

Writing illustrated childrens books is a pretty tough way to make a living. A lot of people assume that it is an easy life because the books are so simple. In a sense it's true. Anyone can write a children's book. It takes a good author to write a good children's book because it takes a good author to write a good book period, but writing for kids is still a lot less work than writing for adults. The industry, however, is cutthroat. There are so many people who can churn out kids books that the competition can be brutal and crushing. Having your books discovered by a good publisher is almost impossible. You need good contacts, a good agent, and most of all you need to get your books illustrated by an excellent artist.

Illustrating books is a tough sell. A lot of artists turn down requests by people wanting to have their books illustrated without even considering them. You see, the chance of "making it" from the work you do on a kids book is slim to none. Thousands of authors out there want to get their books illustrated, and few of them are willing to part with the money it requires. Most writers want to hire illustrators on spec. This means that the illustrator only gets a commission if the book gets picked up. Only a tiny proportion of children's books get published, and of those very few are financially successful. It is no wonder there are so few book illustrators for hire.

Rather than looking for authors who want to get a book illustrated, most artists will actually go to the company themselves. Many book publishers will hire artists and assign them to new authors. This is the best way for a book illustrator to make a living. Unfortunately, there is no similar offer for authors. Just because you are a good writer doesn't mean that a company will want to hire you. Unless you can successfully pitch your idea, you will not be picked up. No one hires writers purely for their craft. Writers are hired for a marketable idea. Without that marketable idea and the right pitch, they will never get their books illustrated unless they want to part with a lot of money out of pocket. The only solution is to go to the book publishers who will assign you an artist if they like your book. These publishers, unfortunately, are very difficult to get picked up by.