

## Write your picture storybook

This resource provides tips to help you write a picture storybook.

Use this resource with the Make a picture storybook resource and the resources for Australian children's book illustrators **Ron Brooks, Leigh Hobbs, Alison Lester, Elaine Russell and Shaun Tan.**

## Ideas and inspiration

- **Character – Who is the story about?**  
Remember the reader, your intended audience as you invent the character. Your character could be real – maybe you or someone you know. Or your character could be an imaginary, a person, an animal or a creature with special powers? Give your character personality. What does your character look like, what does your character wear, where does your character live, who are your character's friends and what does your character do?

- **Storyline – What happens in your story?**

You will need a good storyline to keep your reader interested. What happens to the character in your story? It might be a story about something interesting that happened in real life - take an event or a family holiday and describe a funny aspect. Alternatively it could be an imaginary adventure or event.

- **Place or location - Where is your story set?**

Does your story take place in a real or imaginary place? What does this place look like? What important information will your readers need to know about this place?

For inspiration for your story you may wish to reflect on your childhood experiences, as many established authors do. Think about how Alison Lester and Elaine Russell have used their family life as the starting point.

## Rough Draft

Before you start writing, think about the beginning, middle and end of your story.

Alison Lester suggests you keep your story short. Tell it to another person before you write it.

- Start your writing. Choose your words carefully, and make them appropriate for young readers (or the audience you have nominated).
- Write your story using good English. Use a minimum of words and check your spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Reread and edit your work, do you need to delete, add or move word groups around to improve the way it flows?
- Have another person also edit your rough draft. Is it too long; is it interesting, does the story make sense?
- Make the changes and keep a copy of all the drafts. Date them clearly.
- Develop a working title for your story. You may change this later.

## Manuscript

When your final draft is checked, changed and completed you are ready to create your manuscript. This is the final version of your book, before publishing.

- Your manuscript will be 8 pages long. Think about how will divide your story into 8 separate pages. What is the main idea or message on each page, and how will the reader follow the sequence of ideas?
- Consider how the pictures will help to communicate the story. Use the Storyboard template to help work out how the pictures and words in your story will work together. The Storyboard template will also help you with the layout of your manuscript.

## Author/Illustrator biography

Look at other author/illustrator biographies. They are often found on the inside or back cover of books.

Your biography should introduce you to your reader. It could include the year you were born, where you live (not your actual address) and a sentence about your family. Briefly describe your hobbies, any pets you have and what you like doing