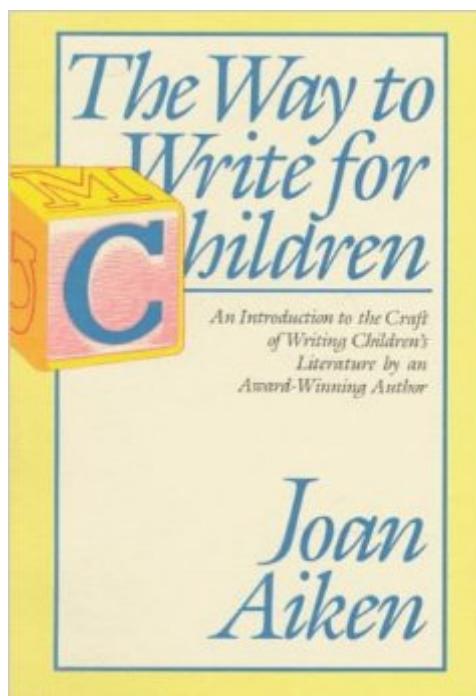


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# The Way To Write For Children



## **Synopsis**

Revised and updated, this essential and practical guide by an award-winning children's author explains how to write books for children, from where to look to inspiration to practical advice on how to create characters and structure a plot.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

A friendly warning to readers: Even though "The Way to Write for Children" is very precise about what SHOULD NOT be in children's books, it is quite the opposite about what SHOULD be in them. On the very first page of the text, Joan Aiken bluntly informs readers that "there is no \_one\_ way in which to write for children." In another chapter, she explains the futility of dividing child readers into age groups and trying to target a single age. Throughout the book, she gives examples of what she considers poor children's literature--and not without good reason. Aiken is not a writing teacher who says, "Do this and this and this, but not that." She is more like a mentor whose gut instinct about these matters is so finely developed that she can tell what will work and what will not, even though she may not be able to explain why. Yet she does try! Those who like their writing manuals well organized into clean-cut sections and subsections will not appreciate her attempts, but those who understand that she is truly sincere may dig deeper and find unexpected treasure. You'll enjoy this book more if you have read as much children's literature as Aiken has and are familiar with the authors and titles that she liberally "name drops" throughout the text. I bought my copy three years ago and understood about 10% of it. Then I started studying some of the books she

used as examples: "Daddy-Long-Legs", "Poems of Childhood", "The Chronicles of Narnia", "The Hobbit", "I Am the Cheese", etc. With that, her words took on new life for me. I can compare reading "The Way to Write for Children" to listening to a wise and remarkable friend speak--but not lecture--about children's literature. It is definitely not writing school, but the education I receive is superior.

Beautifully written and full of real insight, this astonishing little book will do more for the creative flow of aspiring writers than most books in the field. Its focus is on children's writing, and it offers the wisdom of an outstanding and very successful author. Her love of children's writing is contagious, her advice is sound, and this excellent help will inspire many generations to come. In a league of its own.

Having only recently been a child, I found this to be a wonderful book. It explains how children's books differ from adult books and elaborates on different types of children's books. This is not a book of how to write and use grammar; it rather explains how to tell a story. This advice is amazingly accurate and was more helpful to me than several other books I have read. The book is brief but well-written and reads smoothly to the end.

Some how-to books are of marginal value, but a few, such as this, are of negative worth. The brief, rambling stream-of-consciousness is worse than useless for a beginning writer. She makes statements such as (Writer's Block) "There is nothing much you can do about it." and "The teenage novel is here to stay, you can't turn back history." The first is unhelpful and untrue, and the second has no foundation, except a weak truism. (And I was picking two statements, skimming casually.) Then she says you can't write a teenage novel unless you are a teen, or in "constant daily contact" with them. Huh? I was going to give this to the library sale, but I just now decided to throw it away. Why would I foist it on someone else?

This book has useful info. Although it was written in the 90's the information is still relevant today 2010.

I bought this book based on the five-star reader review from December 2000 and I was sorely disappointed and wishing I'd saved my \$10 plus shipping! This book is outdated, sketchy (barely touches on YA novels) and very British. Her writing examples rely heavily on Dickens and the like,

which didn't exactly bring me up to speed on the last 20 years of children's literature. I'm still searching for a good guide to writing children's fiction that is in print!

sorta my bible.

gee, I bought this book to help me learn to write for children, not to be talked down to by the author...which is what happened. A shoddy, simplistic, overly "this is how I believe it to be" approach that lacks the the clarity and educational value I was looking for when I purchased it. Dated examples and poor type face and formatting doesn't help. I'd avoid this one.

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