Writing For Children Course - Synopsis

Module 1 – Introduction
Welcome to the Writers Bureau – your first and most important step to becoming a published writer – how to build on your natural talent – how to enjoy your course – hints for studying successfully.

Module 2 – Making a Writer Out of You
Deciding when and where to write – how to start your writing – overcoming writers’ block – the basic books and tools you need – how to organise yourself – the importance of reading widely – the personal qualities every writer needs – coping with rejection – the need to build on firm foundations.

Module 3 – Getting Started

Module 4 – Fiction for the Under 12s

Module 5 (i) – Genre Fiction – Fantasy, Horror and Science Fiction

Module 5 (ii) – Genre Fiction – Other Genres
Author led-v-series led stories – the pros and cons of each examined – historical novels and crime/thrillers – is factual accuracy necessary? – retelling legends and local stories – what is acceptable in the romance genre – working to a series house style – what are publishers currently looking for? – writing for the educational market – reading schemes – writing for less confident readers – looking to the future.

Module 6 – Writing for the YA Market
What is YA – the age range – word length. Can you remember what it was like to be a teenager? Are you familiar with the teenage world and how they speak? Other things to consider: your characters, voice, emotion. Do your research properly – think about your title. Viewpoint – tense – swearing and sex. Planning the beginning – flashbacks and time-slips. The end – there must always be hope.

Module 7 – Picture Books

Module 8 – Puzzle and Activity Books
Choosing a theme – getting ideas – finding a new angle – specialist activity books – story/activity books – what about the art work? – plotting the book – writing up the puzzles: dot-to-dot, crosswords, mazes, matching pairs, counting, spot the difference, colouring by numbers, rebus, find things in a picture, word searches, unscrambling words, anagrams, codes, missing letters, riddles, general knowledge, logic and other puzzles – activities – materials – making sure it works – writing the instructions – the artwork – pull outs – joke books – approaching a publisher – payment for photo-copying your work; the ALCS.

Module 9 – Writing for Magazines
Getting started – American magazines – annuals – the importance of research – magazine content – short stories: studying style, thinking-up ideas and using the right language, presentation – picture strip stories: the art work, the story board, writing the text, picture strips with speech bubbles – comic strips: speech bubbles, captions, sound effects, making the pictures do the talking – photo stories – writing articles: choosing your subject, finding a new angle, research, writing it up – puzzles – activities – quizzes.

Module 10 – Non-fiction Books

Module 11 – Writing Poetry

Module 12 – Presentation and Publication

Module 13 – Marketing Yourself and Your Work

Module 14 – Supplement: Punctuation & Spelling
Everything you need to know if you’ve ever worried about either aspect of your writing, or you just want to check on a point about which you need clarification.