

Essential Writing

by Chazda Albright -

<http://greatstorybook.com/essential-writing/>

*How to Start a Story is really about understanding **first** some of the basic, essential writing aspects of the publishing industry and how we categorize different types of books. If you have this information in your pocket before you start drafting your manuscript, you will have a much easier time of it!*

Writing stories for young readers is one of the most rewarding creative outlets anyone can choose to tackle.

Once you've read your own story to a group of kids for the first time and experienced their joy at what you've created, you will be hooked - for life.

So I suppose this is fair warning: only pursue this kind of work if you want to be happy. If you want to be depressed, this is the wrong way to go.

That isn't to say it isn't hard – because it's really hard! But it's also wonderful.

[To avoid the most commonly made mistake writers make, go HERE.](#)

Just Being Kids

Kids don't edit their feedback. They don't know how! If they're bored, you know it. If they're engaged, you know it. If they're worried about the protagonist, you know it.

Every little muscle in the child's body reveals exactly what they think and feel about your words. It can be intimidating, because if there's a lull in your story, kids just get up and leave you. You might be mid-sentence. They get up and go do something else.

But when your story works, it's amazing. Their eyes light up, they sit up straight – they are engaged, fully.

One of the most effective ways to test drive a storybook is in reading it to a group of kids. [Here's how you can do that.](#)

For this reason, I've decided to focus my writing efforts on kids – which means baby books all the way through YA novels. If you're new to this, you might not know how books for kids are categorized.

Books for kids are defined in these three ways:

1. age group / reading ability

2. genre
3. type of book.

So when you decide you want to create a story, you need to have it clearly in mind what sort of story you want to bring to the market. Whether you traditionally publish or self-publish, you need to decide these three things:

1. Who will read my story? A question of demographic.
2. How will the story make people feel? A question of genre.
3. What kind of form will this product take? A question of edition(s).

So let's take a look at each of these three key decisions. What exactly are your options?

Demographic

[Baby Books](#)

[Pre-Readers \(3-5\)](#)

Beginning Readers (6-8) (eg: I Can Read)

[Early Readers \(7-9\)](#)

NOTE: [illustrated storybooks](#) can appeal to any age, but = typically 0-9 years.

[Chapter Books \(8-11\)](#)

[Middle Grade Readers / MG Novels \(9-16\)](#)

[Young Adult \(or Teens\)](#)

New Adult

Adult

Genre

There are certain genres for kid's books that are special and specific. Here they are:

[Genres for Kids Books](#)

Edition(s)

Here's a complete list of all the types of books with pictures. Whatever you want to create, it's here.

[Types of Books with Pictures](#)

Essential Writing Information

Illustrated Storybooks need to have certain things happening in them. Here are the 10 Must-haves:

[10 Must-haves for a Solid Illustrated Storybook](#)

Your writing needs to be intentionally targeted to a certain age group, whatever you choose. Here's how to do that:

[5 Essential Writing Elements Plus 3 Levers](#)

If you decide to create a story with pictures, you need to understand how to mock-up your story. You'll need this whether you are the artist or if you're collaborating:

[Storybook Mock-up or Not to Mock-up](#)

Questions?

Send me an email. I'm happy to help any way that I can.

Keep creating, no matter what.
