

PICTURE BOOK BLUEPRINT

WEBINAR

What Does Your Protagonist Want?

Unit 2 > Step 3

Before the webinar: Please look over this form, but don't fill anything out. We'll be working on part of this form during the webinar, and Laura will explain the rest so you can transfer the information to the worksheet inside Picture Book Blueprint when you do the full program on your own.

What your main character wants is the driving force behind your plot. In this worksheet, you'll explore and define that "want".

What does your main character want in his/her life right now? This should be something your character can accomplish in a short period of time. Describe it in detail here:

Write the "want" again in one sentence, in first person, as if your character is speaking (i.e. "I want to find a perfect birthday present for my mom"):

If this "want" is inward focused, or centered around feelings (i.e. "I want to feel less shy around my classmates."), how can it be expressed in a way that is shown through the character's actions, and can be illustrated (i.e. "I want to have a friend to play hopscotch with at recess.") Think of several examples and pick the one you like the best.

Now restate the more active, illustratable "want" in your character's first person voice:

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Will children between the ages of 3 and 8 understand this "want"? (Remember, your book might not be targeted to the entire picture book market, but it should be understandable to at least the younger [ages 3-6] or older [ages 4-8] end of the audience.) yes no

If you answered "no", how can you change the "want" to make it understandable to your target audience?

If children can understand the "want", will they care about it? Does it have relevance to their own lives? yes no

If you answered "no", how can you change the "want" to be more relevant to your audience?

Why does your protagonist want this?

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Will children between the ages of 3 and 8 understand this "why"? (Again, remember that not every story resonates with the entire age span of the picture book market.) yes no

If you answered "no", how can you change the "why" to be more relevant to children between the ages of 3 and 8?

Will children of your target audience believe that this character would have this "want", and also believe the character's motivation for wanting it? yes no

If you answered "no", go back and revise all of the above until you can answer "yes."