

Writing Faith in Children's Fiction – Learning Lab

With Penny Reeve – *Write His Answer Online Christian Writers Conference Intensive*
June 2026

What is Children's Literature?

Usually written for _____ by _____.

What makes a good children's book?

Thinking about your favorite children's book: _____

- Why do you love it?
- What may limit engagement for today's readers?

5 Rules for Writing Children's Books:

Rule #1 - Don't assume writing for children is easy

Rule #2 - Keep emotions real and fiction true

Rule #3 - Don't dumb things down

Rule #4 - Remember your audience, but don't forget the market

Rule #5 - Never underestimate the power of story

The Pendulum of Faith:

“What”, “How”, and “Why” of Writing for Children:

- What are you writing?
- How will you do it?
- Why does this book/s matter?

Getting Practical with 5 Key Questions:

Question #1 – Who is my audience?

- Where are they on their spiritual/faith development journey?

Question #2 – What is your BIG idea?

- What is the faith idea you are hoping to communicate?

Question #3 – How does your character grow?

- What is your character's spiritual/faith journey arc?

Question #4 – How can you avoid being cheesy?

- How will you keep your story emotionally and spiritually "true"?

Question #5 – How will you use Scripture?

- How will you use the Bible when writing this story?

Additional Notes:

About the Presenter:

Penny is an award-winning Australian author of more than 30 books for children. Writing as Penny Reeve, Penny Jaye, and Ella Shine, she writes picture books, junior fiction, children's Bible studies, and young adult fiction, always striving to empower young people to respond to the complex, fascinating, and sometimes difficult world we live in.



Penny has a Master of Arts in writing and literature and is undertaking her doctorate research on spiritual questioning in young adult fiction. She was a 2022 ADM Senior Research Fellow, has delivered keynotes at the Blue Ridge Mountains Christian Writers Conference, and teaches Writing for Children at Tabor University, Australia. An experienced speaker, workshop leader, and conference presenter, Penny has a particular interest in equipping Christian children's writers.

Some of her published work includes the picture book *Can God See Me?* (illustrated by Shannon Melville), the *Pet Sitter* series of chapter books (collaboratively written with Cecily Paterson under the pen name Ella Shine), and a gripping novel for upper YA, *Out of the Cages*.

For more information, or to contact Penny visit www.pennyreeve.com

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