

# Children's Book Insider

The Children's Writing Monthly, established 1990\* [Mail@WriteForKids.org](mailto:Mail@WriteForKids.org)

## CONTRIBUTOR GUIDELINES

*Children's Book Insider, The Children's Writing Monthly* is a monthly electronic newsletter for aspiring and published writers of children's and young adult books. Now in its 34th year of publication, CBI is looking for fresh voices to add to our stable of contributors.

Looking for published authors, author/illustrators, agents, editors, and other industry professionals who can contribute content. Unpublished authors and author/illustrators are also welcome to submit a query if they have developed expertise in some area of the children's book writing business and that expertise can benefit other writers.

Articles should be focused on a specific area of the general topic, with several examples and/or "how-to" tips that readers can put to use in their own writing. A step-by-step or checklist approach is also good if it fits the topic. Sidebars with suggested reading lists, links to resources, or a short list of publishers **currently** accepting unsolicited manuscripts and queries in the category of the article are welcome but not necessary.

We are open to any article ideas, but are especially seeking articles in the following categories:

### General craft:

- writing tips for different age groups (character development, sentence structure, pacing, etc.)
- examples of age-appropriate conflicts, problems, and plot obstacles for different age groups  
\*\*\*both of the above articles could focus on one age group (easy readers, chapter books, etc.)  
for the entire article, or compare various age groups
- diversity in children's books (characters, settings, plots, family structures, etc.)
- writing humor for different age groups
- writing in rhyme/lyrical writing
- writing for middle grades and/or young adults (open to any topic)
- writing easy readers and chapter books (especially showing the difference between the two)
- sentence structure/plots for easy readers
- writing faith-based books (fiction and nonfiction)
- developing an original voice

### Writing for magazines:

- how-to articles on writing fiction and nonfiction for magazines
- how to study the magazine market and find where your work fits
- how to take one article and alter it for several publications

## **Nonfiction:**

- tips for writing any kind of nonfiction book (science, history, biography, etc.) Article can focus on one genre.
- writing self-help books for kids
- writing for special needs kids
- how to make nonfiction interesting/exciting for readers
- how to determine the level of information needed in nonfiction books for different age groups
- research tips for nonfiction books and articles

## **Marketing\*:**

- step-by-step process for getting started marketing a self-published book
- how to get book reviews (for self-published and traditionally published authors)
- short (500 word) marketing tips that can be put to use quickly (how to set up a school Skype visit, how to write an engaging blog post, the best times to Tweet, etc.)
- Successful strategies for driving traffic to an author blog or website (a "Here's how I did it" approach)

\* Authors writing marketing articles must have a social media presence of some type that readers can easily find, and their books need to be readily available on Amazon and in stores/libraries. Our readers like to see how the CBI contributors have put their own advice to use in their work, especially when it comes to marketing.

## **Self-publishing:**

- ebook publication (layout tips, marketing, etc.)
- How to find illustrators for your self-published book (print or ebook)
- CURRENT list of resources for self-published authors (printers, illustrators, designers, publicists, etc.)

## **Miscellaneous:**

- writing great query letters (with examples)
- "How I did it": personal accounts of how authors got their first book published and what they learned
- tips for editing own work (cutting words, judging the plot arc, knowing if a nonfiction book covers the best information, etc.)
- How to know when a manuscript is ready to send out
- Finding time to write
- Staying organized with research, tracking submissions, story ideas, etc. (A checklist approach works well for these articles.)

## TERMS:

CBI buys first-time worldwide electronic rights, with exclusivity for the first 90 days. Also requires the right to keep the articles in the back issue archive on [www.WriteForKids.org](http://www.WriteForKids.org) for five years. We reserve the right to include articles in future ebook compilations on specific topics that are given away for free to our members. If an article is chosen to appear in an ebook, the author will be notified and can update or add to his/her bio and links at that time. Aside from the payment for the original article (see below), no further compensation will be paid to the author for any ebook compilations that are given away to CBI members for free. However, should we choose to add an article to an anthology that will be sold on [www.WriteForKids.org](http://www.WriteForKids.org), the author will be notified and additional payment will be given (to be negotiated at that time).

Payment is as follows:

- Articles (average 1200-1800 words, though length is flexible): \$75 plus a six-month subscription to *Children's Book Insider*. After a contributor writes five articles for CBI, their subscription will be converted to a lifetime subscription with no expiration date, but they will still receive \$75 per article written from that point on.
- Pays on publication. Prefers to pay via PayPal.

Authors get a byline and a bio listed in the newsletter with links to their blog, website, etc. Authors may quote excerpts from their books as examples when demonstrating a point in the article, and can provide a cover JPEG of the book to run with the article.

## Queries

Please query Laura Backes at [Laura@writeforkids.org](mailto:Laura@writeforkids.org) (put "CBI query" in the subject line) with the article idea and estimated length, as well as an estimated date of article completion.