

Children's Short Story Checklist  
from  
the



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## Children's Short Story CheckList

Use this checklist BEFORE you submit a short story or picture book manuscript for consideration for publication by a magazine or book publisher. If your manuscript is missing any of the elements on this checklist, go back and do some rewriting until your story DOES contain each of these elements and your story will be more marketable.

- \_\_\_ 1. The story is written from a single point of view and a child is the point of view character.
- \_\_\_ 2. The main (POV) character has a problem to solve right at the start of the story.
- \_\_\_ 3. The story has rising action, which means the problem keeps getting worse and worse for the main character, until something happens (the climax) that enables the main character to solve or resolve the problem.
- \_\_\_ 4. The main (POV) character solves or resolves the problem himself, without help from a parent or other well-meaning adult or another child, and the main (POV) character changes or grows somehow as a result of solving this problem. This is usually the "take away" point or theme of the story.
- \_\_\_ 5. Most of the story is "shown" through action and dialogue rather than "told" through straight narrative or inner monologue.
- \_\_\_ 6. The story ends with an unusual "twist" that is unexpected but completely logical.

For more checklists, lessons about writing for children, and teleclasses, join the Children's Writers' Coaching Club at <http://www.cwcoachingclub.com>.

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