



How to Write a Children's Book and Get It Published

Barbara Seuling

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Here is everything the aspiring children's author needs to know about the five essential steps to publication: researching the current marketplace, developing story ideas, strengthening writing skills and improving work habits, submitting proposals and manuscripts to agents and publishers, and becoming part of the writing community. What's more, this revised and expanded edition contains updated reading lists and organizational references, as well as the latest information on word processing and illustrating with computers. There's also a new chapter on writing plays for children, and innovative suggestions for handling difficult contemporary issues such as AIDS. From character sketches to bound books, author/editor Barbara Seuling shows how to get involved and work toward success in today's world of children's literature.

How to Write a Children's Book and Get It Published Details

Date : Published January 1st 1992 by Wiley (first published March 1st 1984)

ISBN : 9780684193434

Author : Barbara Seuling

Format : Paperback 214 pages

Genre : Language, Writing, Nonfiction, Reference, Adult

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Becca says

This slim and business-slick book was interesting. It had a bit of a write-by-numbers feel, like a glossy beach magazine, and it wasn't artistically inspiring like the how-to write books by --you know-- real writers. Oh, Seuling is published, and I hope someday to have a nice long list of credits like she has, but she ain't Jane Yolen. As polished as it was, it certainly spurred me on to actually sending a manuscript out (in the mail, folks!) My favorite bits were the odd outdated leftovers from the first edition that have somehow made it into the most recent printing: "make sure your typewriter has a fresh ribbon!"

Notes:

Children's book council

Horn book with articles about children's books

p41 "The important thing for the perpetual notetaker is to get something done, finished to the point where she has devoted attention and time to it and given it a fair chance."

p54 Query letter works well for non-fiction to shortcut the wait time. check out "Subject guide to children's books in prints for your non-fiction topic to see what else is out there. Write to publishers if they would be interested in your idea, "note other books in print on your subject and explain why your book could compete successfully with them." Sell the publisher on your subject rather than on yourself. Explain why you are qualified to write. Some publishers will find query letters for fiction and picture books useful, too. But "I usually recommend that for picture books, you simply send your completed manuscript--up to about five or six pages." (57)

106- "If you come up with a good idea and a fresh approach and show that you can handle it successfully through your proposal and same material, your chances of 'breaking in' could be significantly improved."

115 "If you write poetry in general, try to sell individual poems, crafted with the same care as the finest prose, to children's magazines. It is a starting place, to gain the much-needed credits you will need as you master the verse form."

117 write poetically, ala William Steig or Jan Wahl.

136 create routing slip for manuscripts sent, responses etc. also, send manuscript with a self-addressed stamped postcard to acknowledge receipt.

139- "send along a couple of sketches and one piece of finished art." also 146: send a typed manuscript, one finished art, same sketches, dummy.

multiple submissions-- poor form. But check in with Society of Children's Book Writers to break in.

147 "appropriate number of pages-- thirty-two or forty-eight."

p177 list of basic proofreader's marks

188 great list of books to add to Goodreads, also 189 and 192.

Ellen Ramsey says

An excellent book for covering a range of topics about children's books. The book includes hints to carry a writer from idea to book submission and publication. I read it a while ago and still refer to it often, which is a good recommendation for a how-to book.

Laura says

The title is exactly what this book delivers. This, its latest edition, was written in 1991. I think some of the content gets a mulligan for that, but as a whole it was worthy of many a note taken by yours truly.

Rebecca says

It's basic, so it's good for someone just thinking about writing, but it's also outdated...sometimes in a very obvious painful way.

For me, it wasn't the best book. I found more useful, relevant information through various children's writing websites.

Cami Evans says

I have my first script accepted by a publisher and this book helped me figure out how to revise it best for the final copy. I read the third edition. There is a lot of valuable information here. It already could use an update, however, as manuscripts are now submitted digitally and editors respond via emails instead of snail mail.

Holly says

This was a truly practical book with plenty of activities to get you thinking about the business end of publishing a book as well as the creative process. I had checked this book out from the library, but am considering purchasing it to complete the chapter suggestions at my own pace.

Erin Nudi says

Admittedly, some parts of this book are outdated, but the majority of it is still extremely pertinent and helpful information.

Seuling goes into different types of children's books, what pictures work for better age groups, what age groups are into different types of topics over others, how to work with or without an illustrator, how to connect with other writers and writing groups, how things look on the publisher and editor's end, etc. etc.

Also, I really liked how she emphasized that children's books are not "watered down" adult books; kids aren't stupid, and they need much of the same aspects in place to make a good, interesting, captivating book, just like with adult books.

Catherine Johnson says

I have just read the third edition of this book and it is a very valuable resource. I highly recommend it.

Meagan says

I would imagine that the publication process outlined in this book is outdated (personal computers were only just becoming popular when this book came out...and here we are decades later with books on our Smartphones.) Even so, Seuling's advice for the writing process, her reading recommendations, and her insight into the mind of an editor inspired me to take pages and pages of notes. I appreciate this book and think it still holds some value even today, but I do believe that her advice must be supplemented with modern information.

Amina Al motery says

a very useful book for beginners, i really liked all the techniques mentioned plus the appendixes it's an amazing book really for anyone who thinks about writing for kids

Sharon says

I'm not really writing a book, but I have lots of ideas that I think are pretty original, but I am terrible at expressing my thoughts in words. I saw this at the library and thought I would give it a try. Mostly so far, it is all common sense and I am wondering what books this lady has ever written that has made her an expert.

Ana says

Great book about the theme. Perfect to inform yourself about publishing for children and have a formed idea where to start.

Xander says

I felt that though there were some helpful tips in the book, it definitely talked down to the reader and was certainly far from encouraging. If she's writing books for children, I hope that those books are slightly more encouraging and uplifting. This book seems to be her way of discouraging others from writing so that she might do better herself. Just how I felt when I was reading it. I'll still use it for a reference, but I certainly think it is far from the be all end all reference guide to children's books.

Ashley says

Some of the info is probably a bit outdated but it gave me a good glimpse in to the process from manuscript to publication. I think this would be helpful for all beginning writers at least to some degree, not just writers for children. Good intro book.

Heidi M Rogers says

This book was so helpful and informative. Even though the copy I read was several years old, she still had so much up-to-date info technologically speaking. There are a lot of helpful resource lists as well.
