

Publishing Tips for Young Authors and Illustrators:

Each Child Proofreads, Edits, and Publishes an End-of-Year Hardbound Book!

Publishing Tips:

Our Kindergarten Publishing Company is much more laid back and forgiving than most. We can fix any problem with white "Oops Tape" or white stick-on labels! So relax, breathe deeply, be flexible, and enjoy nurturing and celebrating individual young writers. Kindergarten writing is...well... "Kindergartenish!"

Kindergarten Publishing allows us to motivate writers, honor the children's work, extend their concepts of text features, and expand their ideas about what constitutes quality work as writers and illustrators. We let the children first develop their stories in six-page enlarged fold-a-books or a six-page kid writing draft on lined kid-writing paper. The chosen story draft is first proofread by the child, then discussed and edited with an adult before the final version is reprinted, illustrated, published, and celebrated.

Create a special publishing center space with fine point Sharpie® pens (black and assorted colors) and quality colored pencils (we like Berol PRISMACOLOR® thick lead). Reserve these for use only in this center. (Consider keeping everything in a writing tote which can be put up when not in use!) Ideally, always have a knowledgeable adult monitoring the center with no more than four students at a time. It helps children to stay focused if the center's table (or tables) is set aside for PUBLISHING only. Remind the children that only serious writers and illustrators doing quality work are invited to stay.

Ask each child to proofread the rough draft book to be published. They can fill out the proofreading checklist and review it with an adult.

Have an editing conference (see guidelines and checklist for editing).

Discuss the dedication page and to whom they want to dedicate their book. Invite the child do a sample of this page before they inscribe the information into



their final book. You might want to show all of the children samples from children's literature and from previous students' work.

After each child has written, illustrated, proofread, discussed, and edited a six-page story (taken from the book-making center or from their writing notebooks), he or she can choose to have it published in a blank bare book which the prolific kid writer may proudly rewrite.

For less-experienced learners and special-needs students, it may be necessary for the teacher or volunteer to take dictation for the rough draft, guiding the child with questions, helping her create a personally-meaningful story. We provide **as much or as little support (scaffolding) as is needed** for the child to feel successful. **These students may choose to have the "publishing crew" rewrite the words** of their draft into the published book, either in black pen or pencils for the child to trace over. A volunteer with good handwriting can simply copy the text, using a black fine-point Sharpie® permanent marker, onto the pages of the blank book, leaving space for the child to illustrate. (Final language may also be provided from a word processor and glued onto the book.)

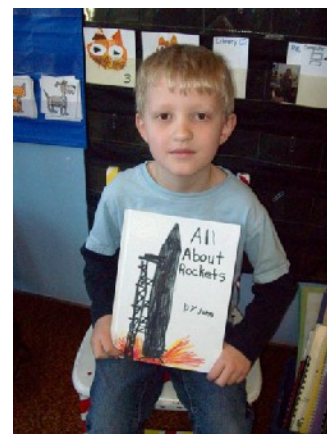
Once at the actual publishing center, we carefully guide each child as he or she prints the title of his or her book (capital letters at the beginning of most words!) across the top of the book and his or her name on the bottom half of the book cover. (Again, with special-needs children who are still developing writing confidence, we may print the title in pencil first and invite the child to carefully trace over the print with a permanent black marker, or the adult "scribe" may print the title.)

Focus attention on the cover: detailed illustrations with a variety of colors make an attractive book! Explore the covers of mentor texts for ideas; talk about what makes an inviting cover. Monitor the illustrations on the cover, **reminding children to leave white space around the text.**

Take a photo of the child and his or her book as soon as they have finished the front cover for the **"About the Author" page** which we tape on the inside back cover.

You may also want to review with the children **"What Makes a Quality Illustration."** Keep a copy of the document in the center's tote.

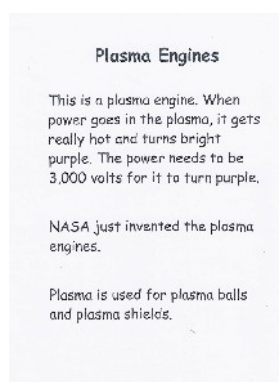
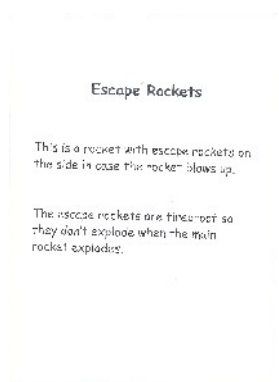
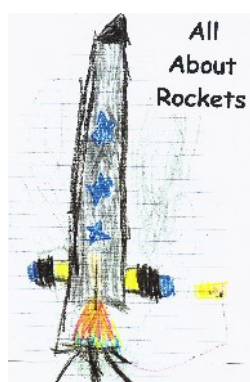
If the story is so long that it fills all the inside pages, children can do their "The end" page on the back of the book. (This is another great teaching moment to talk about front and back cover, text features, end pages, dedications, and publishing details.)



Encourage thoughtful detail on every page of the illustrations, asking questions to stretch the child's thinking. Examples: "What else might you see in the sky or on the ground?" "What kind of clothes is she wearing?" "How can you show us...?"

We recommend that every child be given the same size of six-page chunky bare book or whatever final publishing format is being used. (Keep it simple!)

For very ambitious writers, we worked with any interested parents to encourage in-depth projects of the children's passions throughout the year; e.g. one student who wrote quantities of information and did detailed illustrations about rockets (over eight weeks), page after page in his writing journal, was encouraged to make a 21-page nonfiction book of rockets with editing layout help from parents. Another child who chose to write a chapter book day after day during writing workshop time (for again almost six weeks) was asked if he'd like to make it into a book. His mother took his rough draft home and typed out the 21-page story in six different chapters. We simply taped the text into a blank bare book (9 ½" x11") for the student to illustrate. Give prolific writers a cognitive challenge.



After a child has completed his published book, let him practice reading it to an adult before sitting in the author's chair and sharing it with the whole class. The child always has the option of reading it himself or asking the teacher to read it (and we adults read these books with powerful pauses and dramatic intonation).



The teacher's role during "author's chair" sharing is to model how to give positive feedback and ask relevant questions. Invite the author to call on five students for comments or questions after children have demonstrated they know how to honor the young writer (i.e. I like the way you...My favorite part is...How did you decide...?) They should be very familiar with who?, what?, where?, when?, why?, and how? questions. (Read "Sitting in the Author's Chair," by Bobbi Fisher.)

Our kindergarten-authored books (in process) are kept in a special book bin titled "Kindergarten Authors" until they are completed. Then they are displayed on the "new books" library display shelves for all to enjoy—and they do! Children treat these books with great awe, care, and respect.

Anticipate that some children will be very quick and focused, and will finish illustrating their published book in a few days. Other children will ask to stay in at recess time and may take over a week to finish due to the quality and detail of their work. Some children will simply need much more support than others.



We make color copies of a few of the books to inspire next year's writers! These books in first draft and final version are one way we document meeting rigorous Common Core State Standards in kindergarten writing. Most of our kid-published books are narrative or informational stories.

Here are guidelines for designing the page "About the Author and Illustrator" for a Chunky Bare Book 8.3"x6" (These are purchased at www.barebooks.com, item #3602 ~ \$1.65 each.)

Center the photo of the student and place at the top of the last page

Create a document for the bio using this format with no spaces between lines

Center all text with margins 5½ inches wide

Print "About the Author and Illustrator" in Comic Sans 16

Print author's name in Comic Sans 22 Bold

Print the bio of the author (from interview questions for "About the Author and Illustrator") in Comic Sans 16 up to six lines long. If the bio is longer, decrease the size of the font.



Published books are featured on the main kindergarten library shelf for children to read again and again.

See Additional Documents from:

Chapter 9 of *Kindergarten Writing and the Common Core*

Consider Dedication and Publication Pages and Book Spines

Kindergartners Become Authors and Illustrators

Interview Questions for "About the Author and Illustrator"

Kindergarten Writers Carefully Illustrate Their Book Covers

Great Drawing, Writing, and Word Work Resources

Our Pictures and Words Tell a Story

Kindergarten Authors and Illustrators Decorate Their End Pages

Kindergarten Writing and the Common Core: Joyful Pathways to Accelerated Literacy (book and CD), Nellie Edge, updated 2014.

See also Nellie Edge's Pinterest Board: [Publishing Kid Writing Books](#)