

How to Make Children Appear Believable in a Manuscript

When including children within your manuscript it is important that you write about them and for them in such a way that they appear believable. This includes considering such elements as their physical appearance, their clothing, their interests, their relationships and their language.

As a writer it is often difficult to get inside the mindset of your characters, particularly as an adult trying to write the character of a child. As with all characters, to help you with this process it is essential that you do adequate research and planning before you get down to the actual writing. There are several ways in which you can do this research; listen to the conversations of children that you may pass on the street, watch characters on television who align with the type of character that you are trying to develop and pull on some of their mannerisms or their fashion style. Importantly you should also read others' books to see how they make the children in their stories believable, or not, as the case may be.

One of the most important aspects to consider is language - which can manifest itself in both dialogue and thought. Remember it is no good simply ensuring that your character speaks like an 11 year old girl if they then go on to think like a 50 year old man!

Points to consider with respect to language therefore - in speech and thought, are:

Use of slang

Not all children will use slang but it is likely that they will have their own words to describe certain items or situations. An example can be seen in the way that children have described something that is perceived as good, over the years; mega, cool, wicked, sick etc. are just some of the terms that have been used and words such as these are continually evolving so try to ensure that you use the right phrases for the time period that your children and your story is set in. The urban dictionary is a good place to go for an insight into the most current terminology used.

Simplicity

Remember that the language used by you as a writer will not be the same level of language used by a child. Keep it simple.

For example, rather than:

'I could not even begin to contemplate what I was supposed to do next'

use:

'I didn't know what to do!'

Children do not generally think or speak in long convoluting sentences and therefore keeping them concise and simple will allow for your characters to become believable.

Incorrect sentences

If your characters are very young children, consider how they would form sentences - they may not do it correctly, omitting words or confusing words even, but providing you have developed your

character appropriately, writing in this way will be believable. A grammatically poor sentence can be just the thing to make your character believable.

With adequate planning and working on getting the language just right your character should begin to develop into someone believable, someone that looks, thinks and sounds like a child.

When your manuscript is ready for submission, use the Words Worth Reading Ltd [professional manuscript proofreading service](#) to make sure that your characters are really convincing.