

## Types of Children's Fiction

1. Picture Books: ages 2 to 5. These contain little text and illustrations on every page.
2. Picture Story: ages 6 to 9. More text, fewer pictures, much action in the story. These need to have a definite plot line, action that leads the main character to a goal. These are usually books read by an adult to a child.
3. Easy-to-Read, for ages 6 to 9 (grades 1-3), designed for children to read on their own. Book manuscripts will be 1500 to 10,000 words. Characterized by a definite plot line, a small number of characters, a strong hook in the first sentence, limited vocabulary, simple sentence structure.
4. Young Readers: ages 7 to 14. Many of these are books written for only girls or only for boys. Strong plot, clear characters.
5. The Teens: ages 10 to 15. Nearly any topic; boy-meets-girl stories are difficult to sell.

## Characteristics of Children's Fiction

1. Single viewpoint. Tell the story from the point of view of the main character; everything that happens should be given through the eyes, senses, feelings, thoughts of the main character. And the main character should be the one with whom the audience can best identify. Few successful writers shift point of view in a children's story. "In juvenile fiction, it is permissible to break viewpoint once in a while, but the reason for it must be very, very good."--Lee Wyndham
2. The power in the story belongs to a child or to children. Do not have an adult resolve the problems of plot; do not give wisdom only to adults.
3. The stories SHOW rather than TELL: and the showing is in graphic, dramatic terms.
4. Plots that call for a villain have a strong, cunning villain who makes life difficult for the hero. Hero and villain are almost equally matched--and villain is more powerful in some ways.
5. The opening contains a powerful hook.
6. In short stories or picture books, the hero attains goals but does not necessarily undergo change. In longer fiction, the main character undergoes a change. Characters learn something significant, become more mature.
7. Plots are clear; the hero resolves problems of plot through ingenuity; luck plays no major part in plot resolution.