want to adjust that word count accordingly. The sample edit should definitely be shorter than the actual edit you're planning to hire him/her for.

Once you decide to work with an editor, it helps to provide him or her with two or three bullet points on what you think he or she should know about your book and your audience. You could include information on the following points:

- Your book's target audience (age group)
- Word count
- Specific lingo you are using that is relevant to your story or specific to your industry
- The most important point you want to bring across with this book
- The overall tone you're going for (if relevant)
- Placeholders for illustrations throughout your manuscript (so the illustrator knows what scenes will be supported visually).

Remember that editors are busy, so keep it as concise and brief as possible. In order to prevent any delays, you may also want to contact him or her a couple of weeks in advance in order to secure an opening that would best suit you and your timeline. I often book my editor 4-6 weeks prior to my actual manuscript submission, as the waiting list can be quite long at times.

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[<https://media.giphy.com/media/B8BFDuCKNmV1C/giphy.gif>]

Once you've booked an opening, send your final manuscript. Try not to tinker with the manuscript after you've submitted it (at least until you have the edited version back), as this often leads to you wanting to make changes, which defeats the whole purpose of having a professional editor look over your work.

Most editors will provide you with the following, once they've completed reading through your manuscript:

1. Completed edit with tracked changes and comments in the margins
2. Clean edit – tracked changes have been hidden, so all you see is what it would look like if you accepted all your editor's changes (can be easier to read than the tracked changes version)

To get you started with your search for an editor, I've included a short list of open marketplaces:

1. **FIVERR**: Pick and choose your own proofreading and editing service among hundreds of providers.
2. **FREELANCER**: Browse hundreds of editors.
3. **REEDSY**: Reedsy is a marketplace full of vetted professional editors for every editing level and genre.
4. **UPWORK**: Browse highest-rated writers and freelancers. Hourly rate.

CHAPTER 7

ILLUSTRATIONS - LET THE FUN BEGIN!

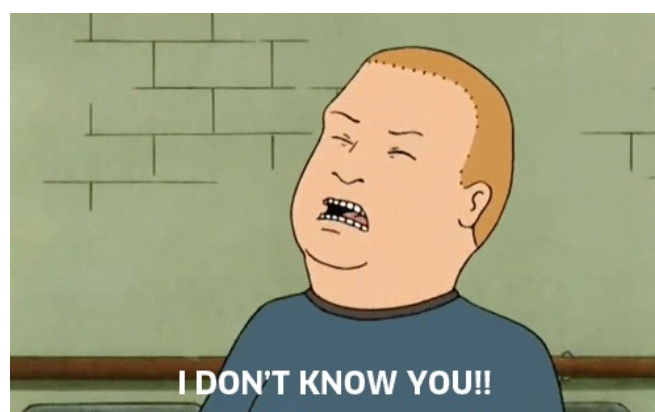
This is one of the most comprehensive chapters, as it covers a hugely important topic for aspiring children's book authors.

When it comes to illustrating your book, there are three choices:

ILLUSTRATION OPTIONS:

1. Do them yourself
2. Hire someone
3. Combination of both

For most self-publishing children's authors, this part of the book-creation process is the most complex and nerve-racking, because you're putting your work – your vision – into someone else's hands. More than likely it'll be a person you've never met, with whom you'll only communicate via email or over the phone.



[<https://media.giphy.com/media/FxXMYXjyeB3rO/giphy.gif>]

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Preparing the illustrations yourself will definitely save you money, and will keep all elements within your control. But it will also slow you down significantly, as it takes time to create a large number of illustrations. It also requires you to be somewhat talented when it comes to drawing, painting, or sketching, depending on the style you have in mind.

I have both hired an illustrator and created the illustrations myself for my books. Both have their advantages and disadvantages. Another approach is to share the workload, by hiring an illustrator for some of the work, and doing the rest yourself. However, if you do this the work must be split in such a way that all illustrations have a similar look and feel to them, for example you will both have to use the same technique (e.g. watercolor, pencil sketch, digital). So make sure you agree on that before you hire someone.

Also, to ensure the illustrations are consistent throughout the book, you'll want to split the workload something like this: you do the illustrations where the characters/subjects are positioned in the foreground (i.e. close-ups), while your illustrator deals with the wider views/backgrounds (or vice versa).

I wouldn't recommend splitting things in such a way that one person illustrates the first five images, and the second person all the remaining images. The reader will most certainly be able to see that shift in illustration styles.

Another way you could split the workload would be to have your illustrator create the sketches or outlines of all the scenes and characters, and you add the color (or vice versa).

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In order to communicate the key points to a prospective illustrator, you'll want to create an illustrator package for your book. In this chapter, we'll prepare an illustrator package and I will walk you through how to find and hire a professional illustrator, if you decide not to do the illustrations yourself.

ILLUSTRATOR BRIEFING PACKAGE **(INFORMATION TO GIVE YOUR ILLUSTRATOR IN ADVANCE)**

- The number of internal images required
- Book format (dimensions – portrait, landscape, square)
- Print book extent (number of pages)
- Whether cover art is required (in addition)
- How text and images will be combined
- RGB color profile for images (if you have a specific one in mind)
- Image resolution: 300dpi (to ensure high-enough resolution for printing)

ARTWORK SPECIFICATIONS

Whether you hire an illustrator or do the illustrations yourself, you'll want to make sure you do the sizing correctly, so that once you upload your artwork, everything runs smoothly.

AVAILABLE PRINT SIZES ON CREATESPACE

To find Createspace's available print sizes, visit

(https://www.createspace.com/Special/Enterprise/Publisher/submission_guidelines)

The print sizes available will depend on whether your book is going to be in color or black and white. Below are the most common sizes.

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- 5.5" x 8.5"
- 6" x 9"
- 6.14 x 9.21"
- 7" x 10"
- 8" x 10"
- 8.5" x 8.5"
- 8.5" x 11"

Make sure to add 0.125 to the top and bottom, as well as one side to account for trimming if you want your artwork to extent over the entire page! Createspace offers templates [here](#), but remember that you'll still have to add the bleed allowance yourself.

Here is a quick EXAMPLE from my book *The Little Mower That Could*:

Let's say you want your book to be 8.5" x 8.5":

- Add 0.125 to the top, bottom, and one side
- Image size with bleed should be 8.63" x 8.75" (w x h), (or 2589 pixels x 2625 pixels at a resolution of 300 pixels/inch)
- This is only necessary for interior pages if the art covers the ENTIRE page
- This is ALWAYS necessary for the cover on all four sides

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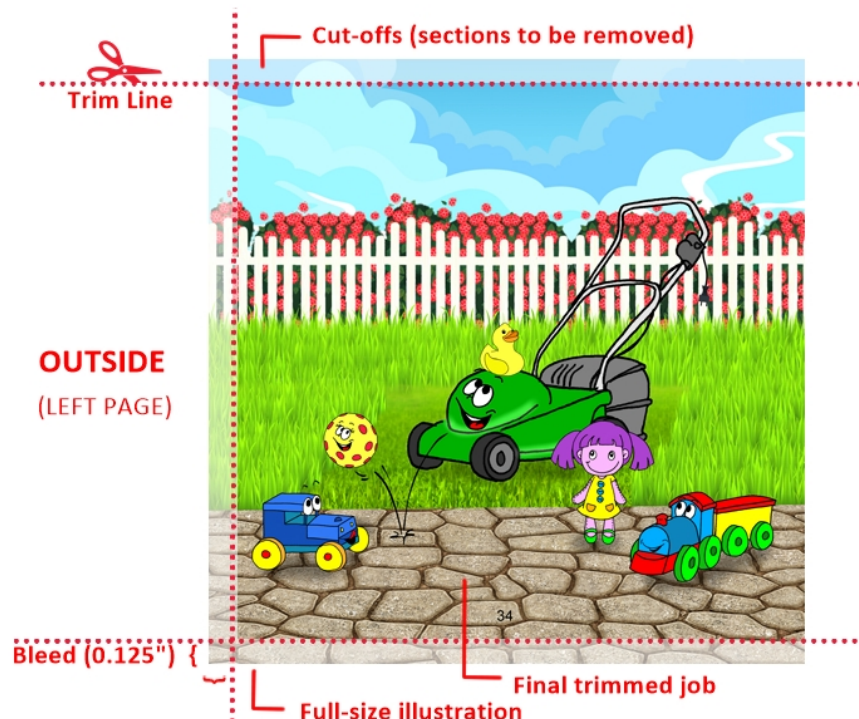


IMAGE SIZING

The larger, the better. At least 2,500 pixels per side, preferably larger. Take printing into account. For example, if your book will be 11" on one side, your images need to be more than 3,300 pixels per side. Just make sure the aspect ratio remains the same if you should decide to resize your images.

Here's a great [Inches-to-Pixels](#) and [Pixels-to-Inches](#) converter so you know how large your image should be depending on your selected trim size. Be sure to select a DPI (Dots Per Inch) of 300.

STORYBOARD/ BOOK DUMMY

How do we decide what to include in the illustrations on each page? How can we make sure the images match up with the text?

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That's where a storyboard or book dummy comes in. There are many different ways of using this technique. What follows is the way I've found works best for me. The process differs slightly between picture books and chapter books. I'll illustrate both.

WHY DO WE CREATE A BOOK DUMMY / STORYBOARD?

- Gives you a clearer vision of how the book will look.
- Lets you see the overall flow of the story.
- Helps you spot any potential holes in your plot.
- Allows you to see whether or not your story makes sense.
- Helps with the overall layout of your story so that text and illustrations match up on each page.
- Gives you an idea of how many illustrations you need.
- Sets the stage for hiring an illustrator.

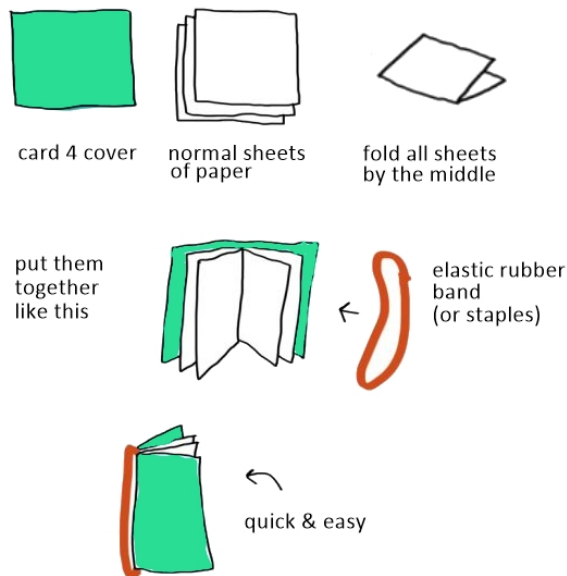
For picture books, I usually like to work backwards. Now that you've written your story, this will be easy to do. Remember – this is not the final layout. This is just meant to help you determine what illustrations you would like to include so that you can create an illustrator brief. This step is also helpful if you are planning to create your illustrations yourself.

You already know how many pages your book will have. You'll use this information to evenly distribute the text throughout that number of pages. Let's say you have 32 pages (15 double-page spreads plus 2 single pages). It's helpful to create an actual dummy to help us with the next steps. Here's how:

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QUICK & EASY BOOK DUMMY

(no glue, no scissors, no needle)



Print out your manuscript and divide the text into 15 parts. Cut them out and paste them into the actual book dummy you've created, one part per double-page spread.

Flipping through each page, read your pasted text and think of an illustration that would go nicely with that particular text; start sketching on the page opposite to your pasted text.

This storyboard creation process doesn't have to be perfect – you just want to get the essence of the story right. So be loose and expressive, and have some fun. All in all, you'll probably create a couple different versions, each being an improvement of the previous one.

CHAPTER BOOKS

For chapter books, you won't have to use this process to determine the overall layout. I like to include at least one full illustrated page per chapter. And because each chapter automatically requires us to begin a new page, the setup is much easier.

If your chapter book has ten chapters, for example, you would want around ten illustrated pages. The theme of each illustration would depend on what happens in the corresponding chapter. Pick the most exciting part within that chapter to be illustrated, and then place that illustration where its particular scene occurs within the story. Either sketch those scenes out or describe and write down your idea.

Armed with a clear vision for each illustration, you are well on your way to creating your illustrator brief.

TEXT AND ILLUSTRATION COMBINATIONS

How you combine your text and illustrations is really a design question and completely up to you. But because the creation process depends on your chosen combination, you will have to decide in advance so you can let your illustrator know.

There are two ways of combining text and illustrations:

1. TEXT AS PART OF THE IMAGE
2. TEXT AND IMAGE SEPARATE

TEXT AS PART OF THE IMAGE

Having the text in the image itself makes formatting much easier, as you don't have to worry about page breaks or font sizes. It will also look consistent across different devices.

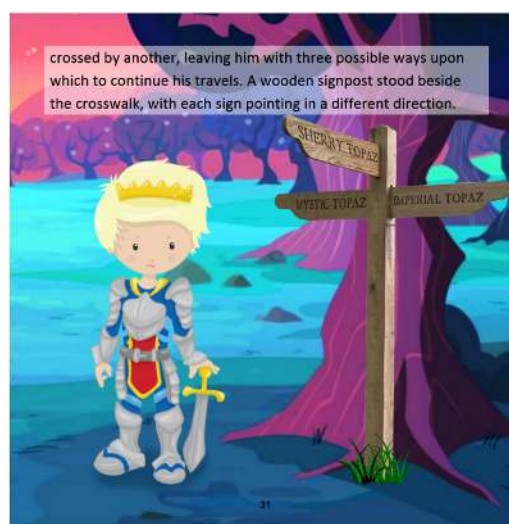
I usually use this method for my full-color children's books. You can use whatever font you want, and the text can go anywhere on the page, making it fun and engaging for little ones' eyes.

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Below (left) is a page from my book *The Garbage Trucks Are Here*, and on the right, one from my book *A Gemstone Adventure*. Here, I have added a layer underneath the text to make the text stand out.



Text in illustration



Text in illustration with layer underneath

If you decide to include the text in the image itself, this will have to be done by your illustrator. Or, if you feel your skills are up to it, you can add the text yourself once you receive the finished images, using simple graphics software.

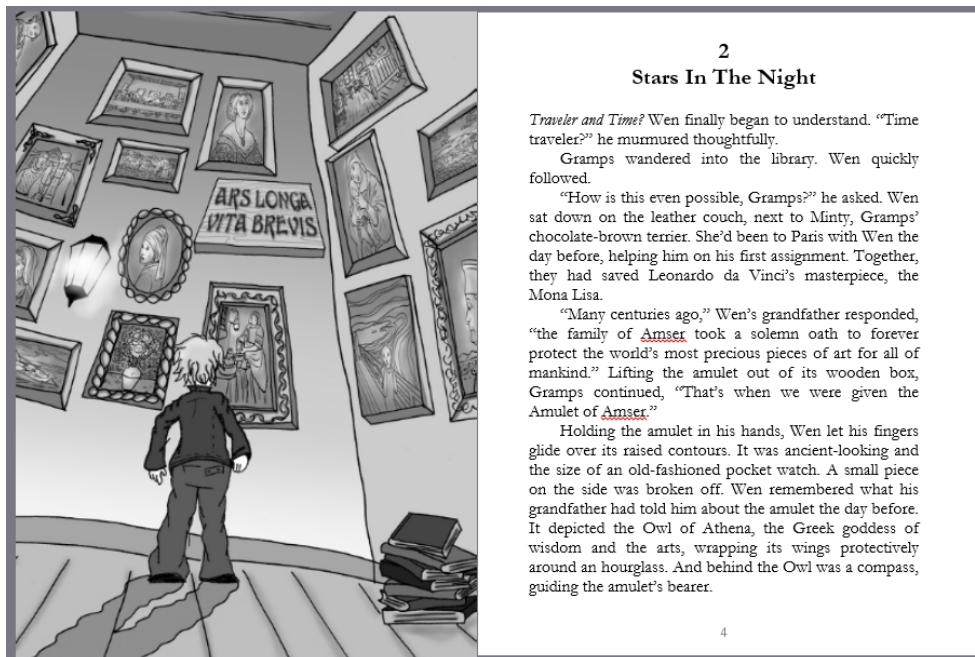
Bear in mind that this method does make editing the text a bit harder – any changes or corrections have to be made within the image itself.

TEXT AND IMAGE SEPARATE

The other option is to have the images and text completely separate, with the text either below the illustration or on a separate page. Below is a double-page spread from my chapter book series *The Amulet Of Amser*. It has an image on the left-hand page and the text on the right-hand page.

Here, the layout would be arranged by the book formatter (or yourself), and does not involve your illustrator.

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FINDING AN ILLUSTRATOR

To find the most suitable illustrator for your children's book, you should look for more than one prospective artist so that you have some choices. Having backup options in place is advisable, in case the illustrator you initially selected doesn't deliver on time or isn't able to communicate as well as you'd like.

Here's a short list of outsourcing sites to find an illustrator for your book:

- Upwork.com
- Guru.com
- Fiverr.com
- Freelancer.com

Social media sites (children's book specific):

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- LinkedIn – artist and illustrator groups
- Facebook artist/ illustrator groups
- Goodreads groups
- DeviantArt
- ChildrensIllustrators.com

Friends and family:

Personally, this is an option I wouldn't recommend. People tend to take illustrating less seriously if there is no or very little money involved. Usually, friends and family don't illustrate for a living, therefore it might take them a lot longer, as they are less motivated. If communication breaks down or if anything goes wrong, there could be hurt feelings and awkwardness. So be really careful if you go this route. If you do, I'd recommend paying them, as you would a third-party illustrator. That way, s/he has a real motivation and obligation. Also, make sure you have very clear deadlines and expectations put into place.

The outsourcing sites mentioned above are great, for multiple reasons. For example, most provide you with reviews from the artists' previous clients. Some even include information about previous completion rates, something I really pay attention to. And most importantly, these sites are cost effective. You have to weed through the profiles a bit, but if you find the perfect illustrator who offers the style you're going for, the research will be absolutely worth it.

On most outsourcing sites mentioned above, you will need to post your project (similar to a job offering), and illustrators will then bid on it.

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In order to get an idea of how much you should be offering, browse some of the platform's current projects. Know that your bid sets a baseline only, as each illustrator will bid individually on your project if he or she is interested in working with you.

After the initial bidding process (usually a couple of days), you will have to go through each illustrator's profile and portfolio to decide who would be a great fit. The first time you go through this weeding-out process, you'll eliminate those you don't plan on hiring.



[<https://media.giphy.com/media/tei52cyY5mroA/giphy.gif>]

To see if an illustrator is a great fit, I recommend you go through a vetting process. I usually look at their profile and read through previous reviews, and view their portfolio to get a feel for their style. But the most important part of vetting is a sample request where you see how effectively they can turn your writings into illustrations, and how well they follow instructions.

SAMPLE ILLUSTRATION REQUEST

Once you have narrowed it down to about 6–10 illustrators, you can request a sample illustration. If you do your research and personalize your message, most are more than happy to do so. Be sure to approach at least eight, as there will always be a couple who won't respond.

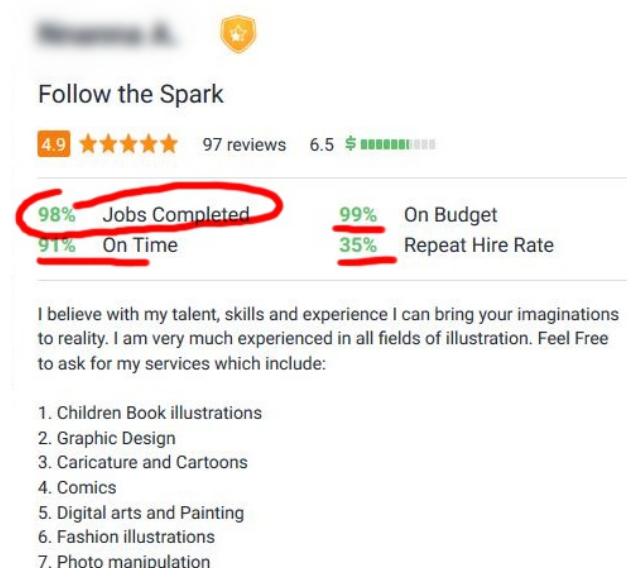
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Please be respectful of each artist's time, and the effort he or she puts into this process. If you should decide not to work with a certain talent, please let him or her know.

Besides helping you decide which illustrator to pick based on their artistic skills, this sample request will also help to see whether or not the illustrator is able to follow your written instructions.

Depending on which platform you're using, you will be provided with an artist's completion rate, i.e. the percentage of work that a particular artist has accepted AND completed. If your project requires the artist to draw multiple images, a higher completion rate is definitely important and something to consider, as you don't want him or her to drop the project in the middle of the process. If this happened, you'd then have to find a new illustrator and would lose valuable time.

Here's an artist profile from www.freelancer.com:



The screenshot shows a Freelancer.com profile for 'The Spark'. The profile includes a 'Follow the Spark' button, a 4.9 star rating from 97 reviews, and a 6.5 rating. Below this, a table of performance metrics is shown, with '98% Jobs Completed' circled in red. The profile also includes a bio and a list of services.

Metric	Value
Jobs Completed	98%
On Time	91%
On Budget	99%
Repeat Hire Rate	35%

I believe with my talent, skills and experience I can bring your imaginations to reality. I am very much experienced in all fields of illustration. Feel Free to ask for my services which include:

1. Children Book illustrations
2. Graphic Design
3. Caricature and Cartoons
4. Comics
5. Digital arts and Painting
6. Fashion illustrations
7. Photo manipulation

With a completion rate of 98% and a repeat hire rate of 35%, this is a likely candidate, depending on whether or not I like his or her actual sample illustration.

WHAT TO PAY & HOW TO PAY

In order to get a feel for what prices are acceptable for any given project, I recommend browsing the outsourcing site to find postings for similar projects. I'm refraining from including actual prices, as those differ greatly from service provider to service provider, and also change over time.

When hiring an illustrator via one of these outsourcing sites, payments are generally released based on milestones that you get to set. For example, you may release the first milestone payment after the storyboard has been submitted. The milestone setup will depend on the scope of your project and the platform you are using to hire your illustrator.



[<http://media.giphy.com/media/h8yeWWvhwVdsl/giphy.gif>]

The cost of your illustrator depends on multiple things. First and foremost is the number of illustrations – the more you need, the more you'll pay.

The price also depends on the complexity of the artwork. Using watercolors will be more time consuming, and therefore will cost more than purely digitalized images, for example. The simpler your illustrations, the more you'll save.

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Another aspect is the skill level and experience of the illustrator, as well as his or her location. Usually, artists located in Western Europe, the US, Canada, and Australia will charge more than artists in Asian or Eastern European Countries.

And finally, the pricing will depend on the delivery speed. The more quickly you require your artwork, the more it generally costs in order to move you up in the illustrator's drawing queue.

As I mentioned above, a good way to gauge the pricing is to look at similar posted projects on the particular outsourcing site you're planning to use. What are they offering? What are the offers of the bidding illustrators?

MILESTONES – PAYMENT PROCESS

If you're hiring through an outsourcing site, pay through the payment options they provide. If you hire your illustrator outside of such a site, pay via [PayPal](#) or [escrow.com](#).

SAMPLE PAYMENT SCHEDULE	
<u>MILESTONE 01:</u>	
Illustrator sends rough sketches for all pages/ storyboard	
➔ Send 25% of payment (w/o bonus)	
<u>MILESTONE 02:</u>	
Illustrator sends low-resolution updates of finalized images for feedback and revisions	
➔ Send 25% of payment (w/o bonus)	
<u>MILESTONE 03:</u>	
Illustrator completes full-resolution images	
➔ Once all images (and cover) are complete, send remaining 50% plus bonus if applicable	
➔ Illustrator sends original and high-resolution artwork.	

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Regular check-ins are key when working with a freelancer, as you will want to keep the delivery date on your illustrator's radar. You will also want to keep time zone differences in mind. A constant and regular update is preferable, as you don't want a bunch of work done that isn't right. If your illustrator sends you his first image, you can critique it, and he can then use those pointers for all other images. This, in turn, will save you both lots of time and nerves.

If you have a very clear vision in mind, be sure to tell your illustrator.

And there you have it! You now have a beautiful story tailored toward your audience AND the illustrations to go along with it. CONGRATULATION! You should be so very proud of yourself!



[<https://media.giphy.com/media/DKnMqdm9i980E/giphy.gif>]

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

With each book I wrote, I improved my process. I saw what worked and what didn't, and improved my systems and ways of doing things. While I'm extremely proud of my first couple of children's books, they're also the ones I made most mistakes with. But I was able to learn from these experiences and refine the used methods on the way. Just know that this is a continuous learning process and that you'll get better with every book you'll create.

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO WRITING & ILLUSTRATING YOUR FIRST CHILDREN'S BOOK

This guide was meant to address the biggest pain points of most aspiring children's book authors. I have interviewed and surveyed more than 100+ people, and that's what was requested the most.

In this guide, you've learned how to

- Determine whether self-publishing or traditional publishing is best for you
- Figure out why you want to write a children's book
- Distinguish the different types of children's books
- Discover stories within you
- Identify your target audience
- Write your story, including the 5 most important story-elements
- Give your book an amazing title
- Decide what book format to use
- Find an editor
- Create a storyboard
- Correctly size your artwork
- Easily discover an illustrator
- and so much more

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I hope you derived tons of value from this guide on how to write and illustrate your children's book. If you'd like to expand your knowledge on how to...

- Request an Editorial Sample
- Post Illustrator Project Descriptions on Market-Sourcing Sites
- Format Your Paper & Ebook Versions of Your Book Step-by-Step
- Publish Your Paperback and Ebook, and
- Market Your Freshly Published Children's Book

...feel free to check out my bestselling book *How To Self-Publish A Children's Book - Everything You Need To Know To Write, Illustrate, Publish, And Market Your Paperback And Ebook*.



This book comes with 19+ templates and swipe files I've developed and used over the last couple of years.

Plus, you'll find:

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- A hand-selected list of highly qualified editors, illustrators, book formatters, and marketing strategists you can hire, without it costing you a fortune
- Lists of blogs, book festivals, awards, and groups specifically for marketing children's books
- Templates of emails to hire editors and illustrators, plus how to ask influencers for reviews you can feature on your cover.

GET IT HERE

Found this guide helpful? Then please share it with someone you know would like to write a children's book as well. Don't know anyone? Just ask! I bet some of your friends and family thought about it before, just like you did! Help them take action. Help them take their first step toward writing and publishing their own children's book. You'll be their hero. And mine as well. Thank you!