

Engage young writers by hosting a

WRITING MAGIC

event at your store!

Dear Bookseller,

This September, Newbery Honor author Gail Carson Levine will publish her new novel, *Fairest*, a magical adventure set in the world of *Ella Enchanted*. But that's not all! She will also release *Writing Magic*, a new guide for young writers who want to fill their fiction with life and make it fly off the pages.

In this kit, you'll find everything you need to encourage the young writers who come into your store—you'll have activities to host your very own *Writing Magic* event. With guidance and advice from Gail Carson Levine herself, this activity kit features exercises inspired by *Writing Magic*.

- Each activity in this kit can be completed independently of the others. If you prefer, the exercises can build upon one another, from the first activity, which loosens the imagination with a free-write, to the scene-writing activity that ties together all the skills learned from this kit. Use your own judgment—it all depends how you want to run your event.
- The activities in this kit are designed to be self-contained: There is space on each page for participants to write. All you need to provide are pens and pencils and some extra paper (or copy the lined sheet provided) just in case their imaginations run away with them.
- Writing can be very taxing. Be sure to have drinks and snacks on hand for these young literati at work.

Have fun, and enjoy your creative writing time!

Warm up your imagination

Take a few minutes to free write five new story ideas.

Free writing is writing whatever comes to your mind as soon as it comes to it; without thinking, you put the words on paper. Don't worry about grammar, spelling, or even making sense—the point is to loosen your imagination. If one of your ideas is irresistible, keep going with it.

Reproducible Activity

For more information about *Writing Magic* and Gail Carson Levine, visit www.harpercollinschildrens.com.

Create your character

Getting to know a character is one of the most important things you as a writer can do.

Write a sketch of a character in your story. What is the character's name? Age? What does the character like to do on Saturdays? What is your character's favorite food and color? Make a list or write a paragraph of description about your character.

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Focus on the details

Spend a minute or two focusing on your surroundings.

What do you see? What do you smell? Is it noisy or quiet? The answers to these questions are the details of a story. Focusing on the world around your character is what creates description in your story.

Now it's time to try it with your character. Use one of the situations below (or come up with your own) to create a scene full of description and details.

- Your character is on a boat at sea.
- Your character is in the middle of a crowded city.
- Your character is exploring an enchanted forest.

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Give your characters a voice

Dialogue is the voice of your story.

“I don’t suppose your eyes ever pop out,” I said.

“I don’t think so.” Hattie smiled complacently. “They’re too small to pop.”

This is an example of dialogue from Gail Carson Levine’s book *Ella Enchanted*.

Dialogue moves the story along through conversation between characters. It is a great way to get details, emotions, and thoughts into your story.

Now write some of your own. Imagine your character is telling a secret to a friend.
Write the dialogue.

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Write your favorite part first

You don't always have to start writing a story at the beginning.


Sometimes, to really get into your story, you need to start with the part of the story that interests you the most. Write a scene. Don't worry about where it falls in your story—if it is the beginning or the end; just write your favorite part. Try to use lots of detail and plenty of dialogue.

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Extra inspiration



A large, blank, lined writing area with a vertical margin line on the left. Three hole-punch marks are visible on the left side of the page.

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