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# Introduction

## Maybe...

Welcome to Tips on writing and publishing your picture book! This book is to get you started and to assess your needs. If you are someone who has always wanted to write a picture book, then this course is for you! Maybe you have gone through years of college, maybe not. Maybe you are a grandmother who wants to put together a book with historical stories passed down through the generations. Maybe you are a mother or father who wants to pursue the dream of writing. Maybe you are an illustrator who just needs the story to compliment your beautiful artwork. Whatever it is you want, you chose to have this book sent to you. So, cheers to you, because this is a great step in accomplishing your picture book writing career.

## Why?

Why did I write this course? I was a university student who dreamed of becoming a writer. I heard my peers talk about their books, the ones they seemed to be always writing. And I had stories too. I attended the writing conferences for years, and I couldn't wait to get into the right classes with Dean Hughes, Rick Walton, or Ann Cannon. They were fantastic writers and, of course, I wanted to be them. I learned, I dreamed, and then I graduated without a career and without a book.

So, I returned to college and became a teacher.

After years of teaching, I decided to return to an old dream, a dream I should have completed years earlier, because it is easier than people think. So now, I am a published writer. And you can be one too.

# Is it that simple?

I will be honest with you. Everything worthwhile is not that simple. But, if you read this book and follow me in the course, you will see the basics and you will be able to convert your idea into a picture book.

## How?

In college I had a room with long, shaggy, purple carpet. I wrote a crazy story about a little boy who had the same room, but he hated it. I saw a possibility and now I have a published book.

What kind of stories do you have to tell? Think about the everyday inspirations that come to your mind. Keep an index card in your car or back pocket and write down the titles that come to you. Download the recording app on your phone and when you are flooded with an idea, record it. The book you will watch me write in this course, came to me while driving. I recorded my ideas on my smart phone. You can do that too!

# Why write picture Books?

You might already know this answer, but why write a picture book? Why not write a novel or a how to book? My answer is to write those too. Don't limit yourself. But, why start with a picture book?

First, picture books really help writers to understand that writing is about showing and not telling. Use the vivid words and say just what you want to say. If you can condense your writing into a picture book, you can do anything.

Second, the writing is less, which can make the editing less. If you are worried about editing, don't be. Copy editors are not that expensive. And if you made it through high school, you might not even need a copy editor for your picture book. I recommend revising your picture book 3 times. Do not fall in love with your words!!! The final rewriting is when you cut up your manuscript to illustrate your book. I'll explain this more when you take the course. This is not one of the writing techniques explained in the course. You will want to hear those!

Third, illustrating makes your words look even better! But don't forget that writers are illustrators too. Your words are art, they should show and not tell, they should be beautiful.

Fourth, picture books are quick because the writing is shorter and you can share the work with an illustrator. Even if you find ready-made illustrations, you are sharing the responsibility, thus cutting down the work load. If you have a full time job, then picture books can be a fun hobby that can lead to a second income.

# Important questions

When it comes to writing a book, you need to know what you want. Use the list to decide, and then continue reading!!!

1. Decide on a title first, it helps with the theme and story- it also helps with your niche- I always start with a title.
2. What kind of illustrations do you want? Whimsical, cartoon, black and white?
3. Does your story give humanlike characteristics to animals or objects: personification?
4. Are you going to write it in 3<sup>rd</sup> person (He, she said) or 1<sup>st</sup> person (I said)?
5. What is the size you want? For example, do you want a 6x9 or letter size?

Once you've asked these questions, it's time to write.

# Do Your Research!

## Or skip it...

One of the things I've mostly learned from College, writing conferences, and teaching, is that there is so much research. If it's not looking up one topic, it's another. And the library, it seems like I was always in it. Do I value my education? Absolutely. Does everyone need to go through so much education to be successful? Not exactly. When it comes to picture books, there are just a few research techniques that you need.

1. Always remember to show and not tell: But this is easy with picture books. You can write the words and then go back and create illustrator notes. The pictures can actually tell some of the story. I'm sure you have heard of the famous: A picture is worth a thousand words. It truly is.
2. Yes, you can pick an author and go to their conference. They will tell you about mapping, freewriting, group conferences, the whole enchilada. Or, you can go to the sources. Study those picture books. What do you like and dislike?
3. The internet. Most people don't realize that between texting, Facebook, and internet causal research, they probably already have that college education. Now prove it.
4. Read. Read everything.
5. Okay, don't laugh when I say this: Turn on the T.V. Movies show plot and character development, cartoons show personification. Nearly all shows started as a book. If you watch it, watch it as a learning device.

# Go to the Conferences!

## Or skip them...

Writers love writing conferences. They love them so much that they forget to write. In fact, many just learn, absorb, and then give up on the writing. The conferences are glamorous, the writing can be, but it is tedious. This is why I suggest that you edit your 1-2 page picture manuscript 3 times only. The final edit is placing it into the book. You will see the problems, they will be bite sized and easier to fix. A word won't work, a sentence won't be needed, so you can fix the mistakes easily.

Here's all you really need to know about writing conferences:

1. Agents represent your work, they might edit and make suggestions too.
2. Editors usually work with a publishing house. They get your work from the slush pile, or they might skip the slush pile if you made a great connection or sent your work through a trusted agent.
3. Always send your best manuscript
4. Check the Editor's website for submission guidelines
5. Send your book to agents and editors who actually publish your genres
6. Always send a SASE, self-addressed stamped envelope- this is for your rejection
7. Don't bother editors or agents for 2-3 months to see if they are going to accept your manuscript
8. Never write preachy picture books
9. Include your word count
10. Use Times New Roman Font

There is of course, more to conferences. They are also a great way to meet people, but the world of publishing is changing. You can make your connections through the internet. You can even join writing groups through the internet, if you need them.

# Participate in Writing Circles!

## Or skip them...

When it comes to writing circles, teachers and writers love them. Basically, all participants make copies of their work to hand out to the group. This gives everyone time to read and critique the manuscript. When it's the writer's turn, he/she cannot talk until the end. Others reflect on their work.

1. Why do I like them? Usually readers find errors to correct. If a writer switches from third person to first person, this can be corrected. Sometimes writers need to "flesh out" their characters.
2. Writing circles are helpful.
3. But what if you don't have one?
4. Join a trusted group on the internet
5. Set one up. People set up book groups all the time. Ask your local ladies group at your church and find those writers. Set it up, lead it, then let it lead itself.
6. How to skip writing circles? Write your book, illustrate it, make a PDF and find a few trusted readers. Most of your problems will have fixed themselves. If your readers see a problem, then you can fix it before the final publication. This really only works with picture books. If you are writing novels or chapter books, you may want to hire that copy editor and you do probably want to have at least a small writing circle.
7. Want more ways to skip writing circles? Please join me in the picture book writing course.

# What will you Learn?

1. The “Need to know picture book basics” learned from University courses, webinars, writing conferences, and the classroom
2. How to see and use the great titles and books that are already out there. Quality is remembered and loved through the generations.
3. Picture book writing techniques
4. The secrets to illustrating. The secrets that picture book writers do not want to tell you!
5. Step by step formatting, help with dimensions, exporting, and turning your manuscript and illustrations into a book. Yes, you will learn a few tricks that you can use over and over again.
6. You will be able to turn your manuscript into a picture book, because you will follow me through the actual steps.
7. Yes! You will watch me create a book from Start to Finish. This is the clincher, because the book is not published! How can you not do it yourself if you watch me do it and learn my techniques? Learn from a certified teacher, learn the teacher techniques. Let me help you become a picture book writer!!!!

# What everyone isn't telling you...

1. My Illustrators, yes... I will tell you exactly where I get my illustrations
2. My Publisher Secrets... Yes, I will tell you!!!
3. Illustrating tips... I will show you my creative suggestions!!! They work and they are marvelous.
4. Cover worries? Don't hire someone to make your cover. Everyone will tell you to do this, but I will tell you not to.
5. Break the rules! Win the readers. Let me show you the last secret. It's too good to even hint at right here and it's what no other picture book writer knows. I haven't seen it anywhere, but it's too great not to miss!!!
6. Extra bonus? The course includes the final secrets and a final question and answer session.
7. How much is the course the bonus session? \$2,500.00 full price. Remember, this is what you would pay for an illustrator, or even a weeklong writing course, but a course that will not teach you the publishing secrets. They can't teach you the secrets, because they want you to send them your manuscript. But you don't have too! Learn everything you need to know to publish successful picture books, and still get the illustrator.

But the best news is that our course is \$250.00.

"If we start today, we will reap tomorrow."

Thank you for joining me in the introduction of [From Start to Finish!](#) Please watch [the 1<sup>st</sup> video](#), which is the first start to your Picture Book Success.

Sincerely and with intent,

L.K Dominguez

# Questions/Answers

## Will I succeed?

Yes, you can. I will not only explain the ins and outs of publishing, but I will give you writing tips, techniques, and I will write a book with you. This book will be published for you to view after the course. My hope is that you will watch me carefully, so you too can see your book in print after the course as well.

## The Course is four days. How can you teach people to publish a book in four days?

I have had years of learning, but they are years that **YOU** don't have to have. I will only brief you on all of the "nice to knows" and get down to the meat of what you "need to know." With a few writing techniques, you should never get writer's block. I will give you several illustrating ideas, and I will help you format and then walk you through the publishing process. Obviously, you will not have a completed book in four days, but it will be mostly completed!!! You will have the tools to finish it and wait for that proof copy of your book. My books took two weeks to publish, but only because I had to wait for proof copies. But two weeks!!! Wow!!!

## It sounds like so much information. Will I have to take notes?

You don't have to take notes, because your daily homework assignment will reiterate what was taught in the daily lesson. After completing the homework, you should know the steps. Print and or save your homework assignments in a file and use those to accomplish all your books.

## Why do I have to pay 1,200 for this course?

This course is actually worth so much more than that. This is my life's learning. I will not only be showing you how to write a picture book and how to keep writing picture books, I will be showing you valuable tricks to ensure your success. In this course via webinars, I will show you my most valuable skills and secrets. You have nothing to lose, because you will have the "know how" to write and publish your own book. You will not have to give me royalties and you will not have to wait two years to see your book in print. This price is worth your time and mine!

## Will My Book Sell?

Of course, I cannot promise you that your book will sell beyond that of friends and family, but it should. Follow my recommendations carefully, and you will have a selling book. There are ways to ask people for reviews and to get noticed by librarians. I will tell you everything I know about promoting your book.

## What if I buy the course, I follow it carefully, then I lose interest?

It can happen, which is why this course is a simple, step by step instructional course. The webinars are daily, and if you miss one, you can watch a limited time recording. Follow me carefully, do the homework assignments, and there won't be time to lose interest.

## I am not an illustrator

You don't have to be an illustrator. You just have to give this a chance and try to be creative with what you get from an illustrator. There are many options in finding illustrations for your picture book.

## Will my book look professional?

Yes! It should look better than many of the picture books out there. I am usually disappointed when eBooks don't have the words in the picture. Also, there are many books where the writing is too wordy, or too small, or the pictures are terrible. If you put in the time and follow my formatting advice, your book will look great!!!!

## What will I need for the Course?

I will ask you to reserve \$100.00 to spend during the course, but this money isn't for me, which is why the course is 1,100 instead of 1,200. That's the only surprise. Other than that, you will need a word processor with a great internet connection. The course will be made possible through webinar, so you can listen on a cell phone or telephone if needed.

## Is this a scam?

You don't have to believe me, but this is not a scam. I started publishing children's books and I want to show you how to do it too. You can go to college and learn how, but writing courses don't teach you how to get to the final product. You can go to writing conferences, but they will have presenters who tell you how to get to the top of the slush pile. Granted, you will still be in the slush pile. You can go to other webinars, but you might only learn a little. I found all of this information on my own, because I took what I learned from college, from conferences, from other webinars and the internet. Skip those steps and join me in writing your picture book with Start to Finish.

<https://www.readersselect.com/picture-book-course-sample>

Thank you,

L.K Dominguez