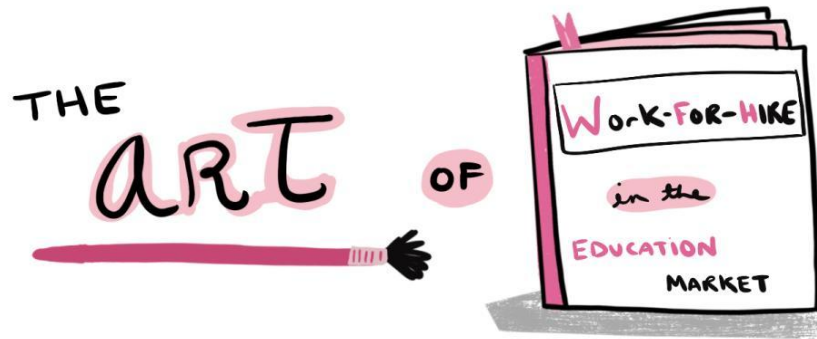




The Art of **Work-for-Hire (WFH)** in the **Educational Market** Cheat Sheet by [Melissa H. Mwai](#)



by Melissa H. Mwai

[Part 1: Work-for-Hire Checklist](#)

[Follow WFH publishers, book producers, & jobs](#)

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[Match your sample's writing style](#)

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[Part 2: Work-for-Hire Challenges & Fixes](#)

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Part 1: Work-for-Hire Checklist

☐ Follow WFH **publishers, book producers, & jobs**

- **Publishers:** Capstone, Innovation Press, Kane Press, Lee & Low Books (*new, unagented writers*)
- **Publishers:** Nat Geo, Rourke, Macmillan Education, Scholastic *agent, publication, or industry connections*)
- **Book Producers:** Wonderlab Group, Potomac Global Media, Red Line Editorial (*check locally*)
- **Job Boards:** Publishers Marketplace, Publishers Weekly, ShelfAwareness

SOURCES: Ask Google & industry professionals

- [Educational Publishers by Reedsy](#) & [Children's Educational Market by Evelyn Chester](#)
- [American Book Producers](#)
- WFH author credits: [Annette Whipple](#), [Monika Davies](#), [Elliot Smith](#)

☐ Read **submission guidelines & catalogues**

- Look for a nonfiction series written by multiple authors published yearly
- Usually nonfiction history or science books, fact books, encyclopedias, dictionaries
- Check the copyright for a book producer or editors to scan their catalogue

SOURCES:

- [Writing for the Educational Market from the Highlights Foundation](#)
- [5 Kinds of Nonfiction by Melissa Stewart](#)

☐ Match your sample's **writing style**

- Find topics that interest you overlap with series
- Match book structure like table of contents, headers, sidebars, glossary, etc.
- Is their tone informative, funny, second-person...?

☐ Match your sample's **writing level**

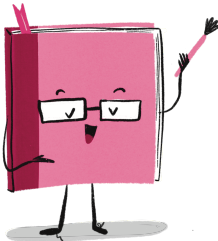
- Reading Level = Word choice + Sentence length + Word Count + Topic

SOURCES:

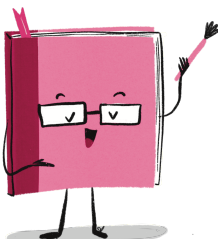
- [The Children's Writer's Word Book by Alijandra Mogliner](#)
- [ATOS Analyzer](#)
- Merriam-Webster: Student Dictionary/Thesaurus

Part 2: Work-for-Hire Challenges & Fixes

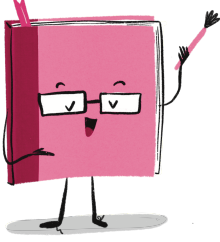
1. Juggling Details & Deadlines

	Fix: Organize Project Docs, Track Word Counts, & Plan for Off Days. → Organize project docs on your computer or cloud. Flag important docs by color or keyword. → Track daily word counts by section in a spreadsheet. → Use a calendar to track deadlines and invoices.
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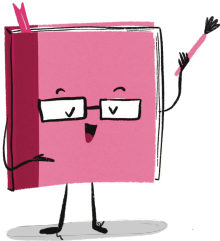
2. Running into Writer's Block

	Fix: Change Your Writing Routine → Try writing longhand, using voice memos, or notes. → Find interesting story threads, facts, and descriptions to engage you & your readers. → Write out of order. Write an exciting section first. Write the beginning last.
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3. Dealing with Surprises

	Fix: Change What You Can & Let Go of the Rest → Ask your editor questions. → Discuss factual/content issues with your editor. → Use track changes for everything. → Remember your book is a collaboration with publishers.
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4. Bonus: Organizing your Research

	Fix: Use Digital Organization Tools → Hyperlink <u>and</u> screenshot sources. → Develop a list of trusted sources like JStor, Library of Congress, Google Scholar, etc.. → Scribbr: for citations and bibliographies. → One Tab: for saving tabs. → Notion: an online customizable workspace. → Go analog. Use the same keywords/colors as your digital workspace.
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Part 3: Bonus Sources

1. *Behind the scenes: “The Mysterious World of Work-for-Hire Early Readers” by Melissa H. Mwai.* *Beth Anderson’s Blog, Children’s Writer.*
<https://bethandersonwriter.com/2024/03/08/behind-the-scenes-the-mysterious-world-of-work-for-hire-early-readers-by-melissa-h-mwai/>.
2. MSU Research. “Research and Publishing Ethics in the Age of AI: Copyright, Community Consensus, and Spaces Between.” *YouTube*, 20 Nov. 2024,
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Knh55PeB_Q.
3. Mwai, Melissa H. “Storystorm 2024 Day 17: Melissa H. Mwai Shares Research Gems.”
Tara Lazar’s Writing for Kids (While Raising Them), 2024,
taralazar.com/2024/01/17/storystorm-2024-day-17.
4. Tools for Dynamic Nonfiction (KidLit Writing Tips). The KidLit Deconstruction Zone Podcast. *YouTube*, 30 Sept. 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izuaAZHBgtU>.
5. Stewart, Melissa. [*Nonfiction Writers Dig Deep: 50 Award-winning Children’s Book Authors Share the Secret of Engaging Writing*](#). 2020.¹
6. Salas, Laura Purdie. [*Writing for the educational market: Informational Books for Kids*](#). Createspace Independent Publishing Platform. 2014.

¹ I’m a [Bookshop.org affiliate](#) and will earn commissions through link purchases.