

## Laura Purdie Salas – Online Writing Courses

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### Writing Children's Nonfiction Books for the Educational Market

An online workshop from August 10 – August 21, 2009

Participate in an online class (with new content posted daily, Monday–Friday) for two weeks and learn how to get assignments writing nonfiction books. Here's how it will work:

You will read a private lesson online each day (at whatever time is convenient for you) that will contain information, as well as online resources, sample materials, and a homework assignment. Some days the homework assignments will be brief. Other assignments will be more involved. You should set aside about an hour (or a bit more) each day for reading the materials, working on homework, and participating in discussion.

After you read the material, you will post comments online. These can be responses, ideas, opinions, questions...I'll respond, and I hope everyone will participate so that we have lively discussions.

After the last post on August 21, I'll leave the blog available for one more week and will continue to answer questions and participate in discussions.

At the end of this two-week course, you will have all the information you need to start approaching publishers with introductory packets. You'll be ready to create your own packet, including your cover letter, writing sample, and resume.

This two-week class will go further in-depth than my one-day in-person workshop. Writers with some experience or a great critique group will be ready to move forward on their own and create their submission materials. Writers who feel a little more hesitant or who don't have a critique group have the option of purchasing a critique from me of their cover letter and/or their writing sample. You would have 6 months after class ends to submit your materials to me for critique. You can order the critique services when you register for a small discount, or you can wait until the end of the two-week class to decide. Again, the critique extensions are totally optional! I've had students in my in-person workshops (which don't include critique) go on to get contracts for books. I'll give you all the information you need for that during the class!

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## Syllabus: Writing Children's Nonfiction Books for the Educational Market

(Please note: the order may change somewhat. Also, please note that this is an **intense** 2-week class.)

### Lesson Topics

Introductions and Trade vs. educational publishers  
Finding publishers and catalogs and Analyzing catalogs  
Introductory packet and The cover letter  
Writing samples and The rest of the introductory packet  
Studying a series

Series guidelines  
Working with editors  
Readability – What is it and how will you use it?  
Research tips  
Pay and contracts

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### Nuts & Bolts Info: Writing Children's Nonfiction Books for the Educational Market

The class will be **limited to 15 people**.

**The cost is \$200.**

I will need 5 students minimum in order to hold the class. If fewer than 5 students register, all monies paid will be refunded to those who did register.

You will need to obtain catalogs and some books to look at. I'll make this class as online-friendly as possible, but it really helps to have some things in-hand, too. Upon registration, you'll see the Welcome Letter, which will tell you the list of items to obtain (none should cost you any money).

All class materials will be confidential. The materials I post are for your information and use, and you are free to print them out to save as a reference. They are not to be forwarded to other people or photocopied, emailed, or shared in any form with other people. Thanks for your cooperation. We need these assurances to make everyone feel comfortable sharing their work!

Cost of critiques:

	Order at Registration	Order at End of Class
Cover Letter	\$40	\$50
Writing Sample (up to 800 words)	\$60	\$75

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### Instructor Bio

Laura Purdie Salas started out writing for grown-ups, but she soon discovered that kids were her favorite audience. After graduating from college with an English degree (emphasis in Creative Writing), she worked as a magazine editor, writing occasional freelance articles for newspapers and other magazines on health and education topics. She then taught 8<sup>th</sup>-grade English for two years and rediscovered her love for children's literature. Laura turned her focus to writing for kids and has never looked back. She writes realistic fiction, all kinds of poetry, and nonfiction books and articles.

Laura is a member of the Children's Literature Network and the Society for Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. She teaches writing for children (to adults) through the Loft Literary Center in Minneapolis and is a former instructor for the Institute of Children's Literature.

Laura has written more than 80 nonfiction books for kids. Please see her website (<http://www.laurasalas.com>) to learn more about her books. For a complete listing of her published and some of her forthcoming books, please see this .pdf file: <http://www.laurasalas.com/pages/about/My%20Books.pdf>.

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### Student Comments

I just want to say that I really am glad I took this class. Even though I have been working as a writer for a number of years, it has cleared up some mysteries about the world of educational publishing for me, about the NF market in particular, of course, but also gives me some ideas about how to seek out the kind of work I want in general.

---[Katie Rawson](#)

I feel you covered everything thoroughly and if I am persistent I will be offered work in the educational nonfiction world.

---[MaryEllen Ryan](#)

Fabulous Class! Hands on, professional level, intense.

---[Linda Brennan](#)

Everything was fabulous. I had no idea I would learn this much information. Sharing your experiences, letter samples, and resources was the most helpful. Not everyone is willing to share so freely! The critiquing was very valuable. I appreciated your "no stress" approach to homework.

---[Julie B. Wise](#)

Laura, I enjoyed this class and learned a lot. Thanks so much for making the information available.

---[Linda Herman](#)

I also want to say that I got so much out of this class—beyond my expectations. And I really enjoyed it. I am so grateful I came across your announcement on our SCBWI e-mail list. You have been an exceptional teacher and done a great job of combining being frank with being kind and gracious. Thank you.

---[Karin Fisher-Golton](#)