

## Contact Us

For Additional Information or Services:

A.K. Child

[akchild@akchildscifi-fantasy.com](mailto:akchild@akchildscifi-fantasy.com)

<http://www.akchildscifi-fantasy.com>

Copy Editor

Maeghan Jo Kimball-Peyruc

703-909-1810

[Maeghan.Jo.Kimball@gmail.com](mailto:Maeghan.Jo.Kimball@gmail.com)

Developmental Editing and Writing Coach

Marguerite Labbe

[Margueritelabbe@gmail.com](mailto:Margueritelabbe@gmail.com)

## Who we are

A.K. and Maeghan are both writers and independent editors with several books published. We also work with NaNoWriMo and can be seen hosting write-ins and events across Fairfax County.

A.K. is originally from the Pacific Northwest but has been in the DC area for over 20 years. She has been participating in NaNoWriMo events since 2007 and has been a Northern Virginia region co-Municipal Liaison for several years. She has four independently published novels under the name A.K. Child and is a professional editor.

Maeghan, currently residing in Sterling, VA, is a lifelong Virginian, with 4 books published under her name and 4 under a pen name. Her most recent publication is Incident Zero, a dystopian fantasy, which can be purchased from your favorite online retailer.

Marguerite grew up traveling all over the place but settled down in Maryland. She writes Gay Romance mixed in with Paranormal, Sci-Fi, Horror. While she doesn't offer editing services, she's a great resource for up-and-coming writers.

# So, You Want to be a Writer



**Maeghan Jo Kimball  
A.K. Child &  
Marguerite Labbe**

<https://www.feralwritersclub.net>

# Table of Contents

Definitions .....	1
Getting Started.....	2
Roadblocks.....	4
Types of Writers .....	5

# Types of Writers

The styles noted below aren't as different as you may think. They're more about how a person processes their ideas. A planner may need to see a solid structure to keep their ideas in order, while a pantsler is comfortable holding the main points in their head.

## Planner



Planners tend to be detail oriented. They often need outlines, note cards, sticky notes, a physical, written pathway to help them write their story. If you have trouble remembering important details and your adverse to chaos, planning may be for you.

## Plantser

A plantser is somewhere in between a planner and a pantsler. They may need a high-level overview of their story, or maybe some character details squirreled away for reference, but they're comfortable letting the story flow and following the changes. In some cases, they may free-write their first draft, then use the draft to make a more thorough outline for editing.

## Pantsler

Pantsler look like chaos personified. Some will simply have an idea and start writing. Others may have some small amount of pre-planning. Generally, they keep their ideas in their heads and have an intuitive sense of flow and storytelling.



## Finding Your Style

Not sure what suits you best? Go ahead and try different styles and see where you feel comfortable. Don't worry if one way or writing doesn't work for you. Some writers even change their style as they learn more about the process.

# Roadblocks

Sometimes when we're ready to get writing, we find ourselves inundated with roadblocks keeping us from getting those words on paper. Here are a few roadblocks which may try to stop you, and how to break them.

---

*The most difficult and complicated part of the writing process is the beginning.*

– A.B. Yehoshua

---

## Time

Who has time to write? We have jobs, families, and sometimes we just want to sleep. Well, like anything else, it's a matter of priority. If you don't have a lot of time to write, set small goals. Take 15 minutes here and there, write 100 words then do something else. Every small piece of time equals making progress. Set a time, make it a habit. If possible, join a writer's group focused on getting the writing done.

## Education

Were you professionally trained in how to write? Chances are, you weren't, but that's okay. Not all of us are. It's okay to take a class or read books on writing, but remember, at the end of the day, you are the author, and you should do what works for you. Find your own voice, writing your own way, and hire an editor for the nitty-gritty.

## Perfectionism

No. Just stop. You are not perfect. Your story will not be perfect. No one expects you to write the greatest masterpiece of our times. If you do, super, but don't start with this as a goal. Put away perfectionism and get to writing.

# Definitions

## Fiction



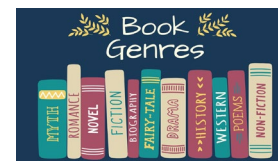
We focus mostly on fiction in these lessons, as we are fiction writers. Fiction can be more difficult to publish unless you have a specific niche area, but it makes up a large portion of the entertainment industry. Many movies and television shows start out as words of written fiction.

## Non-Fiction



Non-fiction is critical to our society. Non-fiction writing conveys ideas and information to the public. Non-fiction can be sold to a publisher "on spec," meaning, a well thought out and packaged idea can be picked up for publishing before the book is written.

## Genre



Genre is the general category any writing fits into (or doesn't, as sometimes happens). You can blend genres or stick to one that makes you happy. Feel free to experiment – write the stories you want to read.

## Audience



Defining and finding your audience can be difficult. Do you want to write to young people? Older people? Men, woman, a specific race or identity? It's important to consider your audience as you write, as different audiences will require different elements.

# Getting Started

## Generating Ideas

You have the itch to write. You've told yourself a hundred times, "I'd love to write a book, but where do I start?" The number one question asked of successful authors is, "Where do you get your ideas?" The answer is, everywhere. Some writers get their ideas from dreams, others hear, see, or read something that inspires them. Pay attention to the world around you, and chances are something will grab you.

---

*"Just get it down on paper, and then we'll see what to do with it." —Maxwell Perkins*

---

More likely than not, you're reading this because you already have an idea, but you're not sure what to do with it. The best place to start is figuring out how much planning you need to do. Some people need more than others, and there is no wrong way to organize and begin your writing. If you need pre-planning content, try detailing the following content:

- Plot;
- Characters and Settings;
- Important "beats"; and
- Ending.



If you are comfortable getting started and letting your characters and/or plot direct you where to go, get to it! Remember, research may be necessary for some of your writing, but don't get so bogged down in research, you never start writing.

## Creating Compelling Characters



Your story should have characters. It should have interesting, compelling, identifiable characters. How do we do this? People watching is a great tool. While you may want to avoid problematic stereotypes, human behavior has a certain amount of predictability. Watch people, see how they interact. Where possible, find out about people's backgrounds, which will affect how they behave. You can even read psychological texts for better understanding of specific behaviors.

## World Building



If you're writing in the real world with normal physics, you may not need to do a lot of world building, except to explain the behavior of certain characters. If you're writing fantasy, science-fiction, or magical realism, you may need to set some rules on how the world works. You don't necessarily have to write the rules in the story but be clear on them for yourself, so you know how your world works.

## Drafting



Now you have your plot, characters, setting, maybe even some research. It's time to start putting it together. The goal is to get a complete draft. It doesn't have to be good. It doesn't even have to be in order. This is the beginning of the process and you're going to be working on and with your manuscript for a long time.