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THE
**COMPLETE
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"In this honest and precise book on writing for children, Harold and Lynne have managed to cram in almost everything about writing for children there is to know."

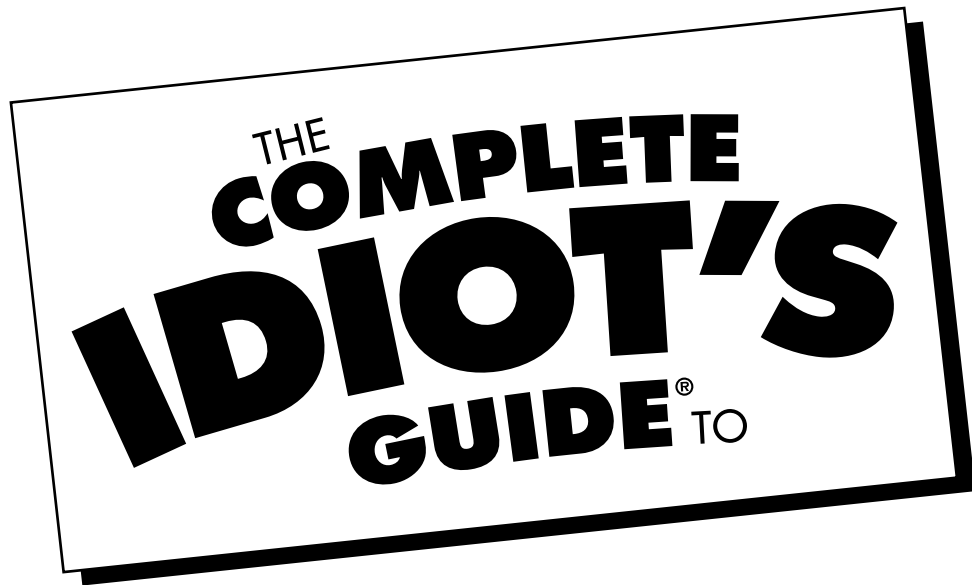
—Jane Yolen, author

Publishing Children's Books

- ◆ **Practical advice** on getting started and developing your talent
- ◆ **The basics** on writing—and selling—books kids will love and parents will buy
- ◆ **Idiot-proof tips** to guide you through the publishing process

Harold D. Underdown and
Lynne Rominger





Publishing Children's Books

*by Harold D. Underdown and
Lynne Rominger*

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Foreword

In this honest and precise book on writing for children, Harold and Lynne have managed to cram in almost everything about writing for children there is to know.

Almost everything.

What they have left out are these three things: joy, gathering, and ducks.

I know this is an odd list. But read on a bit and see what I mean.

Joy. Too many writers talk about the difficulties of writing. How it takes blood and bile. How it is enormously difficult and lonely. How no one in his or her right mind would plan to make a living at it.

But I always want to come down on the side of joy.

Think of it: You will be writing down stories, poems, anecdotes, and information that might change lives.

I always told my children that they should leave the world a little better than they found it. Some might say it's an easy task, given in what awful shape the world is now. But I believe they have taken that mother line to heart. They are good, moral adults, and in their work do make a difference to the world.

Well, I am not modest about it. I get enough letters from children whose lives I *have* changed with my fictions and my poetry to know that it happens. On a small scale—certainly. One reader at a time—absolutely.

Art can work miracles.

Story can.

Now about **gathering**, here is what I mean.

My son Adam, his wife Betsy, and their little daughter Alison live in Minneapolis. When I travel there, I know I will visit with family. Have good meals. See friends. Indulge in amusing conversations. Lots of fun music. (Adam is in two bands.)

What it doesn't mean is writing.

I can still accomplish daily things like keeping up with e-mail and phone calls.

But I do no writing.

Still, I consider these kind of trips “gathering days.” Good writing is made up of details. So on these hours away from the computer, away from actual writing, I become a collector of details. Some I collect actively, most passively.

The sweet talc smell of the baby's neck, under the chin. The way my son flicks his long hair away from his daughter's grabby hand. How John, who plays backup guitar