

# Who is your audience?

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Age, education level, ethnicity, faith, gender, hobbies, interests, and profession are among the considerations when you define your audience. More importantly, your audience defines the vocabulary and word count of your manuscript.



Early in the creation of your message, define your audience. Knowing who you are talking to guides you to effectively dial in the most efficient vocabulary and word count to share your message. Who do you picture sitting across the desk as you write your story?

**Writing for children? Writing for adults?** These are the general rules for the age of your audience.

### **Board Books**

Ages 0 - 3 are 24 pages in length, consisting of no more than 50 words

Ages 2 - 5 are 24 to 32 pages, under 200 words

### **Picture Books**

**Ages 4 - 8** (prekindergarten, kindergarten, first, and second grade) 32 pages with 500 to 600 words. If you have 1000 in your picture book, editing is in order.

**Ages 7 - 10** (second, third, and fourth grade) 32 to 48 pages with approximately 1000 words

**Ages 9 - 13** (fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade) 32 to 80 pages in the 1500 to 3000 word range. These longer projects include graphic novels, photographic nonfiction, or picture-rich fiction.

**Middle Grade chapter books** are 20,000 to 35,000 words

**Young Adult** books have a word count of 55,000 to 80,000

**Full length novels for adults** are traditionally 40,000 to 90,000 words with chick-lit toward the shorter end, and contemporary, mainstream, mystery, romance, suspense, thriller, and literary on the longer side.

NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month in November) aims for 50,000 words

Westerns are some 65,000

Memoirs log in around 70,000 to 80,000

Sci-Fi and Fantasy run longer at 100,000 to 115,000

Novellas range from 17,500 to 39,999 words

Compilations average 12,000 words

Novelettes average 7,500 to 17,499 words

Short stories for teens and adults land under 7,500 words



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