

Cultivating Stories

Generating Ideas:

Keep a notebook

Be curious

Ask questions

READ! Award-winners

Ag in the Classroom - [21 Best Farm Books For Kids](#)

National Science Teaching Association – [Best STEM Books](#)

American Library Association [Notable Children’s Books](#)

Mine your family history

Mine your childhood

Hang around kids

Use Mentor Texts: (see additional handout) Type out the text. Analyze how the author creates a mood, introduces characters, shows conflict, etc.

Picture Book Structure

32 pages or

16 double-page spreads



Story Structures

Basic Nonfiction Outline – List 14 things you want your reader to know about your subject?

Other Story Structures – ABC’s, counting book, Goodnight Moon, House that Jack Built,

Basic Narrative Story Structure

Once there was a _____ [introduce character]

And every day _____ [normal life]

Until one day _____ [conflict/change]

And because of this _____ [action]

And because of this _____ [action]

Until finally _____ [success]

And ever since that day _____ [end/result]

Revision

Put work away for a few days

Read your work aloud or have someone read it to you. Find a critique partner or group.

Take your writing to the next level with:

strong verbs

alliteration

repetition

onomatopoeia

sensory details

analogies

Illustrations

Traditional publishers contract with illustrators. Independent authors are responsible.

Using Your Own Photographs – Use only high-resolution images. 300 DPI or larger. Multiply intended print size by resolution; e.g. an image to be printed as 6” W x 4” H would be 1800 x 1200 pixels.

Using images from the Internet – Look for royalty-free images that do not have a copyright. Be aware that some copyrighted images may not say so. WikiCommons

Seek out art students, look at illustrator sites like <https://www.scbwi.org/illustrator-gallery/>, or https://www.fiverr.com/?source=top_nav, Pinterest...

Traditional Publishing

- Pros: You Get Paid!
You’re Just the Writer
Purchased by Schools and Libraries & Bookstores
Reviewed and eligible for major awards
- Cons: Lots of competition
Get used to rejection
Relinquish control for the sake of a better book
Still have to engage in marketing

Self-Publishing

- Pros: You have total control
You can set your own deadlines
It’s easier to make changes if necessary.
- Cons: You pay upfront to hire an editor, designer, illustrator, etc.
You are responsible for all marketing, sales, distribution...
You don’t get shelf space at major bookstores, libraries or schools

Publishing Resources:

[Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators](#)
[Alliance of Independent Authors](#)

Writing Resources:

[KidLit 411](#)
[Writer’s Rumpus](#)
[Lyrical Language Lab / Peek & Critique](#)
[Nonfiction Ninjas](#)
[NF Fest](#)