

# How to Write a Children's Book



## Planning & Plotting a Book for Young Readers

### Build Your Reading List

Identify twenty of the most successful books in your category. Read them, study them, read reviews, ask the kids in your life what they think about them... whatever it takes to understand what makes these books great.

#### 10 Recently Published Bestsellers

#### 10 Classics that Still Sell Well

# Understand Your Reader

Answer these questions to find a deeper understanding of the types of stories that will resonate with your reader.

## Who is Your Reader?

Age:

Grade:

Reading Level:

What do they do for fun?

What makes them laugh?

How do they bond with others?

What do they fear?

# Understand Your Reader

What do they daydream about?

What life lessons are they starting to learn at this age?

What does it mean for them to “succeed” or “win”?

How do they want others to see them?

Who are their heroes?

# Build Your Protagonist

Name:

Age:

Where do they live?

Who is in their personal community? (Family, friends, classmates, teachers, pets, etc.)

How do they talk?

What do they love?

What do they hate?

What do they fear?

# Build Your Protagonist

What is their goal?

What motivates them to achieve this goal?

What belief or philosophy drives their decisions?

What are their strengths? Weaknesses?

What stands in their way?

How do they feel about the obstacle? (Angry? Afraid? Defiant? Sad?)

How do they change by the end?

# Design Your Story

What is life like for your protagonist at the beginning of the story? (Example:  
The very hungry caterpillar is just an egg on a leaf in the moonlight.)

What event motivates your protagonist to pursue their goal? (He's born hungry,  
and he needs to find food pronto.)

What attempts does your protagonist make in pursuit of their goal? (He eats  
one apple, two pears, three plums, etc.)

# Design Your Story

Why don't those attempts work? (The hunger won't go away. Then when he eats a ton of junk and gives himself a stomach ache.)

What new approach does the protagonist take to get what they want? (He eats a nice healthy leaf.)

What is the result? (He's satisfied and ready for a transformation. He becomes a butterfly and loves it.)

(Note: If you're writing a middle grade book or young adult novel, check out our post on [How to Write a Book](#) for a more comprehensive, three-act structure template.)