

CREATE and PUBLISH a BOOK



Published by:

**free kids
Books**

CC-BY-SA

Create and Publish a Book

Create and Publish a Book

A simple guide to creating a book for children.

Published by Red Sky Ventures

Created by Free Kids Books October © 2019

This work is licensed under the
Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License, CC-BY-SA
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

Any use of this material must be attributed to:
Free Kids Books – <http://www.freekidsbooks.org>

Contact the Creator
danielle@redskyventures.org

More books like this one are available at
<http://www.freekidsbooks.org>



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	4
LESSON 1. SOFTWARE.....	5
LESSON 2. IMAGE AND PAGE SIZES.....	9
LESSON 3 SOURCES OF INFORMATION.....	11
LESSON 4 WRITING.....	13
LESSON 5. ILLUSTRATING.....	15
LESSON 6. FORMATTING.....	17
LESSON 7 FINISHING TOUCHES.....	19
LESSON 8 EDITING.....	20
LESSON 9. PLATFORMS	22
LESSON 10 PUBISH YOUR WORK.....	25



INTRODUCTION

This book is a step by step guide to creating and publishing a book for and by children and can be used as a class lesson by teachers.

While there are many options and methods to use for publishing, this guide explains the following methods and processes:

1. Using free open-source software to create a book;
2. Writing, illustrating, and formatting processes;
3. Publishing on Amazon KDP or Lulu, or using a local printer.

Open source software is chosen since it is freely accessible and does not need to be paid for. Publishing on Amazon or Lulu or with a local printer is also free.

While notes are provided for other methods, these are the primary resources that are explained in this book.

This book covers the process of writing a book in the following steps:

- 1) Software
- 2) Set up the page size
- 3) Source and research your content
- 4) Create your text
- 5) Create your images
- 6) Format the book to your desired look and layout (can be done concurrently with creating the text and images)
- 7) Create the cover, title page, about page, attribution page or bibliography (if applicable), and book details
- 8) Edit your work (NEVER SKIP!)
- 9) Choose your publishing platform
- 10) Publish!
- 11) Rinse and repeat!!!

LESSON 1. SOFTWARE

To write a book you'll need some document creation software.

Word processing software is recommended when starting out as it's easier to learn than desktop publishing packages, and more easily available in open source.

We recommend OpenOffice for creating books, as it is an open-source versatile (and free) program for creating documents. Microsoft Office can also be used.

To Install Open Office:

Go to <https://www.openoffice.org/download>, download the appropriate version (PC , Mac, or Linux), and install the software (follow the normal procedure as appropriate for your operating system).



For creating a book, OpenOffice has the following programs:

OpenOffice Writer

This is perfect for books that are mostly text and inline or positioned images on the page. Suitable for some picture books that have one image related to text on the same or opposite page. This format is also perfect for textbooks or non-fiction books since there is many auto functions like heading levels, numbering, contents, and indexes.

OpenOffice Draw

This is perfect for books which have an interaction between the images and text, it is best for most picture books, or full-bleed books.

Each page can be created as a picture, it is a separate entity, and the images and text do not wrap from page to page. This format is suitable for books with lots of images and less text, or complex relationships between the image and text layout. If using Microsoft Office, Powerpoint has some similar functions to OpenOffice Draw.



Output Required:

Word processing software is not transportable. That means it can change when you move the document from one computer to the next, for example when fonts are not installed. To publish a book we need a format that is both transportable and not editable.

Once you have created a document, you can export directly to a portable document format (pdf) for printing or distribution as

an ebook or convert it to another transportable format.

PDF – Portable document format or pdf output is the simplest and best for print books and for simple ebook sharing. The page in most cases appear exactly as it is created and will print the same. It does not change from computer to computer (usually) and while many viewers have some simple edit functions is not generally editable. PDFs can be optimized for size (for digital) or for print (retain the maximum image sizes).

Epub – an epub is a preferred format for digital *text based* books and usually preferred for mobile reading now days. Epubs can be free-flow or fixed layout. Again the big advantage of an epub is text wrap for text based books.

Mobi – Mobi is the kindle digital format and is a kindle version of an epub. Once a book is available in pdf, a mobi can be created on kindle's free software.

Image Creation and Manipulation Software

For creating or manipulating images you will need some kind of graphics software. While Adobe Photoshop is one of the industry standards and a name you've probably heard, it's also relatively expensive. GIMP is a good open source (free) alternative graphics program for complex graphics and image manipulation, and OpenOffice draw for many other graphics functions and cover creation. Canva is another great free source for creating graphics.

Begin Creating:

To start your book, open a new “text” or “drawing” file, or open one of our templates, here

<https://freekidsbooks.org/fkb-book-templates/>

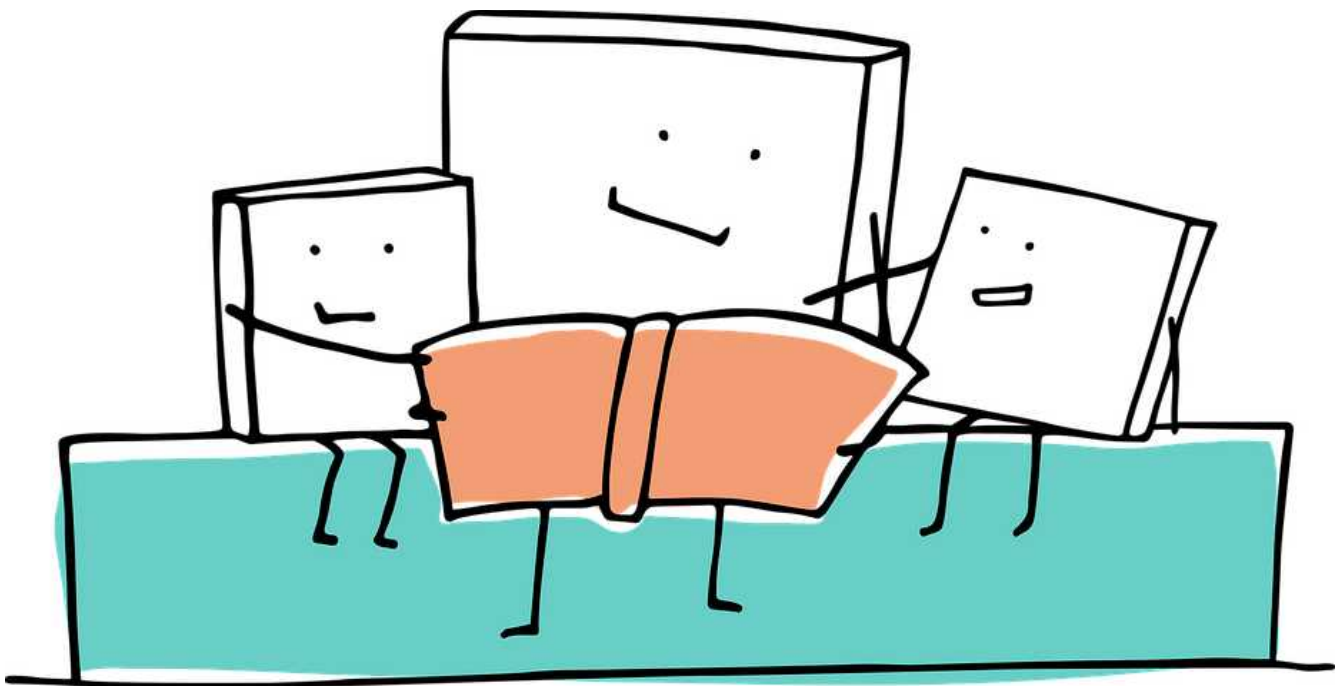
1

Save the file with an appropriate name.

Hint, you may create different versions, it helps to include the date at the end in YYYYMMDD format for sorting and file names are better with _ or – instead of spaces to help computers read them better.

Eg. Create_a_book-20221012-FKB.odt

Hint: Save regularly when you are creating your content, as this way if the computer or the program for some reasons crashes you will not have lost much work.



LESSON 2. IMAGE AND PAGE SIZES

Page sizes

Before you start creating your content for a book, you need to consider your page size. If you are creating content with images, it helps to create the page size before you start.

If you plan to publish, when selecting a page size, you should consider a size that is available from your publishing platform.

We recommend US Letter portrait for children's books, primarily as it is the most used so most transportable, that is, most print on demand publishers provide US Letter. It is also a nice size for reading, and can be easily resized into an A4 or A5. If you want to print via a local printer contact them to find out their options. In UK or EU countries A4 or A5 may be preferential.

If your book is in landscape, the options online are a little limited, only custom sizes, with a maximum width of 8.5 inches are available in limited printing at Amazon, other print on demand have a few limited sizes, and a local printer might have more options. You may want to look at your publishing platform before choosing a page size (see more in chapter 9).

Image Sizes

For print books and for many print on demand platforms, images must be a minimum of 300dpi.

For digital books, you can choose to reduce the file size to make it easier to download. If you are using OpenOffice, this is best to be done in the “export as a pdf” process, where dpi and compression size can

be set. Reducing the file size for digital distribution can also be done very effectively by compressing the pdf after creation, for example www.ilovePDF.com compress pdf function is a good option for reducing pdf file size for transportability.

Header and Footer

For documents (eg. odt) it is easy to place a header and footer in your book via format page. Usually it is nice to include your title on the header and your name and a page number on the footer.

For OpenOffice Draw (odg), including a page number, header, or footer has to be created as text and then copied onto each page. The best way to do this is to create a basic page layout at the beginning of your document creation process, and then use “insert duplicate slide”, to copy the slide template.



LESSON 3 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

When you research your book there are some sources of information that are free to copy and include, and others which are copyright and can only be quoted. Additionally when you create your own content you need to think about asserting your own copyright on the title page (see more in chapter 7).

Public Domain Content

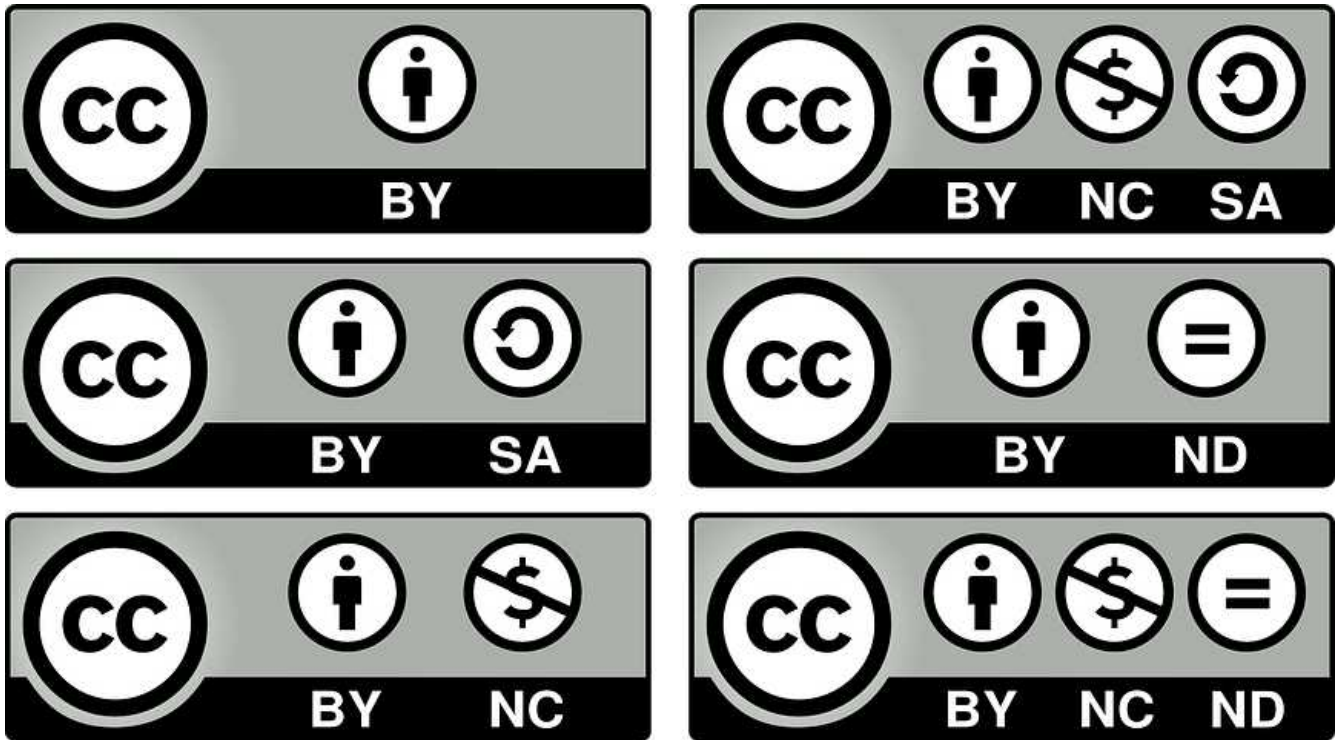
Public domain work can be used in any manner, without attribution. It is open content and free for everyone to use. Most of the classic fairy tales and folk tales are in the public domain, and many free image sites provide public domain content.

Creative Commons Content

Content in the creative commons is released under a number of different types of license, the most common are CC-BY-SA and CC-BY-NC, or combinations thereof. For the second, NC means you may only use it for non-commercial projects. Also a CC license that contains 'ND' means you may not make derivatives – so it cannot be used in a new creative project.

Please note, when using creative commons material with “SA”, the license clearly states any new material created **MUST BE** released in the same or similar manner (i.e CC-BY-SA or CC-BY-NC or CC-ND-NC etc), and for “BY” attribution to the original creator must always be provided.

More information on creative commons can be found at <https://www.creativecommons.org>



Copyright Content

Copyright content cannot be used without express permission by the owner. The exception to this is quoting short passages with reference, which is attributed to fair use.



LESSON 4 WRITING

Whether you decide to use the text editor or drawing program in OpenOffice, or another software, it is usually easiest to create the text in a document format first (the text editor). However you may choose to start with one of our drawing templates and create the text in drawing format as you go.

Fiction

If you're creating a fictional book think about the plot, the problems the characters solve, the message, and the character's attributes. Plan out your story, and get some feedback during the writing process.

Non-Fiction

For non-fiction books, research your topics carefully. If you're creating a book for early grades, pick a fun topic and remember to use simple terms suitable for your audience's age range. If you are writing for peers consider you're own interests and needs.

Audience

Most important when writing is to think about who you are writing for and what age group or interests they have.

Feedback

Don't be afraid to ask for feedback during your writing process. If you can't think of anyone to ask for a review, sometimes just reading the work back to yourself, especially reading out loud can help gain perspective. However, you will be surprised how helpful “beta readers” can be and how willing friends can be to help with this. Remember

when you gather critique to be open and willing to consider all input. Normally when one creates something we feel connected to our work, external eyes can bring faults to our attention that we need to be cognisant of, and should be viewed openly.

Critique Groups

If you really don't have someone to critique, or even if you do, a pure unbiased view can be gained from a critique group. Where one can find an in person group it is a wonderful experience, however also limited by size. There are a number of online critique groups that provide a wonderful way to fine tune your writing, for example www.scrofile.com, www.critiquecircle.com, or www.wattpad.com, are an excellent solution. These sites work on a points system, where you need to critique other's works to gain enough points to post your own, however this in itself provides an excellent way to improve your own work.



LESSON 5. ILLUSTRATING

For illustrating there are two avenues, creating images (photos, digital images, or by hand) or using stock images.

Creating Images Yourself

You may choose to hand draw, create digital images, or take and edit your own photographs. This can be immensely fun for the creative and artistic, and very rewarding.

To create digital pictures you can use a program such as Gimp, which is free, or Paint for Microsoft users, or you can create drawings within OpenOffice Draw itself. And there are many others options available.

Hand drawn images are the absolute easiest if you are artistic. This can be done with a digital pen or using physical media.

For physical media you need to scan or photograph the work to create a digital version for including in your book. When scanning remember to scan at a minimum of 300dpi, preferably use the highest resolution as you can downsize later. For photographing ensure to mount the work in a position without shadow.

Once the images are scanned or photographed, you may need to clean up the image by cropping, filtering, or touching up in a program like Gimp or Paint for Microsoft. Cartoon like drawings can be created by drawing the outline with a marker then scanning, posterizing if needed, and paint filling the resultant black and white image in Gimp or Paint.

If you take your own photographs, this also requires some skill. Work on the composition, light, distance, and focus. Photos can be touched

up or edited after they are taken in Gimp or similar programs.

Using Stock Images

There are many “open source” images that you can use for your book available online. These images are called “stock images”.

Stock images (photographs, pictures, or clipart) are images someone else has created and released in either the public domain or creative commons for others to use.

Using images such as these can improve your work and save you time for sourcing the images yourself, but always make sure the images you find ARE open source (public domain or creative commons) and do not use just any images you find in the Google image search.

Here are some recommended free image sites:

<https://www.snappygoat.com>

<https://www.pixabay.com>

<https://www.unsplash.com>

<https://www.publicdomainimages.net>

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/>

Additionally all of the images created on <https://www.BookDash.org> and <https://www.Storyweaver.org.in> platforms are released in creative commons CC-BY-SA, so you may like to use some of these too, just remember to include attribution and your work must then also be released in the Creative Commons.

Once you have the images and text, use copy and paste, or “insert>picture>from file” to include images with your text.

Hint: when copying from the web, using OpenOffice, you need to use the “Paste Special” function, and choose to paste as a bitmap.

LESSON 6. FORMATTING

Once you've created text and images, it's time to format. This can also be done concurrently as you create the text, if you have already decided on how you want your book to look.

Formatting may involve choosing font typefaces, resizing images, creating backgrounds, and correcting positions of items on the page.

Here's some hints we use: in OpenOffice to help with formatting files.

Fonts

For most text based books, it's best to use a “serif” font for easy reading, like Times New Roman, Georgia, or one of our favourites Tsukushi B Round Gothic. However you may prefer a “sans-serif” font like Arial, Verdana, or Helvetica. Another great option, especially for picture books is **OpenDyslexic**, which is available free at <https://opendyslexic.org/> and is proven to help dyslexic learners. For early reader, aimed at kindergarten age kids, it may also be important to use a font that has print style text which conforms to the regular alphabet, for example **comic sans** (note the 'a').

There are plenty of sites to download free fonts if you feel creative. Search under .ttf can also work to find fonts.

Headings and Styles

If you are completing a chapter book or longer non-fiction book, it is recommended to use the auto-heading styles(heading 1, heading 2 etc). This enables insertion of an automatic table of contents.

Usually use “Title Case” for headings, and sentence case for text, however you may wish to use CAPITALS for some titles, like we have in the chapter heading for this book.

Text size should also be considered, for longer books 12 pt is usually suitable, shorter children's books may fit 16pt, and picture books 24pt.

Image Formatting

Resize images using the menu (right click) position and size option, to ensure the size remains relative.

Align images or text boxes centrally or right or left using align (right click > align)

For images and text use the wrap function, and add a border on the “wrap” page to make the image look neater (right click, picture, wrap).

Remember to use the spell checker! For OpenOffice select the red underlined “ABC” on the toolbar. Address all text underlined during the formatting or editing stage (see more in Chapter 8).



LESSON 7 FINISHING TOUCHES

The cover, title, attribution pages, and blurbs usually come last, that is once your book is close to being finished. However you can fit in this step anytime you feel a lull in the creation process as creating a cover, title, or blurb can be quite motivating.

A cover image must be relatively high resolution, and remember your cover sells your book. People do “judge a book by the cover”, since besides from your descriptive blurb, the cover is basically all they have to go on without reading the book itself...

You can create a cover in OpenOffice Draw or you can use a program like Gimp or Canva. Remember to use eye-catching imagery and colours, and make the title font clear but graphically pleasing. Ensure to include your name on the cover, but, note, you do not need to use the term “by”, it looks unprofessional.

Include a title page which details the title, your name, and ensure that you assert your copyright, including either a standard copyright statement or creative commons license if you are releasing the work in creative commons. If you omit this assertion it can be assumed your work is in public domain. The ISBN if you have one should be included on this page.

Make sure you include attribution for any creative commons text or images used and/or a bibliography if required at the end of the book.

You may wish to include an “About the Author:” page, links to your social media or email, or other such items readers will enjoy. Note for publishing online (see Chapter 9), you usually need a minimum of 24 pages, so adding some additional details can assist if the book is shorter.

LESSON 8 EDITING

It's SOOOO important to edit your work prior to publication! Even if you are great at writing, it's virtually impossible to check your own work because you will be too familiar with it, so ask a friend, parent, or teacher to check your work for you.

Copy Editing Versus Type Editing

If you want feedback on your work you might be interested in copy editing, where the editor will provide advice on the plot and narration as opposed to type editing which just addresses grammar and spelling.

Joining a critique site or group is a good way to get copy editing advice. As mentioned in Chapter 4, www.wattpad.com, www.scribophile.com, and www.critiquecircle.com, are very good examples of critique groups available online.

Once your work is finished it always require a final proof or type editing, this is usually one of the very final steps prior to publication, and can be repeated a couple of times for longer works.

Type editing is a very important step in the book creation process to make sure you remove any typographical or grammar errors prior to publishing and cannot be skipped.

Once you are absolutely happy with your content, export it to a pdf format for printable or transportable use (or for creating a print version or for transforming into an epub or mobi). Pdf is the format most printers (print on demand or local printers) will use.

Proof your pdf

Once you've exported your pdf, it's easier to do a final check in this

printable format, just to ensure the layout is absolutely correct, prior to printing. For longer works pay attention to line breaks, image setting, and heading formats. If you spot any errors, simply correct in your document, and export again.



LESSON 9. PLATFORMS

To publish your book you need a publishing platform, in the form of a printer or publisher and you need to decide on the physical format of the book.

Binding Choices

Most paperback books are either stapled (small books) or perfect bound for larger books, however spiral binding is also very versatile for some types of books. Hard copy books are available from most print on demand publishers too.

Publishing Online with a Print On Demand Printer

A print on demand is an online service which allows you to print as few as one or as many as thousands copies of a book whenever desired. Note: if you are printing more than a few thousand you probably should look at a bulk printing service, not POD as it will become cheaper).

Print on demand also allows you to print for yourself or to publish for members of the public to purchase.

Amazon KDP - <https://kdp.amazon.com/> is one of the easiest, most professional, and cheapest platforms available for print on demand, so we're going to review this platform.

The process is nearly identical for Lulu - <https://www.lulu.com/> or Ingram Spark - <https://www.ingramspark.com/> .

Create an Amazon KDP Account

To begin you need to create an account with Amazon KDP, which

requires an email address or phone number. Then sign in and create a new project, choosing the page size and printing style.

ISBN (Amazon Assigned or Buy your own)

Most POD companies, and Amazon KDP is no exception, provide an ISBN which means you don't have to buy your own. However if you wish to buy one yourself this is also possible. An ISBN is necessary if you want to have your books in a library or in wider bookstore distribution (online or offline). An ISBN (International Standard Book Number) identifies the book, however it is not for the book alone, but for the edition and publishing type. So if you publish a different size, or style, for example paperback versus hardcopy, or with another publisher, it requires a new ISBN. This helps identify the specific version for sellers and buyers.

Upload Your Book

Upload your final, type checked and proofed, pdf version of your book.

Upload or Create Your Cover

The cover will can be uploaded as an image file or as a pdf. The platform provides all the guidelines for creating a cover.

Include All Your Book Data

The remaining POD publishing process is merely listing all of your book data, for example your blurb, creator details, and some categories and keywords if you want your book to be searchable.

Note: most POD publishers do sell services to help you publish your book if needed. This is different to vanity press, (see below) as it is only for add on services for example editing or marketing.

If you're looking for other alternatives, Google POD publishers (Print on demand publishers), there may be others available.

Vanity Publishers

Remember POD is a free service, you only pay for ordering books at a publisher rate. If you are charged to upload your book this is called a “vanity publisher”. Beware! Many vanity publishers promise your book will be a big success and they have very alluring sales pitches, unfortunately they are really only interested in the fees they charge for publishing your book. To spot a vanity press you usually will find that the services charged for are out of proportion to the fee.

Printing at a Local Printer

In nearly every city and most towns there will be local printers who can deliver short run print on demand for a binding method of your choice. Contact your local printer and ask them about printing costs. Usually they will only need the pdf you have created for your interior and cover. If you print with a local printer, you will not have an ISBN provided unless you buy one yourself. POD with a local printer is usually only cost effective for black and white unless you look at large print tuns.



LESSON 10 PUBLISH YOUR WORK

When you print on demand, you can choose to keep your book private and order copies for yourself or your family only, or publish for the world to see!

If you print with a local printer, you can also choose to print only for yourself, or you might want to sell your book in a bookshop or at your school book fairs. Most bookshops will take on consignment (payment on sale) if your book is suitable quality.

You can also submit your work for publishing on platforms like <https://www.freekidsbooks.org>, where many people can find and read your work, and provide you reviews and feedback, with links to your purchase pages or social media.

Practice makes perfect!

If you enjoyed the process, gain some reviews, learn from what you've done, and create another book!

- GOOD LUCK -



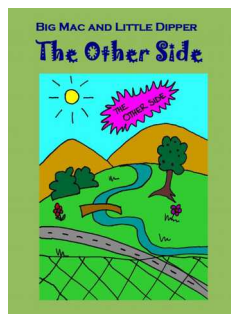
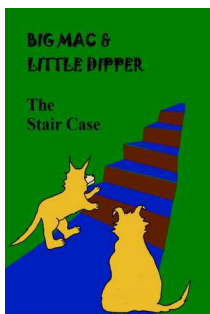
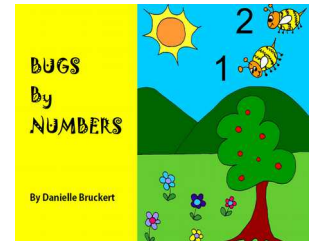
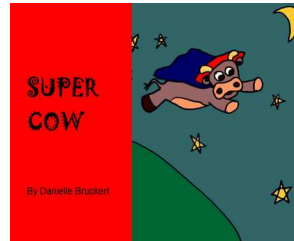
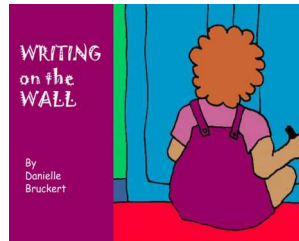
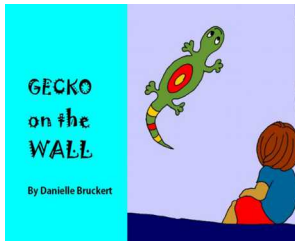
More books like this one are available at:

<http://www.freekidsbooks.org>

More books from the author are available at:

<https://www.freekidsbooks.org/danielle>

MORE BOOKS!





**Share a book on FKB:
Gain more exposure;
Get read and reviewed!**

FREE KIDS BOOKS

<https://www.freekidsbooks.org>

*Preschool, early grades, picture books, learning to read,
early chapter books, middle grade, young adult*

Always Free – Always will be!

This book is shared online by Free Kids Books at <https://www.freekidsbooks.org> in terms of the creative commons license provided by the publisher or author.

want to find more books like this?



<https://www.freekidsbooks.org>

Simply great free books -

Preschool, early grades, picture books, learning to read,
early chapter books, middle grade, young adult,
Pratham, Book Dash, Mustardseed, Open Equal Free, and many more!

Always Free – Always will be!

Legal Note: This book is in CREATIVE COMMONS - Awesome!! That means you can share, reuse it, and in some cases republish it, but only in accordance with the terms of the applicable license (not all CCs are equal!), attribution must be provided, and any resulting work must be released in the same manner.

Please reach out and contact us if you want more information:

<https://www.freekidsbooks.org/about>

Image Attribution: Annika Brandow, from You! Yes You! CC-BY-SA.

This page is added for identification.