

## 13 Steps of Becoming a Published Picture Book Author

### 1. Join the kidlit community.

- ★ 12x12 Challenge (<https://www.12x12challenge.com/>)
- ★ 12x12 Picture Book Challenge on YouTube  
([https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvG2L\\_2a9goJKaYRWDiSAC-5ExwHM9ldS](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvG2L_2a9goJKaYRWDiSAC-5ExwHM9ldS))
- ★ Big Sur Children's Writing Workshop (<https://www.bigsurchildrenswriters.com/>)
- ★ Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators and Performers (<https://www.canscaip.org/>)
- ★ Children's Book Academy (<https://www.childrensbookacademy.com/>)
- ★ Children's Book Insider (<https://cbiclubhouse.com/>)
- ★ Courage to Create (<https://thewritingbarn.com/courage-to-create/>)
- ★ Good Story Company (<https://www.goodstorycompany.com/>)
- ★ Gotham Writers Workshop (<https://www.writingclasses.com/about/index>)
- ★ Inked Voices (<https://app.inkedvoices.com/>)
- ★ Institute for Writers (<https://www.instituteforwriters.com/>)
- ★ Kidlit Hive (<https://kidlithive.com/>)
- ★ PB Rising Stars (<https://www.pbrisingstars.com/>)
- ★ Picture Book Summit (<https://picturebooksummit.com/>)
- ★ SCBWI (<https://www.scbwi.org/>)
- ★ School of Visual Storytellers (<https://www.svslearn.com/>)
- ★ Storyteller Academy (<https://www.storytelleracademy.com/>)
- ★ The Complete Picture Book Submission System (<https://picturebooksubmissions.com/>)
- ★ The Cuddlefish Academy (<https://cuddlefishacademy.teachable.com/>)
- ★ The Good Ship Illustration Picture Book (<https://www.thegoodshipillustration.com/PB>)
- ★ The Highlights Foundation (<https://www.highlightsfoundation.org/>)
- ★ The Manuscript Academy (<https://manuscriptacademy.com/>)
- ★ The PB Retreat (<https://www.thepbretreat.com/collections>)
- ★ The Writing Barn (<https://thewritingbarn.com/>)
- ★ The Writers Grotto (<https://www.writersgrotto.org/>)
- ★ The Writers' Loft (<https://www.thewritersloft.org/>)
- ★ The Writing Loft (<https://www.thewritingloft.com/>)
- ★ Write for Kids (<https://writeforkids.org/>)

### 2. Subscribe to bloggers/authors who offer webinars and submission opportunities.

- ★ <https://bitsykemper.com/>
- ★ <https://www.ebonylynnmudd.com/courses>
- ★ <https://emmawaltonhamilton.com/>

- ★ <https://hannahholt.com/>
- ★ <https://juliehedlund.com/>
- ★ <https://www.reneelatulippe.com/>
- ★ <https://www.rosiejpova.com/>
- ★ <https://susannahill.com/for-writers/making-picture-book-magic/>
- ★ <https://taralazar.com/storystorm/>
- ★ <https://valeriebolling.com/index.html>

**3. Attend webinars and conferences.**

**4. Read, read, read tons of picture books.**

**5. Read books about the art and craft of writing.**

- ★ *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* by Anne Lamott
- ★ *Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear* by Elizabeth Gilbert
- ★ *Blueprint for a Book* by Jennie Nash
- ★ *Good Prose: The Art of Nonfiction* by Tracy Kidder and Richard Todd
- ★ *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* by Stephen King
- ★ *On Writing Well* by William Zinnser
- ★ *Reimagining Your Nonfiction Picture Book: A step-by-step revision guide* by Kirsten W. Larson
- ★ *Steering The Craft: A Twenty-First-Century Guide to Sailing the Sea of Story* by Ursula K. Le Guin
- ★ *Story Genius* by Lisa Cron
- ★ *The Magic Words* by Cheryl Klein
- ★ *The Nuts and Bolts Guide to Writing Picture Books* by Linda Ashman
- ★ *Thinking Like Your Editor: How to Write Great Serious Nonfiction and Get It Published* by Susan Rabiner and Alfred Fortunato
- ★ *Writing Irresistible Picture Books: Insider Insights Into Crafting Compelling Modern Stories for Young Readers* by Mary Kole
- ★ *Writing Kidlit 101: A Self-Guided Course* by Victoria J. Coe and Cheryl Lawton Malone
- ★ *Writing Picture Books Revised and Expanded Edition: A Hands-On Guide From Story Creation to Publication* by Ann Whitford Paul

**6. Write. Write. Write. Participate in reputable award contests.**

- ★ 50 Precious Words (<https://viviankirkfield.com/category/50preciouswords-writing-contest/>)
- ★ Nonfiction Ninja Writing Contest (<https://www.nffest.com/>)
- ★ SCBWI Contests (<https://www.scbwi.org/awards-and-grants>)
- ★ #SUNWRITEFUN (<https://www.karengreenwald.com/contests>)
- ★ PB Party Fest (<https://mindyalyseweiss.com/2023-pbparty-annual-contest/#>)

- ★ Halloweenie Contest (<https://susannahill.com/for-writers/contests/>)
- ★ Valentiny Writing Contest (<https://susannahill.com/for-writers/contests/>)
- ★ Holiday Writing Contest (<https://susannahill.com/for-writers/contests/>)
- ★ Spring Fling Writing Contest (<https://sites.google.com/view/springflingwritingcontest/main>)
- ★ Kidlit411 Overview of Awards and Contests  
(<https://www.kidlit411.com/2016/01/kidlit411-contest-awards.html?m=1>)

**7. Join or start a critique group.**

**8. Subscribe to the free children's newsletter via <https://www.publishersweekly.com/> to stay up-to-date on what is being published.**

**9. Type the picture book(s) you love into a doc and take notes on the pagination.**

It makes a huge difference to see a published picture book in manuscript form.

**10. Get a professional freelancer/editor/agent critique.**

- ★ <https://www.deborahhalverson.com/>
- ★ <https://www.instituteforwriters.com/>
- ★ <https://www.karengreenwald.com/for-writers>
- ★ <https://kirsten-w-larson.com/>
- ★ <https://www.leilaboukarim.com/>
- ★ <https://www.literallylynnemarie.com/>
- ★ <https://manuscriptacademy.com/>
- ★ <https://www.pbrisingstars.com/>
- ★ <https://www.rateyourstory.org/>
- ★ <https://www.storytelleracademy.com/>
- ★ <https://thewritingbarn.com/>

**11. Decide if you want to query an agent or a publisher (or self-publish) and learn the art of proper querying.**

**12. If you want to find an agent first, research agents, their wishlists and requirements for submissions:**

<https://www.manuscriptwishlist.com/>

<https://www.publishersmarketplace.com/>

<https://querytracker.net/>

**13. If you want to submit to publishers that accept unagented authors, find publishers here:**

<https://bitsykemper.com/tag/list-of-publishers/>

*Don't be discouraged.*

*Do your research.*

*Never stop learning.*

*Never stop believing in you and your stories.*

*Got a no?*

*Take it as practice for all the people who might not like your story once it is published.*

*Once your story is out in the world, you cannot take it back.*

*People will have reactions.*

*Good and bad ones.*

*Every no is practice of what might come in the future:*

*A published book & people's reactions.*

*You got this.*

*It takes one yes.*

*One.*

*(Inspired by Ivan Taurisano, assistant editor at Sourcebooks)*