

Libraries Helping Teens: 10 Things to Help Aspiring Writers

#1: Write for your school newspaper or yearbook

If your school doesn't have one, then start one. It's a great way to practice writing and get some experience.

#2: Be realistic about where you submit

Rolling Stone probably isn't going to be interested in your short story about a wild horse in Alberta. Target publications that are more interested in the type of writing you do.

#3: Read

Reading new authors and writing styles will help you with your own. Stephen King once said, "If you don't have the time to read, then you don't have the tools to write."

#4: Improve your writing

Write every day. Start or join a writing club. Take courses. Start a blog or even just write in your diary.

#5: Write for a local paper or youth publication

Smaller publications often publish writing from young people.

You could also try someone like *Young People's Press* based in Toronto. They supply articles to newspapers across the country written by young people. They also have a web site that publishes young writers.

#6: Enter contests

Bookstores, local organizations, newspapers, magazines and national groups all hold contests for young writers. See if they're legit first. Then start writing.

The *League of Canadian Poets* is legit and they're running a contest for young poets.

#7: Check out websites for young writers

The Internet has a number of websites for young people. It's a great way to make contacts and find places to publish your work; places you might not have known about otherwise.

#8: Read books on how to get published

What better way to learn than from someone who's been there and done it? Check out your local library or bookstore.

#9: Publish yourself

Start a zine, write about what you want and distribute it where you want. Or ask the librarian at your school to start a shelf for students' writing.

#10: Be patient and persistent

The truth is it isn't easy to get published. It takes a lot of time and effort and practice. So hang in there!

[From:

http://www.cbc.ca/streetcents/guide/2003/06/s05_01.html]

"Writing takes more than talent. It takes a kind of nerve... and a lot of hard, hard work."
~ Georgia O' Keefe, American painter