

The
stories
you will tell



TIPS FOR WRITING
IMAGINATIVE
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

TRIMATRIX MANAGEMENT CONSULTING INC.
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Generate *ideas*

THINGS TO DO:

- 1 **Read** classic and newer children's stories.
2. **Remember** your own childhood. Try drawing a diagram of the layout of your childhood home – memories will flood back!
3. **Watch and listen** – to the children in your life, to TV programs, the Internet, to the world of children.
- 4 **Write** every day – in a journal or on a blog. And carry a small notebook to record ideas as they strike.
5. **Attend** workshops and writing groups – a great chance to learn and connect with other writers.

Develop your story

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

1. **Create** compelling characters – create a profile for each. To help write your descriptions, search for character development questions online. Or do hand-drawn sketches to get you started.
2. **Construct** your plot - hook the reader on the first page! – conflict, climax, resolution – beginning, middle, end – and remember that pacing is important!
3. **Dialogue** – gives information, develops characters, moves your story along. Each character should sound different, and dialogue should be integral to story-telling (not just filler).
4. **Scene/setting** – research time periods, places, historical facts, etc.
5. **Point of view** – First person (I went...) or third person (She went...). Keep tense consistent (past or present).

Things that work

- Decide your target audience. Define age, reading level and gender right from the start.
- Create a satisfying story where problems are solved and good wins in the end.
- Every word counts and each word is the perfect choice.
- Sense of whimsy, sense of silly and a sense of humour all make good sense!
- Strong characters also have weaknesses and experience change by the end of the story.
- Visuals should move the story forward.
- Don't lecture or talk down to young readers.
- You can include frightening things in your story but anything scary should never touch a character physically.

LATEST RESEARCH: Parents value and prefer printed books for their children!

Make a sample

Get a better idea of how your story will appear in book form – make a sample book. Use simple drawings or describe the images you want in words, then map out your story page by page. This will also help you explain your project to your illustrator once you reach that point in the process.

PARTS OF YOUR BOOK

Front Cover/Back Cover
Page 1 Title page
Page 2 Copyright page
Page 3 Dedication
Page 4 Blank
Page 5 Your story begins

Remember: Odd numbered pages go on the right side; even are on the left.

→ **Typical size: 8" x 8"**
32 page book (plus cover) ←
100 to 1500 words

Reading Levels

3 to 6 years Knows the alphabet
Simple picture books = story driven by images

4 to 6 years Reads some words
Picture books with some words = easy to read

K to grade 3 Ready for stories
More of a story = more words + images

Grades 3 to 4 Reading skills advance
Short chapter books

Grades 5 to 7 Middle school level
Young adult novels + nonfiction

READABILITY

Microsoft Word can be set to calculate readability and grade level. Or try readability calculators available online.

Go to **www.readability-score.com** – simply copy and paste your prose. It gives the results for several accepted formulas and an overall average.

Then you can edit for optimum readability for the age group you are targeting.

The *process*

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

1. **Plan** - Understand self-publishing process and responsibilities, and research your target audience.
2. **Decide** - Theme, concept, scope based on your audience.
3. **Develop content** - Organize your content, write the words and avoid common pitfalls.
4. **Prepare and submit** - To editor for polish and to illustrator for image creation.
5. **Design expertly** - Use a professional layout artist for cover and page creation.
6. **Approve** - See it all come together in a final proof and decide your print order quantity.
7. **Launch!** Time to celebrate! Then begin the next stage of marketing your book...

Thinking about self-publishing?

WE ARE HERE
TO HELP!

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CONTACT US