**WRITING NONFICTION FOR KIDS**

Florida Christian Writers Conference 2022

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MARKETS AND TYPES OF NONFICTION WRITING FOR KIDS

1. PERIODICALS

* Print and online magazines and newspapers (anything printed periodically on a regular schedule)
* Publishers of periodicals need lots of content, such as articles, interviews, devotionals, profiles or biographies, quizzes, crafts, recipes, puzzles, activities, Bible stories, and fillers

2. EDUCATION MARKETS

* Curricula and/or supplemental teaching materials for public school, private school, homeschool, Sunday School, and VBS
* Educational publishers need all the same content as periodical publishers, plus lesson plans, games, workbooks, scripts, and take-home sheets

3. BOOKS

* Nonfiction books are produced for all age levels, from board books to young adult
* Author of more than 200 nonfiction books for kids, Melissa Stewart, has identified 5 types of nonfiction books for kids: Traditional, Browse-able, Narrative, Expository, Active

CATEGORIES OF NONFICTION BOOKS FOR KIDS

* Take note that the word counts in the following categories are for nonfiction books only. The word counts for fiction books for kids are different in many categories.
* All word counts are estimates; you will find exceptions.

Baby Books (0-25 words) Babies ☺

Board Books (0-300 words) Ages 0-4

Picture Books (500-2000 words) Ages 4-9

→ Some nonfiction picture books go up to 3000 words.

→ Sometimes the word count includes the back matter.

Early Readers (50-2500 words) PreK-Grade 3, Ages 4-9

Middle Grade & Young Adult (5K-70K words) Grades 3-12, Ages 8-18

→ The word counts for nonfiction MG & YA vary widely depending on the type of book and age level. Look up the lengths of books similar to the book you want to write on [www.arbookfind.com](http://www.arbookfind.com).

5 TYPES OF NONFICTION BOOKS FOR KIDS

* “Five Kinds of STEM-themed Nonfiction Books for Kids” by Melissa Stewart at [www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)
* *5 Kinds of Nonfiction: Enriching Reading and Writing Instruction with Children’s Books* by Melissa Stewart and Marlene Correia

1. TRADITIONAL

Survey books; “all about” books; overviews of a topic; uses expository writing style; *About Birds* by Catherine Sill and John Sill

2. BROWSE-ABLE

Lavishly illustrated; short blocks of text; reading doesn’t have to be chronological; uses expository writing style; *Eyewitness: Rocks and Minerals* by Dorling Kindersley

3. NARRATIVE

True stores that convey an experience; chronological; uses the techniques of fiction (Creative Nonfiction); *Warbler Wave* by April Pulley Sayre

4. EXPOSITORY

Narrowly focused topic; creative presentations; innovative formats; *Pink is for Blobfish* by Jess Keating and David DeGrand

5. ACTIVE

Browse-able; highly interactive; teaches skills through activity; *Brain Games: The Mind-blowing Science of Your Amazing Brain* by Jennifer Swanson

NOTABLE AUTHORS OF NONFICTION FOR KIDS

* Tama Fortner (Christian faith)
  + Indescribable series with Louie Giglio: devotions and activity books
* Michelle Nietert (biblical mental health)
  + *God, I Feel Sad* releasing April 2023 as part of the “Bringing Big Emotions to a Bigger God” series
* Karen Whiting (devotionals, craft books)
* Jennifer Swanson (science)
* Gail Gibbons (zoology, geography, history)
* Jean Fritz (history)
* Laurie Wallmark (women in STEM biographies)
* Lesa Cline-Ransome (biographies)
* Add your favorites!

**RESOURCES FOR WRITING NONFICTION FOR KIDS**

100 Most Frequent Words in Books for Beginning Readers: http://en.copian.ca/library/research/100most/100most.pdf.

Accelerated Reader Book Find: [www.arbookfind.com](http://www.arbookfind.com). Look up word counts, publication information, and ATOS reading levels of published books.

Christensen, Evelyn. <http://evelynchristensen.com/index.html>. Up-to-date lists of children’s magazines and educational markets, plus articles and tips for writers of nonfiction for children.

Dolch Sight Words: <https://sightwords.com/sight-words/dolch/#lists>.

How Stuff Works. [www.howstuffworks.com](http://www.howstuffworks.com). Good for idea generating and finding explanations of how the world works.

Institute for Writers. *2023 Edition Magazine Market Guide for Children’s Writers.*

Jones, Amy, editor. *Children’s Writer’s and Illustrator’s Market 33rd Edition*. Writer’s Digest Books, 2022.

Kidlit411: [www.kidlit411.com](http://www.kidlit411.com). This blog contains a wealth of information and a curated list of blog posts and articles by topic. Scroll down to the “NONFICTION” icon.

Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI): [www.scbwi.org](http://www.scbwi.org).

Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). *The Book: Essential Guide to Publishing for Children 2020.* \*Available to members only.

The Kid Should See This. [www.TheKidShouldSeeThis.com](http://www.TheKidShouldSeeThis.com). “Smart videos for curious minds of all ages.” Good for generating ideas and/or finding videos and articles related to your topic.

Underdown, Harold. “Writing, Illustrating, and Publishing Children’s Books: The Purple Crayon.” <https://www.underdown.org/> This website contains a wealth of information.

“What Are Readability Formulas?”

<https://readabilityformulas.com/articles/what-are-readability-formulas.php>.

“What Is ATOS?” <https://www.renaissance.com/edwords/atos/>.