

Irene's Tip Sheet for Writing Books for Children

1. Join SCBWI (Society for Children's Book Writers & Illustrators). www.scbwi.org
2. "Love. Fall in love and stay in love. Write only what you love, and love what you write. The key word is love. You have to get up in the morning and write something you love, something to live for." - *Ray Bradbury*
3. Get in touch with the child YOU. Find THAT voice. (Editors for children's books are very interested in "voice"!)
4. Read! Read! Read!
5. Check Acknowledgments pages for potential editor and agents.
6. An agent is not a requirement, but you won't be sorry if you have one!
7. Submit your work!
8. While you're waiting.... write the next book.
9. Consider alternate ways of breaking into the market, i.e. magazines.
10. Give yourself permission to write a terrible first draft. (The idea is to put something on paper so you have something to revise!)
11. Don't worry about finding an illustrator. Your publisher will handle that!
12. Children's books, like all books, need a message - but it should be subtle. No preaching or teaching lessons allowed!
13. Read *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Publishing Children's Books* by Harold Underdown.
14. If writing picture books, read by *Writing Picture Books* Ann Whitford Paul.
15. Be the Little Engine that Could.
16. Write with a sense of delight & wonder.
17. Treat writing like brushing your teeth: don't go to bed without doing it.

BONUS: If you're a shy writer (like me!) and need a reader... contact me:
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