

Getting Out of Slushville! Publishing your children's books.

- I. **Have a clear vision of your goal.**
 - A. Read! Read! Read! (Especially recent books to get a view of the current market—post 2006.)
 - B. Familiarize yourself with genres, authors, series, trends, and kids. Visit libraries and bookstores.
 - C. **Develop a vision** of yourself as a writer. And ask: *what knowledge do I need* for this new career?

- II. Prepare yourself for your new career.
 - A. Write! Write! Write!
 - B. Research your career. What are big issues in children's lit today? Which authors push the envelope?
 - C. **Join a critique group and professional organizations** like SCBWI, RWA, SFWA, etc.
 - D. Attend conferences, poetry readings, author talks.

- III. Prepare your family for your new career.
 - A. Become a business. (Set your working hours.)
 - B. See your tax preparer. (Know what you can write off prior to and after getting published.)
 - C. Work with family to define the parameters of **your new job**. (No interruptions unless blood is drawn.)

- IV. Submitting manuscripts.
 - A. Use an online manuscript tracking system. (Some are free, or very inexpensive.)
 - B. Telephone publishers (& agents) to double check names and receptivity for unsolicited submissions.
 - C. Submit simultaneously to multiple publishers and agents.
 - D. Write withdrawal letters to other editors/agents if manuscripts are accepted elsewhere.
 - E. Have several mss circulating. (**Write more while you wait!**)

- V. Rejection.
 - A. **Don't take it personally!** Have another round of publishing houses/agents targeted.
 - B. Update your tracking system and mail out again...if it does not need revision.
 - C. ****If more than one editor/agent says something similar about the ms., revise first!**
 - D. Read between the lines...if an editor/agent says your story doesn't fit their needs, can you make it fit?
REVISE & RESUBMIT— only if you think you can truly now meet the company's needs.
 - E. Pull out all rejections for a story, study them, and regroup. See something you didn't see before?

- VI. Develop "a working relationship" with an editor/agent prior to being picked up. (Some things to do.)
 - A. Try to provide something the editor/agent is looking for. Don't waste time trying to sell *your* idea if you are unwilling to adapt to an editor's/agent's needs. **Get known as being open and receptive.**
 - B. Request permission to continue submitting when "the unsolicited sign" goes up—esp. if you already have a working relationship with an editor/agent.
 - C. Take note when an editor/agent you've been wooing wins awards, gets promoted, etc. Congratulate them.