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Writing a Children's Book

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Writing a Children's Book
by

Andrea L. Fabiano

An Abstract of a Project
in
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Science

May 2006

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

ABSTRACT OF A PROJECT

Writing a Children's Book

This project contains the components and procedures for writing a children's book, as the first in its series. The story is of a child at a birthday party who puts on a baseball cap. He then morphs into a pitcher of a baseball team on the brink of getting into the playoffs.

This project has the timeline and the steps that it took to get to the end result, which was the first draft of the first book in the series. The series has a central theme. In each book, a child will put on a hat, and then transform into a person who wears that type of hat. For example, a child will put on a chef's hat and then turn into a gourmet chef with a large meal that needs to be prepared. The hat theme will be used in all of the following books.

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Dates of Approval:

Dr. Mary Murdock
Project Advisor

Andrea L. Fabiano
Student

In dedication to:

My parents, Neil and Joy, my sister, Christie, and my brother, Nick
for their endless support

My fiancé, Chad
for his love and to our future

My classmates, Jenelle and Tara
for being my sounding board

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Background to the Project

Purpose

The purpose of my Master's project was to have a rough draft of the first story for my children's series. I would have liked to begin the publication process; however, that was almost impossible to do in the time frame that we had. I would eventually like to have the book that I have written, as well as many others in the series, published.

A sense of accomplishment was also another purpose for my Master's Project. Writing a book has been something that I have wanted to do for some time now. I have had the idea for a children's series for a couple of years. This was the prime opportunity for me to begin with this major project.

Description

The series will be short chapters books, aimed at 10-12 year olds. There will be a central theme throughout the series. The theme is hats. Each book will be from the perspective of a different child, who puts on a different type of hat. All of the children will be at a birthday party. The mother of the birthday girl will bring out a trunk that was in the attic. The

old trunk is full of different hats. Each child will choose a different hat and try it on. They will then morph into whatever type of hat that they try on. For example, a little girl tries on a chef's hat and the story will change to someone's kitchen when the little girl has to create an incredible meal. Each story will be told from a different child's point of view from the party.

Rationale for decision

There is one main reason that I have chosen to write a children's book for my project. I have always wanted to write, and this was the perfect chance to be able to get feedback from my peers and others. I have worked with children for my entire life, beginning with my younger brother and sister. My mother tells me that I have wanted to be a teacher since I was 4 years old. I used to play school by myself when I was young. I have read numerous children's books. I have had an idea for a children's series for years now. This was the prime opportunity for me to begin my series.

What this Project adds creatively to me and others

This project was an extreme test of my own creativity. Coming up with how the story was actually going to flow was the hardest thing that I had

to do. I think that this project was extremely creative. I wrote a book. How much more creative can you get?!

I am adding to others creativity when they read what I have written. I think that the whole series at the end will be the most innovative part. The hat theme that I have decided to work on, and the way that I am going to write the stories from a different child's perspective, who are all at the same birthday party, is the most creative part.

I hope that my series will but fun for children and parents to read, and that it will possibly motivate others to write. It is my hope that someone will read my stories and they will be inspired to use their creative sides and produce something of their own.

Pertinent Literature

I have looked at a lot of children's literature to help with my project. I have looked at how other authors write. I have especially looked at authors of children's stories for children of the same age group that I am aiming for, and I have looked at the type of wording that they have used.

Below is a list of the children's books that I have used and I think would be helpful to others:

Blume, J. (1981) *The one in the middle is the green kangaroo*. New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.

Blume, J. (1974) *The pain and the great one*. New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.

George, J. (1959) *My side of the mountain*. New York, NY: Puffin Books.

Martin, A. (1986) *Kristy's great idea*. New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc.

Rawls, W. (1976) *Summer of the monkeys*. New York, NY: Random House, Inc.

Rowling, J. K. (2001). *Harry potter and the goblet of fire*. New York, NY: Scholastic Press.

Sachar, L. (2000). *Holes*. New York, NY: Random House Children's Books.

Sachar, L. (1987). *Sixth grade secrets*. New York, NY: Scholastic Inc.

Scieszka J. (1995). *The math curse*. New York, NY: The Penguin Group.

Scieszka, J. (1989). *The true story of the three little pigs*. New York, NY: The Penguin Group.

Viorst, J. (1972) *Alexander and the terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division.

Process Plan

As I have mentioned, I originally wanted to have my first story written and to have begun the publishing process by the end of this project. Unfortunately, that was almost impossible with the time frame that we were working with. So I decided to concentrate on just writing the first story. I thought that if I could at least get that part completed, I would be that much closer to publication when the time was better for me. So that's what I finished. After much deliberation of which hat that I should begin with, I wrote the first story.

I need big chunks of time to write. I don't like to work on it a little bit here, and a little bit there. When I work that way, I don't feel as if I have accomplished anything. So I had to sit down for hours on a weekend and write. And that's what I did. I now I feel that I have written a great story and am proud of what I have accomplished.

There were lots of things that I had to think about even before I started writing the book. Things like, what point of view should I write it from? Should it be from 1st person or third person? What should be the name of the team that the child plays for? What type of wording should I use for this age group? How long should it be? Will it have pictures on every page or will it be a chapter book? For some of the questions, only time

will give me the answers, for others, I looked to other author's works for inspiration.

I followed my timeline as much as I could. However, it varied a little. I spread out the actually writing process because that's all that I was working on. I didn't need the time that I had set aside for publication purposes, so I used that time to concentrate on my story.

My 'real time' timeline was like this:

- End of January/Beginning of February (20 hours) – look at children's literature for inspiration and ideas
- Beginning of February (5 hours) – Brainstorming hat ideas, Hits of different hats, Brainstorming story ideas
- Beginning to Mid February (9 hours) – Incubation of ideas
- Mid-February (4 hours)– Decide of chef's hat, and begin writing first chapter
- Mid to End of February (14 hours) – look for inspiration from outside sources (including restaurants to watch chefs)
- Beginning of March – (4 hours) Incubation and decision to switch to a new hat (baseball cap)
- Beginning to Mid-March (8 hours) – Write first five chapters
- Mid to End of March (6 hours) – Incubation of ideas
- End of March/Beginning of April (4 hours) – Write last 2 chapters
- Mid to End of April (10 hours) – Begin write up of Project (first draft)

- April 17 – Rough draft of Project write up due
- End of April/Beginning of May (21 hours) – Editing and finalizing of Project write up
- May 1 (1 hour) – Presentation of Project

Total hours: 106 hours

Outcomes

The main outcome of my project is the rough draft of my first book. (Please see Appendix B.) This is only a rough draft and it has not been edited in any way. I will edit and change things in the story quite a bit before I get a finished product.

One of the first things I did was to use brainstorming (with my fiancé) on the different types of hats that I could use. (Please see Appendix C for the complete list.)

Then I used Hits to narrow the list down to five hats that I really had an interest to begin writing with. From there, I wrote a short description of how I imagined the stories from each of those five hats. (Please see Appendix D for the descriptions.)

After this, I began brainstorming ideas of how each story would begin. I knew that each story would be from a different child's perspective, but I wasn't sure how to connect all of them together. This was also in a sense the setting of the story, so I had to feel comfortable with what I chose. (Please see Appendix E for brainstorming ideas.)

I decided to use the chef's hat for my first story. I worked on it, and wrote down some ideas. But, I could not get going with the context. I was struggling very hard with what I wanted to write about. So I switched to the baseball cap. I began writing this story and was just flying through

it! This one seemed so much easier for me to write. I ended up writing the first four chapters in one night! This then gave me a sense of accomplishment, which helped me to continue working. I think that I needed that boost of energy to keep me going.

The title of this book is going to be, Chad's Big Game as part of the Hat Party Series. Each book will be titled with the child's name and whatever event or conflict they have to face in the story.

Another outcome that I had was a sketch of what the cover of the baseball cap story is going to look like. I have not determined if I am going to illustrate the covers of each book myself, or if I am going to look for help from someone else on that. The cover will have a picture of all of the children sitting around an open trunk that has hats spilling out of it. The main focus of the picture will be the child whose story it is, already wearing their hat or with it in their hands. The rest of the children will be looking at them, with excited faces. It will be very colorful and will have a cartoon look to it. (Please see Appendix F for my original sketch.)

Anything that I decided for this first story had to be something that I could work with. What I mean is that this was going to be the first of many stories. I had to have a theme, setting and central characters that I was willing to work with for a long time.

I have included the PPCo that I did on writing a children's book. I created this when I was deciding between two different projects. (Please see Appendix G.

Key Learnings

This has been a great learning experience for me. The following things are my biggest insights from this project:

- It is not easy to write a book.
- Getting started was the hardest part for me.
- If something isn't working, try something else that might.

My first bullet says everything. It's not easy to write a book. Not one that you would eventually like to have published some day. Not that I thought it was going to be a piece of cake, but I don't think that I anticipated it to be this hard. I must have reworded every sentence in my head three times before I actually got it down on paper. And then once I had it written down, I would reread it with the line before it to see how it flowed. After I had written a paragraph, I would do the same thing over again; and then again at the end of the chapter. This was a long process, and I think that I will probably do this for every book. But in my own mind, I will know that what I am writing is quality, and that's all that matters.

Deciding on a theme for the book was easy. I have had the idea for a series for years now. However, deciding on the way the book was going to start was an issue. The flow of the story and the setting were very difficult for me. I'm not sure if there was anything that I could have done differently, and I can use the KAI to help me understand why this was

problematic for me. When I took the KAI survey, I received a score of 46. I am an extremely high adaptor. I like to change things that already exist. I have a very hard time creating new things, which is why I think that it was so hard for me to come up with the story myself. Everything was new. I wasn't changing an already existing story, I had to be innovative and produce something from scratch, which is not my forte. However, I wanted to, which became the force driving me to complete this. I needed to do this, to accomplish it for myself.

I am a procrastinator by nature. I think that I have been good with this project by not waiting until the very last minute to do things. I was incubating for a long time, and I think that I could have sped that process up a bit. However, I was not rushing toward the end, and I followed my timeline for the most part.

I learned that if I am struggling with one aspect, that I should move on and try something else. What I mean by that is I was initially going to be writing about the child with the chef's hat on. I tried and tried to write, but I wasn't feeling anything. I even went to a couple of different restaurants with my fiancé, watching the people (especially the cooks) and nothing was sparking. I didn't want to just put anything down, so I decided to switch gears. No sooner had I changed my mind, I had written two chapters! After that, the writing just got easier and easier. I wrote the first

four chapters in one night. I then spread out the rest over a couple of days. But I learned that if one thing isn't working, try something else.

My next steps, as you might have guessed, are

1. To edit, revise, and complete the first book. (especially the last chapter)
2. To discuss options for illustrations, both within the books and the covers.
3. To have the first book published. Looking into all the steps that go involved in this process.
4. To begin writing more in the series.
5. To have a 12 -15 books in the complete set.

I will hopefully be continuing with this project for years to come. I would like to have the whole series written and available in print within 10 years from now, completing 2 – 3 books per year.

References

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Appendix A
Concept Paper

Writing a Children's Series

Andrea L. Fabiano

February 3, 2006

To Develop a Skill: Writing a Book Series

What Is This Project About?

This project is about writing a children's book series. The series will be short chapter books aimed for 3-5th grade children. There will be a theme within the series, in each book a different child will put on a hat. They will then morph into whatever type of hat they put on. For example, a little boy will put on a baseball cap and become a great baseball player. Each story will go through "a day in the life of..." I will use brainstorming to come up with many different types of hats. Hopefully I can collect some different and exciting story ideas using brainstorming. I am going to also use the Evaluation Matrix to put criteria in each story. I will also use some of the Torrance's Leap Skills, such as Keeping Open and Singing to One's Own Tune.

Rationale for Choice:

I have always wanted to write children's books. I have had this idea for a very long time. I am a teacher in the Buffalo Public Schools, and have been around children for most of my life. I have also had a passion for children's book and would like to be the author of my own series. I enjoy reading books to my students, and would someday love to read these to my own children.

What Will be the Tangible Products or Outcomes?

I would like to have the first book written for my project. I will have the ability to continue writing the series after my project is complete. I anticipate that the book will be bound and possibly ready for publishing at the semester's end. I will also try to have a list of things that someone who is looking to publish should be aware of. A list of possible publishers and other items would be helpful to others who are looking into publishing something. In addition, I hope to have outlines for other books in the series. I have also had the thought of possibly putting my series on CDs.

What Criteria Will You Use to Measure The Effectiveness Of Your Achievement?

I will have other teachers in my school give feedback to me. I will also try to talk to publishers to begin this process. If I can answer the following questions, then I believe that my achievement is effective: 1. Was writing this a challenge for me? 2. Did I work up to my potential? 3. Is it suitable for children? 4. Am I proud of my book?

Who Will Be Involved or Influenced; What Will Your Role Be?

I will be the author of the books. Other teachers in my school (specifically the English teacher on my team), my mother, father, and fiancé will all help with editing and feedback. I also hope to influence children around the world one day with my stories.

When Will This Project Take Place?

I will be working on this a little bit every day. The weekends will probably contribute a big part of my writing. I would like to have at least one book complete by the end of the semester. However, this project leaves me lots of room for time to continue after the semester is over. I could be working on many different books (as part of the series) for years to come. My hope is that I can finish 2-4 books per year and end up with a 12-15 book series.

Where Will This Project Occur?

I live in Youngstown, New York. The majority of my work will take place in my home. I will be working within my school as well. However, I am not limited to these places. I am going to carry around a notebook with me, and whenever I get an inspiration I will write it down in the notebook.. This could be when I am driving, teaching, daydreaming, eating, etc.

Why Is It Important to Do This?

This project is very important to me. I am doing this to fulfill a void in my own life. I have always wanted to write and I am glad to finally have the opportunity to do so. I would like this series to be an important part in many children's lives, including my own.

Personal Learning Goals:

- To be proud of my product
- To have a completed book and be ready to continue writing
- To be challenged with writing
- To have fun with the ideas and theme
- To want to show my work off when it is complete
- To publish my stories

How Do You Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcomes?

I plan to have fun with this project. I want to be able to use brainstorming to come up with different ideas for hats and other parts of the story. I could also use the Morphological Matrix to design some of the stories. I need to work hard in order to be able to complete what I would like to have finished before the end of the semester. I also need to work on talking to publishers on other things related to it. I have never done that, and networking is not easy for me. So this will be challenging.

Evaluation:

I will be getting informal feedback from my classmates, my colleagues, and my family. I will also talk to publishers. This will then give me information that I need in order to know the direction I should be going. I will be affirmatively critical of myself, and I will constantly be evaluating myself. Once my book is published, I think that that will be the true goal.

Prepare Project Timeline:

- February 5 – 12 Begin looking through old children's stories for help/inspiration
- February 13 – 19 Begin thinking of possible outlines for first story (including characters, plot, climax, etc.)
- February 20 – 26 Write first draft of first 2 chapters
- February 27 – March 5 Write first draft of next 4-5 chapters
- March 6 – 12 Begin research of publishing companies and other related items/Continue writing
- March 13 – 19 Complete first draft of book/Continue with research
- March 20 – 26 Begin editing process/Continue talking to publishers
- March 27 – April 2 Continue having people read and edit/Begin looking for places to bind and complete book
- April 3 – 9 Write final draft of the book
- April 10 – 16 Finalize the book/Begin rough draft of project write up
- April 17 – 23 Editing and finalizing project write up
- April 24 – 30 Complete project write up/Printing and Binding of everything
- May 1 Presentation of project

Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:

I think that I will be doing a lot of research on publishing and how to accomplish that. I will also be reading children's books and getting ideas for the type of writing that I should be focusing on. There are also a few books that I have that are inspirational to me that I will be looking to for help, especially the Harry Potter series.

Appendix B

(First draft of the first story)

Chapter 1

“Make a wish!” Chad yelled with the rest of the party. It was Alyssa’s 8th birthday. Everyone had just sung “Happy Birthday” to her, and she blew out the eight candles on the pink and yellow frosted cake.

Chad watched Alyssa’s mother cut the cake while her father spooned out ice cream onto little yellow plates.

A few minutes later, Alyssa’s mother walked into the room with a large, old trunk. Chad hadn’t even noticed that she had left; he was concentrating so hard on finishing his cake.

The trunk was very old. It was brown and rusty on the hinges. To Chad, it looked like it could have been 100 years old!

Chad noticed that everyone had moved closer and were all waiting to see what was inside the trunk.

Finally, Alyssa’s mother opened the lid and everyone saw what was in the trunk... a bunch of old hats! Chad and the rest of the children began digging through the pile of them.

There was a chef’s hat, a tiara, an Indian headdress, a racecar driver’s helmet, a nurse’s cap, a sombrero, a wizard’s hat, and many more.

“This is going to be so much fun!” Chad thought. He began sifting through all the hats that had been pushed out onto the floor. Chad decided to try on the old baseball cap.

Then something strange happened. As soon as he put the hat on his head, Chad felt a strange spinning feeling. The room began to rotate, he couldn't see anything. He was leaving Alyssa's house. He felt his feet leave the floor... and then... PLOP!

Chapter 2

Chad was now standing in the middle of a large green patch of grass, with a dirt diamond surrounding him. He was dressed in all black with a orange logo on the front of his shirt. Everyone around him had the same outfit on. He was the pitcher for a baseball team! He was standing in the middle of the infield. The grandstand was full of people. They were all chanting, "Let's go Ti-gers! Let's go Ti-gers!"

His coach was now running up to him from the dugout. Chad was getting nervous as he got closer and closer to him.

"Ok Chad," his coach said when he finally reached the mound, "we are in the top of the 9th inning. We are up by 2 runs. There are two outs, so anything can happen. You need to strike the next guy out, so we can have our last ups. Do not let them score any more runs!! If we win this game, we get to go to the playoffs!"

"I will do my best, coach!" said Chad.

"I know. That's why you're my best pitcher!"

His coach began to trot back off the field. The fans were all cheering. Chad's hands were sweating. He looked around. All his teammates were nodding to him, giving him their approval. They knew he could do this, but did he?

He looked at the batter. He was a tall guy, standing, waiting for the ball to be thrown. Chad got ready. He wound up and threw a pitch.

"Stee-rike!" yelled the umpire.

Phew, thought Chad. Only two more to go! He took his stance again. The wind-up... and the pitch... the batter took a tremendous swing. The whole crowd held their breath and... he completely missed the ball! That was strike two!!

Chad smiled. He was getting relaxed. He was starting to have some fun with this! Maybe he could strike this guy out! This was his chance. He had to prove that he could do it. Again he took his stance. He wound up, and threw the fastest pitch that he could muster, but to his surprise... the batter hit it! Chad watched the ball go straight over his head. It was heading right to Jacob, the center-fielder.

The batter had already made it to first base and was round the corner on his way to second base.

"Catch it Jacob! Catch it!" the whole crowd was yelling. "You can do it!" It was getting closer and closer to him. Everyone held their breath and...

Chapter 3

Jacob just wasn't fast enough. The ball dropped about 6 inches in front of his outstretched glove. He had missed it. The crowd let out a groan, and the batter was safely on second base.

Now Chad was getting nervous again. Jacob picked up the ball and threw it to him. The umpire pulled his mask back over his face, as a very big, heavysset guy walked up to the plate.

"Uh-oh," thought Chad, "if this guy gets a hold of the ball, we are done for!"

And sure enough, the first pitch that Chad sent him, he hit right out of the park! A homerun! The tall guy that was on second base, must have scored. And the heavysset guy trotted slowly around the bases. He scored, too. The score was now tied!

His coach looked anxious. The crowd was silent. Chad could see his parents and sister in the stands. He could also see all the others that were at the birthday party, including Alyssa. They were looking nervous, too.

"It's all up to me. I have to stop them right now! You can do this," he thought to himself, "You can do this!"

He took his stance as a short, red-headed guy walked up to home plate. He wound up, and sent the ball flying.

"Stee-rike one!" yelled the masked umpire.

Chad was still tense. One down, two more to go.

“Stree-rike two!” Chad heard the ump yell just after he released his next pitch.

The catcher threw the ball back to him. This was it! This was the pitch that would make or break the whole team! Chad had to come through he just had to! He took his stance one more time, and let the ball fly.

“Stree-rike three!” The ump bellowed as the little red-haired guy swung the bat with al his might, still missing the ball.

The whole crowd roared with cheers! They all seemed to jump to their feet at once, including Chad's parents, sister, and all his friends from the party.

Chapter 4

Chad felt the outfielders running towards him, heading for the dugout. So he followed. When they got there, everyone was giving him high-fives, slapping him on the back saying, “Good job,” and “Nice pitch!”

“We are not out of the ball game yet!” said their coach. “We still have to score a run, or we will have to go into extra innings. Ok, the line up is, Jacob, Dylan, and Chad. We need you to do your best here!”

Chad could feel the pressure rising through his insides.

Jacob put on a batting helmet, his batting glove, and picked up his bat. Chad watched as Jacob climb out of the dugout, heading for home plate. Dylan also put on a helmet and grabbed his bat. Dylan walked out to the on-deck circle and took some practice swings.

“Stee-rike!” Chad heard the ump yell, meaning Jacob just got his first strike.

Chad put on his own helmet. He began looking for his bat and batting glove.

“Stree-rike two!” He heard a groan from the crowd. “This is not good,” thought Chad.

Then all of a sudden he heard the crack of a bat and the silence of the crowd, he looked up quickly. Jacob was running to first, the ball just got to the short stop. It was thrown to the first baseman, Jacob was almost there...

Chapter 5

“He’s out!” yelled the infield umpire. The crowd jeered, very upset with the call. Jacob was slowly walking back to the dugout, looking dejected.

Dylan was trotting up to the plate, which meant that Cad was on deck! He quickly found his bat and got up into the practice circle. He swung his bat a few times, not paying attention to anything else. He was in the zone. He had to get a hit, he just had to!

“Stree-rike three!” yelled the umpire.

This startled Chad, he wasn't ready for this! He was up. This was his shot! He began walking to home plate, Dylan walked past him back to the dugout.

Chad got to the plate. His hands were starting to sweat. It was a good thing that he had a batting glove, so the moisture wasn't on his bat. He took his stance, and was staring eye-to-eye with the pitcher. The pitcher was getting ready... the wind up... and the pitch...

“Stree-rike one!”

Whoa! Not exactly what he wanted to hear. He took a step back so the catcher could throw the ball back to the pitcher.

Chad shook his arms out and adjusted his cap. He took his stance again, glaring at the pitcher. Here came the wind up... and the pitch... he swung and barely missed it, making this, strike two.

The crowd was on their feet, getting nervous. He glanced over at his coach, waiting for what he should do. The pitcher was getting ready. The ball was now coming at him, very quickly. Chad watched the ball every step of the way. It was getting closer and closer. He swung his bat as hard as he could and...

Chapter 6

He made the connection! He could feel the ball hit his bat. Chad was so excited, he almost forgot what he was supposed to do next!

“Run!” yelled his coach, so he did. Chad dropped his bat and ran as fast as he could. The ball was now flying over the middle of left field. He made it to first base, and the first base coach was giving him the signal to keep going. He rounded first and was on his way to second.

Suddenly he heard a tremendous amount of cheering coming from the grandstands and the dugout.

Chad looked out where the ball had been headed, and saw the left fielder standing out there, facing the back wall as if it were going to move. He realized that the ball had gone over the back wall! Chad had just hit a homerun!

He slowed his pace down and trotted to third base, made a 90° turn and continued on to home plate. His whole team had come out of the dugout and was waiting there for him!

Chad had won the game. He put his team into the playoffs. What an amazing feeling. His parents, sister, and friends were all running out onto the field. He was lifted onto the shoulders of his teammates as they carried him around chanting, “Chad, Chad, Chad!”

The grandstands were in an uproar of people cheering and giving others around them high-fives.

The other team was looked glum and slowly walking back to the locker rooms.

Chad took the baseball cap off his head and swung it around in the air, happy as could be. All of a sudden, Chad was getting that funny spinning feeling again. He couldn't see anything around him. The whole baseball diamond was rotating around him. All of the fans were becoming a blur. And then with an abrupt PLOP he landed... back at Alyssa's birthday party!

Chapter 7

"Whoa!" Chad said. He felt as if he had just fallen from the sky back into Alyssa's living room. He was looking around at all the other kids. They all had a similar looks on their faces. Everyone started talking at once!

"Oh my gosh! I just had the best dream!" Alyssa said.

"Wow, how fun was that!" Doug shouted.

"Can I try on another hat?" asked Mikayla.

"I just won the most amazing race!" Kyle exclaimed.

Chad was confused. "Did everyone have a daydream like mine? Was it the hats? It must have been!"

Finally he joined in the group on retelling his story for his great baseball game. Everyone did have a different story. Whatever hat they had tried on was what happened in their story!

That was the best birthday party Chad had ever been to... there was something magical about that trunk.

Soon Chad's mom came to pick him up. He smiled at his friends that were still there. He said good bye and Happy Birthday to Alyssa. And he thanked Alyssa's mom for a great party!

He left the house thinking, "I can't wait for the next time we can play with the hats in that trunk!"

Appendix C

Brainstorming results for different types of hats

Possible Hats

- Chef's hat
- Baseball cap
- Indian headdress
- Tiara/crown
- Policeman's hat
- Firefighters helmet
- Top hat
- Nurse's cap
- Doctor's scrubs
- Hockey mask
- Racecar driver's helmet
- Hard hat
- Conductor's hat
- Jockey's cap
- Football helmet
- Swimmer's cap
- Veil
- Welding mask
- Skull cap
- Doorman's hat
- Cowboy hat
- Gardening hat
- Large brimmed hat (Titanic style)
- Sombrero
- Navy
- Green berets (Army)
- Marines
- Air Force
- Wizard/Witch's hat
- Sweat band
- Thinking cap

Appendix D

Five hats and their descriptions chosen from Hits

Hits on Hats

Chef's hat → girl; been asked to cook a gourmet meal in very little time
(12 hours?)

Baseball cap → boy; pitcher in the middle of a big game; he is needed
to win in order to go to the playoffs

Racecar helmet → girl; has to win against all odds (the fact that she is a
girl and has to beat boys)

Veil → girl; a bride getting ready for her perfect day (something has to go
wrong... rain? Best man is late?)

Doctor's scrubs → boy; has to help a sick patient back to health

Appendix E

Brainstorming ideas for setting; the beginning of the stories

Story Ideas

- Find a hat on the way to school
- In Grandmother's attic
- Wakes up with an alarm
- Trunk in the attic
- Hat store in the mall
- Birthday party with all the kids there
- Each story hat is given by someone different
- Story is from the hat's perspective

Appendix F

Sketch of Chad's Big Game cover

Appendix G

PPCo on writing a Children's Series

PPCo on Writing a Children's Story

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| P + always wanted to | + will be fun |
| + will be a good start | + challenging |
| + will use it for work | + sounds professional |
| + will use it with my own kids | + can be done at my own pace |

P * It might help me do the whole series

- * It might be very successful
- * It might be easily done in one semester
- * It might help me get published
- * It might be useful to have my classmates input

C - H2 finish at least one book for my project?

- H2 actually get it published?
- H2 find literature?