

YOUNG AUTHOR

TIPS AND GUIDELINES



Contents

General Information

Tips, Suggestions and Guidelines

For Primary Grades

Story Plans

Checklist

For Intermediate Grades

Young Author Book Outline

Planning a Story

Story Map

Illustration suggestions

Editing guidelines

Rubrics

Evaluation Form

Manuscript Identification Forms



Young Authors

The purpose of the McLean County Unit District No. 5 Young Authors Program is to encourage and recognize student authorship. The district program is part of the statewide effort supported and endorsed by the Illinois Reading Council.



The authorship process begins in the classroom. Many teachers begin the writing process with their students early in the year. Students are involved in brainstorming and information gathering followed by a rough draft version of their manuscript. After revision and editing, a final manuscript is published. Students write fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. In addition to their original writing, they illustrate their text designing a book cover to enhance their work.

Each elementary and middle school in the district is allowed to submit two to five books for district level judging. The number of books submitted from each building is determined by the total enrollment in the school. Sixty to sixty five books are submitted to the district where several authors are selected to represent McLean County Unit District No. 5 at the state Young Author Conference. The authors of the books submitted to the district are invited to a Writer's Workshop in April sponsored jointly with the Normal Public Library. At this event a children's author talks to the participants about writing and the publishing process.

Each book is read and reviewed by judges. The criterion includes originality, creativity, grammar, interest to children, illustrations, and total composition. This review process is coordinated by Bruce Weldy, Director of Elementary Education in Unit 5. At the end of the day, books are selected to represent the district at the Illinois Statewide Young Authors Conference held in May at Illinois State University. This conference emphasizes language as a vehicle for communication with others. The participants are recognized as ambassadors of writing. Their books are read, discussed, and affixed with the official seal of the Young Authors Conference.

The Young Author program, from the classroom to the state conference, provides a plethora of opportunities to encourage and support authorship, a love of books, and skills that will benefit our students for a lifetime.

Each elementary and middle school has a Young Author sponsor who coordinates activities at the building level. Young Author sponsors are:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Benjamin | Annie Lee |
| Cedar Ridge: | Jenny Roop |
| Carlock: | Michele Hanley |
| Fairview: | Becca Blackshire and Britt Davison |
| Fox Creek: | Moe Backe, Kelly Reardon, and Alisha Sudkamp |
| Glenn: | Teresa Uhlman and Jamie Haseman |
| Grove: | Cindy Nourie and Connie Stanczak |
| Hoose: | Kathie Brown |
| Hudson: | Sharon Abner |
| Northpoint: | Andrea Norton |
| Oakdale: | Mary Sue Groff |
| Parkside: | Connie Horvath and Dawn Ludwig |
| Pepper Ridge: | Jennifer Corbly |
| Prairieland: | Britta Armstrong and Amy Lucas |

Our 2014 Ambassadors

- Layla Winn
- Jenna Swingler
- Kendall Macmillan
- Katrina Phillips
- Brady Veal
- Kylie Allen
- Madison Allen
- Grace Witzig
- Mary Manuel
- Cassandra Parent
- Mason Caraway
- Mackenzie Piazza
- Bryce Heiniger
- Natalie Curtis
- Snigdha Garud
- Will Ballad
- Sam Clement
- Avery Melrose
- Sarah Schiebel
- Sandra Le
- Bella Manzo
- Austin Meissner
- Arya Gandhi
- Alex Kowalczyk
- Miranda Hamilton

Sugar Creek:	Karen Showalter
Towanda:	Judy Lancaster and Stacie Finlen
CJHS:	Denise Goben
PJHS:	Julie Nourie
KJHS:	Gina Tenuta
EJHS	Michele Southard

If you have questions contact Bruce Weldy 557-4028 or weldyba@unit5.org.

10 Tips for Young Authors



1. Books should have a sturdy cover with the title, author, and an illustration.
2. Books may include any genre.
3. Books may be any length. Our books have ranged from 8 to 100 pages.
4. Books should include illustrations throughout.
5. Computer illustrations, photographs ... may be used.
6. Two students may co-author/illustrate a book.
7. Creativity is highly prized by our judges.
8. Judges look for descriptive language.
9. Books should be free of grammar, spelling, and typographical errors.
10. Neatness counts. Your book should look visually appealing.

Guidelines for Young Author Stories

- Double space and use 1 ½ inch margins.
- Number pages.
- Typed text at the bottom works best as it compliments child's illustrations.
- Type title page on separate sheet. (Do not include child's name as this will be done on a separate form when child returns his/her book to school).
- Type dedication on a separate sheet.
- Illustrations can be done with markers, chalk, crayons, colored pencils, or may be computer generated.
- Lamination of covers and book bindings will be done at school once the child returns his/her manuscript.

Suggestions from past judges

Use descriptive words

Have a catchy title

Make sure the book has proper grammar

For illustrations use other materials in addition to pens/pencils/crayons, etc.

Make the pictures tell the story as well as the writing

Read your rough draft to the class and ask for advice

If it's a longer book, break it up into parts of chapters



Be creative! Don't give us a story that's noticeably similar to others published.
Include what age it's intended for
Make the title relate to the story
Make sure you haven't copied anyone's idea
Edit more than two times
Be sure to keep us interested in your book
Don't get tired of writing and suddenly end it
You need pictures unless you are very descriptive.
Choose font that matches your story
Make your book neat and clean
Draw pictures or add pictures
Take time on pictures – make them colorful

Young Authors



Kinds of Books

- NON-FICTION
- FAIRY TALES
- MYSTERY
- POETRY
- PLAY
- BIOGRAPHY OR AUTOBIOGRAPHY
- SCIENCE FICTION
- ANIMAL
- COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES

Tips for Authors

- ORGANIZE YOUR IDEAS BEFORE YOU BEGIN TO WRITE
- ILLUSTRATIONS ARE OPTIONAL – BUT HIGHLY RECOMMENDED
- A STRONG, STURDY BINDING IS NECESSARY
- FINAL BOOKS SHOULD BE TYPED
- THE WORK MUST BE YOUR ORIGINAL
- CO-AUTHOR BOOKS ARE ACCEPTABLE
- TRY TO MAKE YOUR BOOK UNIQUE
- USE YOUR OWN IDEAS
- INVOLVE ALL OF YOUR SENSES IN YOUR WRITING
- WRITE ABOUT SOMETHING THAT YOU KNOW ABOUT OR IS IMPORTANT TO YOU!

What Books Will be Judged On



- INTEREST AND APPEAL TO CHILDREN
- ORIGINALITY
- CREATIVITY
- VISUAL QUALITY OF THE BOOK

➤ CONTENT

Parent's Role

- ENCOURAGER
- PRE-WRITING ORGANIZATION
- TYPIST

➤ **TYPING AND BINDING HELP ARE AVAILABLE**

😊 *Have a great time being creative!* 😊

For Primary Grades

My Story Plan

by _____

My story idea:

The big idea or main topic of my story

My story will be:
what kind of feeling my story will have

happy

scary

sad

exciting

other

The events that will happen in
my story are:

I'll make a list of the important things that will happen in the
order that they will happen.

The Setting:

where does my story take place

The characters:

who will be in my story

My grabber sentence:

an interesting sentence to begin my story that will grab the reader's attention

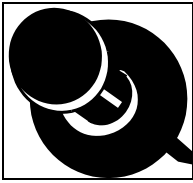
My Editing Checklist

My Name _____

Title of My Story _____

1. All my sentences begin with capital letters.
2. All my sentences end with the correct punctuation (. ? !).
3. I used interesting words in all my sentences.
4. My sentences do not all begin in the same way.
5. I checked my spelling to the best of my ability.

For Intermediate Grades



YOUNG AUTHORS' BOOK OUTLINE

YOUNG AUTHORS

WRITING BOOKS AND STORIES CAN BE A LOT OF FUN. IT IS IMPORTANT TO WRITE ABOUT THINGS THAT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN. THIS FORM WILL HELP YOU GET STARTED WRITING YOUR BOOK. YOU CAN USE THIS FORM ON YOUR OWN OR WITH AN ADULT HELPER.

CHARACTERS

ANIMALS

PEOPLE

CREATURES

THINGS

LIST 2 TYPES OF CHARACTERS YOU MIGHT LIKE TO WRITE ABOUT:

NAMES

LIST 8 NAMES:

SETTING (WHERE THE STORY TAKES PLACE)

CIRCLE ONE:

PAST

PRESENT

FUTURE

EXAMPLES OF SETTINGS

IN A GARDEN
ON A FAR AWAY PLANET
IN A BIG CITY

IN A SMALL TOWN
AT SCHOOL
ON A FARM

IN THE BEDROOM
BY A STREAM
IN THE KITCHEN

NAME 3 POSSIBLE SETTINGS FOR A BOOK YOU WOULD LIKE TO READ:

BEGINNING

THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY IS VERY IMPORTANT. IT CAN SET THE TONE FOR THE WHOLE STORY. MANY STORIES START WITH THE WORDS "ONCE UPON A TIME", BUT THERE ARE OTHER INTERESTING WAYS TO START A STORY: ONE BRIGHT SUNNY MORNING..., EVERY YEAR..., EARLY ONE EVENING..., ONE AFTERNOON IN MRS. WHITE'S CLASSROOM..., IT ALL STARTED AT..., ON MY WAY TO SCHOOL ONE MORNING...

LIST 3 INTERESTING STORY STARTERS:

PROBLEM

ALL GOOD STORIES HAVE A PROBLEM WHICH IS RESOLVED DURING THE STORY. SOME EXAMPLES OF PROBLEMS ARE: FINDING YOUR WAY HOME AFTER GETTING LOST, HAVING A CURSE PUT ON YOU BY A WICKED WITCH, BEING TRAPPED ON A DIFFERENT PLANET, WANTING SOMETHING THAT YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO BUY...

LIST 3 INTERESTING PROBLEMS THAT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO READ ABOUT:

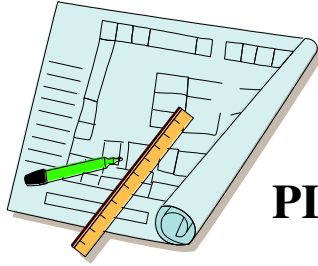
RESOLVING THE PROBLEM IS THE MAIN PART OF YOUR STORY. SELECT TWO OF THE PROBLEMS YOU LISTED ABOVE. IN A FEW SENTENCES TELL HOW SOMEONE MIGHT SOLVE THAT PROBLEM:

ENDING

A GOOD ENDING IS IMPORTANT FOR ANY STORY. MANY FAIRY TALES END WITH THE WORDS, "...AND THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER". HOWEVER NOT ALL STORIES WOULD MAKE SENSE WITH THAT ENDING. SOME EXAMPLES OF ENDINGS FOR STORIES WOULD BE...WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT SUMMER, THEY WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN, WE FINALLY KNEW THAT EVERYTHING WOULD WORK OUT FOR THE BEST, I KNEW I HAD A FRIEND FOREVER...

LIST 3 POSSIBLE ENDINGS FOR A STORY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO READ:

YOU NOW HAVE THE INGREDIENTS FOR A GOOD BOOK!!! YOU WILL JUST NEED TO ORGANIZE THEM INTO YOUR BOOK AND ADD PICTURES. HAVE FUN!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



PLANNING A STORY

Planning a story is almost as important as writing it. Following a plot development outline or a story map can help. Organize your ideas about characters, setting, and plot. This type of story outlining is like a rubber band. It should be able to "stretch" to fit the package it holds.

As you write your story think about the following questions:

1. Does the story have a beginning, middle and an end?
2. Do the paragraphs in the story follow the story outline?
3. Is the main character described clearly?
4. Are minor characters introduced to the plot?
5. Is the main character's problem solved by the end of the story?
6. Is the setting described in clear and colorful adjectives?

SOME POINTERS ON WRITING

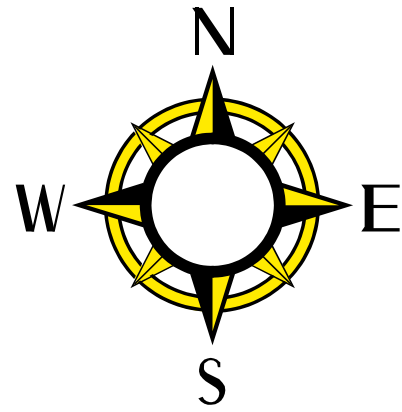
You don't need a lot of equipment to get started writing. A sharp pencil and a blank piece of paper will usually get you going on the writing part. But...you do need to make a commitment to yourself, your parents and teachers, to do the best you can and to finish the project.

Having your own special place to work may be helpful.

Develop a story map and get the ideas down in what writers call a "rough" draft. With this rough draft you change words you don't like and move sentences around. Read your rough draft to several people...ask for comments and revise it.

Try to follow a schedule. Plan the times you will work on the manuscript and stick to them.

STORY MAP



THE SETTING

PLACE

TIME

THE CHARACTERS

THE PROBLEM

THE GOAL

EVENT 1

EVENT 2

EVENT 3

EVENT 4

THE RESOLUTION

ILLUSTRATING YOUR STORY

Illustrating your book is not a requirement but remember illustrations can help tell your story more clearly and help the readers see the story as they read it.

Illustrations should be simple. Try looking through some books that have some good illustrations. This may help with ideas for your own story's illustration.

You might want to try putting your main character in each illustration. Can you find the inch worm on every page in Leo Lionni's Inch By Inch?

Sometimes an illustrator will spread a picture across two pages. This technique tends to help keep the story moving. It also gives you, the illustrator, a large space to help tell the story with pictures. Use all the page - fill it up. One Snowy Day by Ezra Keats and Nonny Hogrogian's One Fine Day are good examples of the author/illustrator making use of the entire page.

Some illustrations are tucked right around the words on a page. Jack Kent, author/illustrator of Little Pup, makes use of the entire page yet he does it in a different way than Keats and Hogrogian.

Take some time to think about illustrations - color, size and spacing can make your book stand out!

Check these books out from your school library or Normal Public Library. Read the stories and pay special note to how the illustrations add to the story.

EDITING YOUR MANUSCRIPT

Good writers edit all their writing. You should always edit what you write. Once you have written your story you are ready to edit it. Edit means you read your story carefully and mark any corrections on your rough copy before you make a final copy.

In addition to spelling and punctuation corrections, you might want to change a paragraph. You may decide you want to add some descriptive details to improve it. This is an important step in editing also. Changing a word if you think of a better one is part of editing also.

After you have read your story carefully and corrected it, call on an adult to give it another "editing job". The final step in editing is copying your manuscript neatly so it can be read by others. Manuscripts can also be typed by "outside" helpers.

Below are some questions to help you edit your work:

1. Look at your main idea sentences in your paragraphs. Do they tell what the paragraphs are about?
2. Are the detail sentences in an order that makes sense?
3. If you used time order words, did you choose the best ones?
4. Did you begin each sentence with a capital letter?
5. Did you use the correct punctuation in each sentence?
6. Did you spell all words correctly?

Young Authors Poster Checklist

All students must receive these guidelines before starting their posters

Standardizing Posters

All posters must be on a **standard size** foam board. You can purchase a “Readi-Board Foam Board,” from the Dollar Tree.

Please do not add a pocket to your poster. Books will have a shelf to sit on in front of each poster.

Please avoid food or other perishable items on your poster.

All posters must have the following information on the front of the poster:

- Author Name, Author School
- Picture
- Book title and short synopsis about the book

Posters must not include personal information, such as:

- Email addresses
- Phone numbers
- Home addresses
- Other personal information

Turning In and Picking Up Posters

Students turn posters in to teachers.

Teachers check posters against guidelines.

Students turn them in early so that there is time to make changes before teachers have to turn them in.

Teachers turn posters in to District Office.

Second check against guidelines.

Teachers turn them in early so that there is time to make changes before they go to the library.

When all posters are collected and correct, NPL will come get them.

Students will not pick up posters at the Young Authors event.

NPL will bring posters back to the District Office for delivery back to schools.

Displaying

Normal Public Library will pick up posters when ready.

Posters will be on display at the NPL for 1 month.