

Week

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## Unravel the Mysteries of the Market

This week you will research children's books and the market. This step is every bit as important as the actual weeks of writing and revision.

Shirley Raye always scopes out the market before a new project. Years ago she got an idea for a nonfiction book by reading Richard Ellis's *The Search for the Giant Squid: The Biology and Mythology of the World's Most Elusive Sea Creature*. Recalling her own childhood interests, she knew inquisitive youngsters would relish a book about this fascinating creature. She spent her planning week in bookstores and the children's section of the local library. Her research revealed there was no nonfiction reader for grades 2-4 about the squid.

She read dozens of books aimed at kids in this age category. She studied the diction and sentence structure. She counted words, paragraphs, and pages. This intensive market analysis provided her with a suitable blueprint or pattern—a 48-page book of 950 words. She also compiled a list of publishers that had already released books similar in style to the one she intended to write. Then she wrote *Tentacles! Tales of the Giant Squid* and sold it to Random House!