

FINDING SUCCESS IN THE
YA AND MIDDLE GRADE
MARKETS

A Writers Workshop

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CURRENT TRENDS IN YA AND MIDDLE GRADE FICTION

A. What's trending on the *New York Times* YA Bestseller List

1. Science Fiction: *The Fifth Wave*
2. Paranormal: *Miss Perigrine's Home For Peculiar Children*
3. Off Beat Romance: *Eleanor and Park*
4. Realistic Fiction: The books of John Green
5. Physical or psychological illness: *The Fault in Our Stars*, *Everything Everything*, *Wonder*
6. Bullying: *Thirteen Reasons Why*

Notes:

B. Learning from the list

1. The appeal of first person perspectives

2. Unique characters rule

a. Willow Clark (*Counting By Sevens*)

b. August Pulman (*Wonder*)

Notes:

C. Blazing your own trail

1. The dangers of chasing trends

2. Personal Point: *I'm Nobody* and the importance of following your heart

Notes:

2

THE FOUR PS OF YA AND MIDDLE GRADE FICTION

A. The importance of **PLACE**

1. Disney and the Art of Place (Video clip)
2. Taking readers on a trip
 - a. Paris 2.0 (*Ratatouille*)
 - b. District 12 (*The Hunger Games*)
3. Think wild and whimsical
4. Settings as characters

Notes:

B. Keep Up the **PACE**

1. Research on internet age attention spans
2. Avoiding long expositions
3. Introducing conflicts early.
4. Every page must "further plot or develop character")
5. Emotional scenes in short bursts
 - a. Story example: *Everything Everything*
 - b. Story example: *Wonder*

Notes:

C. POINT OF VIEW

1. Finding your voice
2. Choosing the right point of view
 - a. 1st person: Can you *be* the character
 - b. 3rd person: A tool for deep stories
3. Moving out of your comfort zone

4. Creative story structures

- a. Personal Point: *Izzy's Pop Star Plan*
a change in POV leads to a contract
- b. Story Example: *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*

Notes:

D. PURPOSE AND POWER

- 1. An absence of purpose (Reflections on current culture and music)
- 2. Don't be afraid to go deep
- 3. Don't preach, inspire
- 4. Shining God's light into a dark world
- 5. CBA or ABA market?

Notes:

3

MARKETING

- A. Hurdles to overcome when marketing for a youth audience
- B. Who buys the book? Teens or parents?
- C. The rise of YouTube
 - 1. John Green, master of YouTube marketing
 - 2. Personal Point: character vlogs
- D. School author visits, teacher's guides, etc.

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ONE MORE THING

- A. Giving our creative dreams to God
- B. Lessons in faith: How I got my first job with Disney