



Editor's Note Easy as Pie, Right?

By Sharon Verbeten

Writing a children's book is hard. I know, I've never done it.

I think it's too hard . . . not that I wouldn't like to, though.

I've been witness lately to a few happenings that have made me ponder children's book publishing and how people view it. For the longest time, many outsiders believed it was easy to write a children's book—after all, it's just a few pages and the readers are, after all, *only* children. Even Dr. Seuss's publisher Bennett Cerf dared the master of rhyme to write a book using only 50 words; should be easy, right? Seuss sure showed him!

One of my close friends—after years of toiling at her desk—has not one, but four, children's books coming out in the next two years with three major publishers. She knows how hard it can be to get a book published, yet she was set on traditional publishing. And, very soon, the fruits of her labor will pay off—I hope with many positive reviews, book signings and, ultimately, more book deals. As Martha Stewart might say, "It's a good thing."

On the other hand, I have an acquaintance who wrote, researched publishers, and toiled for years on her non-fiction children's book—frustrated at not being able to find an agent or publisher. Now she's taking it into her own hands, launching a Kickstarter campaign to fund self-publishing her book. Heck, I noticed that even veteran author Laura Numeroff has a crowdfunding campaign for just the same reason.

Which person is more shrewd? Who will reap the greater benefits? That depends, I guess, on what they are trying to achieve. Each has stories to tell, but they choose to get them out there in different ways. Neither one wants to get rich; both probably won't. But each is living the dream she set out to achieve—to entertain and educate children. And they're doing it in the ways that are best for them.

Me? I'm a traditionalist. I do have a bias toward traditionally published books—to me, it means something that the author toiled, researched, worked, and reedited to get the manuscript just right.

And while self-publishing doesn't always achieve what the author sets out for (Fame? Fortune? A face-front display at Barnes & Noble?), I can appreciate those who want to tell a story so true to their heart that they are willing to do anything to see it in print.

No moral of the story here; just a tale of two stories I've recently seen. Both inspirational authors, two ways of doing things. One common goal—tell a compelling story and get it into the hands of as many children as possible.

Not a bad goal indeed. ☺

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