

HOW TO WRITE A CHILDREN'S BOOK CHECKLIST

Step 1: Get Your Children's Book Ideas

- ☐ Choose your age range
 - Board Book – Ages 0 to 3 – Minimal words, mostly pictures.
 - Picture Book – Ages 2 to 5 – 200 to 400 words, pictures on every page.
 - Chapter Book – Ages 6 to 10 – 3,000 to 10,000 words, pictures on most pages.
 - Middle Grade Book – Ages 8 to 12 – 30,000 to 45,000 words, limited pictures.
- ☐ View a list of [Story Prompts](#) to gain ideas.
- ☐ Try ChatGPT to generate ideas for your book
- ☐ Review appropriate Children's Book Categories on Amazon
- ☐ Vet your children's book idea
 - Use [Publisher Rocket](#) to find keywords for your book, vet the book's categories to make sure they are high demand/low competition

Step 2: Write Your Children's Book

- ☐ Choose your book format (Ebook or Paperback or Both?)
- ☐ Choose a title that grabs reader attention, clearly says what the story is about, is easily searchable, and/or has keywords that your audience is searching for
- ☐ Find your writing style
 - **Rhyme:** When writing in rhyme, ensure good rhyming, consistent syllable counts, rhythms, and avoid forcing bad rhymes or skipping, with examples like The Little Blue Truck and Llama Llama books.
 - **Past or Present Tense:** Kids prefer present tense books for active engagement, experiencing events as they happen, like the Maisy

books.

- **First or Third Person:** Third-person gives flexibility and is preferred by children, but choose first-person if it aligns with your theme.

☐ **Incorporate the 5 important elements**

1. Unforgettable characters
2. Suspenseful action/hook
3. Realistic dialogue
4. Good storyline
5. Instant recall factor

☐ **Write the book**

☐ **Edit the book/get an editor/proofread**

☐ **Choose whether to hire someone to illustrate or DIY**

☐ **Choose your orientation (vertical, horizontal, square)**

☐ **Choose your trim size, here are the most common ones:**

- 5.5" x 8.5"
- 6" x 9"
- 6.14 x 9.21"
- 7" x 10"
- 8" x 10"
- 8.5" x 8.5"
- 8.5" x 11"

☐ **Choose your illustration style and medium**

- Cartoonish
- Realistic
- Wondrous
- Line drawing
- Sketch illustration
- Abstract illustration
- Stylized and exaggerated
- Vintage
- Bold and bright
- Muted or subdued

- Watercolor
- Acrylic
- Pencil art
- Charcoal
- Collage
- Multimedia
- Digital painting
- Vector illustrations

☐ Illustrate the children's book (or have it illustrated for you)

☐ Illustrate the book cover (can sometimes be different from the interior)

Step 3: Format Your Children's Book

☐ Combine text and illustration

☐ Select your formatting program (we recommend [Atticus](#))

☐ Format for the correct trim size (selected above)

☐ Set your illustrations at full bleed (unless not applicable)

☐ Export to EPUB and PDF

Step 4: Publish Your Children's Book

☐ Choose between a traditional publisher or the self-publishing method (trad-pub will require seeking an editor and agent)

☐ Get feedback from readers

☐ Purchase an ISBN number + Barcode

☐ Copyright your book

☐ Choose keywords carefully using Publisher Rocket

☐ Get review for your book

☐ Pick the most relevant social media platform and build an audience there

☐ Plan school visits