

101 BEST WEBSITES FOR WRITERS

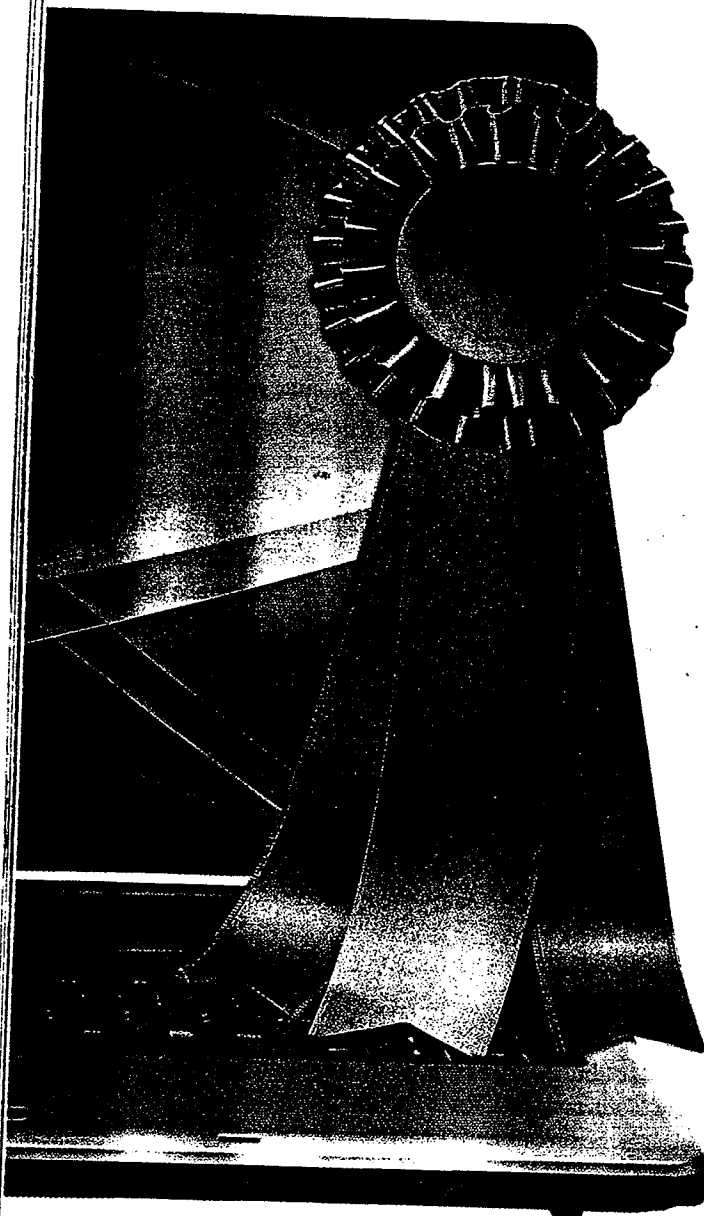
FROM WORD CHALLENGES TO CRITIQUE GROUPS TO HOT MARKETS, OUR ANNUAL LIST OF BEST WRITING WEBSITES IS A ONE-STOP SHOP FOR ALL THE FREE RESOURCES YOU'LL NEED TO FIND SUCCESS.

by Brian A. Klems

Most writers prefer to spend their time ... well, writing. Here, we've attempted to make that job a little easier.

Introducing our 11th annual 101 Best Websites for Writers. This year we sifted through more than 2,700 nominations and pulled the best of the bunch. The list, which features more blogs and free market listings than in years past, has been divided into eight sections: challenges/creativity, general resources, agent blogs, publishing resources, jobs and markets, writing communities, genres/niches and fun for writers. We've also included symbols (see the key on the opposite page) with each listing so you can quickly scan to see if the site offers what you're seeking: blogs, chatting, critiques, classes/workshops, contests, forums, jobs, markets, e-newsletters, podcasts and content for young writers.

Don't see your favorite site? Send comments and nominations for next year's list to writersdigest@fwmedia.com with "101 Websites" in the subject line (deadline is Jan. 1, 2010).



CHALLENGES/CREATIVITY

canteach.ca/elementary/prompts.html

Want to dig deep into your inner psyche? Try these personal writing prompts.

jc-schools.net/write/create.htm YW

Check out this writing prompt generator, which is accompanied by a dancing pencil. Yes, you read that correctly.

nanowrimo.org B  F  YW

Clear your November calendar and join fellow writers on this month-long challenge to write 50,000 words in 30 days.

ourecho.com  F

Everyone has a story, and users of this site want to read yours. Founder Scott R. Lupo's goal is to document stories so future generations can enjoy them.

[seventhsanctum.com/generate.php?](http://seventhsanctum.com/generate.php?genname=writechallenge)

[genname=writechallenge](http://seventhsanctum.com/generate.php?genname=writechallenge)

Step 1: Decide how many writing challenges you want. Step 2: Select the number of predetermined elements you'd like to incorporate. Step 3: Write. The challenges are tough, but fun.

sixsentences.blogspot.com B  

Can you write a story in six sentences? Submit your brief masterpiece for consideration here.

smithmag.net/sixwords

Never mind six whole sentences: This site challenges you to write your memoir in six *words*. The best of the bunch are compiled in book form.

writingfix.com YW

Filled with useful lessons and tips for adults and kids, WritingFix also offers a fun writing prompt generator.

GENERAL RESOURCES

www.askoxford.com  YW

We love this site's Word of the Day e-mail function. Without it, we wouldn't know what a "sudatorium" is. (By the way, it's a room, especially in ancient Roman times, used for hot-air or steam baths.)

babynameworld.com

Having trouble naming your characters? Find names of all origins in one handy place.

bartleby.com

"The preeminent Internet publisher of literature, reference and verse providing students, researchers and the intellectually curious with unlimited access to books and information on the Web, free of charge." Couldn't have said it better ourselves.

Symbols and Abbreviations

B	BLOG		E-NEWSLETTERS
	CHAT	F	FORUMS
	CLASSES/ WORKSHOPS	\$	JOBS
	CONTESTS	M	MARKETS
	CRITIQUES		PODCASTS
		YW	YOUNG WRITERS

copyright.gov

Everything you need to know about copyright law is right here. We highly recommend the FAQ section.

facebook.com

If you aren't a part of the world's largest social networking site, you need to be. (See Page 40 to learn why.) Just don't "poke" too many people.

flashlightworthybooks.com

This site shares topic-based lists of handpicked book recommendations. Its motto: "Recommending books so good, they'll keep you up past your bedtime."

grammarbook.com B  

In addition to a breakdown of basic grammar and punctuation rules, this site offers fun interactive quizzes with answer keys and explanations.

ipl.org/div/farq YW

The Internet Public Library's Q&A section contains tons of great info, including a list of the 10 top-selling books of all time. Don't see an answer to your question? It's interactive: Just ask an IPL librarian.

sfwa.org/beware

No best-of-writing-websites list would be complete without Writer Beware, which is devoted to helping newbie writers and seasoned authors alike avoid getting scammed.

twitter.com

This free marketing tool allows you communicate with your family, friends, fans and potential fans in seconds with posts of 140 characters or less. (See Page 41 to learn more.)


wordcentral.com YW

All lovers of the English language can thank Merriam-Webster for this great time waster. There are games, daily buzzwords and trivia. Your kids will like it, too.

writing.shawguides.com

Looking for a conference near you? Search this extensive database by date, topic or region.

AGENT BLOGS

blogqueryshark.blogspot.com **B** 

Here agent Janet Reid dissects queries, posting lots of examples of what writers are doing right—and wrong. Send your query in. She just might critique it.

cba-ramblings.blogspot.com **B**

Rachelle Gardner specializes in Christian/inspirational writing and has a great knack for blogging about practical, useful topics, such as query tips or book proposal advice.

jetreidliterary.blogspot.com **B**

This second Janet Reid blog warrants a separate mention. Writers may love or hate her in-your-face style, but they all agree on one thing: She's a wealth of resources—and she shares them all.

nathanbransford.blogspot.com **B** 

Nathan Bransford knows a lot about publishing, and his blog is wide in scope. He's quick to host small contests, post pertinent industry news and blog the whole night through. It also doesn't hurt that he's likeable and funny.

pubrants.blogspot.com **B**

Denver-based agent Kristin Nelson's *Agenting 101* series is a must-read for every author about to send out a query.


PUBLISHING RESOURCES

aaronline.org

Search the Association of Authors' Representatives database to find vetted agents and their contact info. Check out the FAQs for a wonderful breakdown on what an agent can (and can't) do for you.

abookinside.blogspot.com **B**



Author Carol Denbow shares excellent writing, publishing and marketing tips on her blog. If we have one complaint, it's that she squeezes too much info on one page.

agentresearch.com/agent_ver.html **B** 

Looking into a new agent? Log on to check agents' public records for any negative reports.

agentquery.com **F**

Spend less time looking for an agent and more time writing with this free searchable database.

anotherrealm.com/preditors **F**   **F** **\$**

Preditors & Editors provides writers with information and contacts, as well as warnings about potential scams.

The Writer's Digest Family of Sites

WRITERSDIGEST.COM

Visit for tips and articles for writers of all genres and to interact with more than 20,000 writers. Plus, find writing prompts, contests, blogs from the editors at *Writer's Digest* and *Writer's Market*, and more.

WRITERSMARKET.COM

The *Writer's Market* site provides more than 6,000 market listings, updated daily to give subscribers the most current information available.

WRITERSONLINEWORKSHOPS.COM

Come here for one-on-one instruction from professional authors. New classes start throughout the year and cover everything from basic grammar to novel writing to marketing your work.

On MySpace

- myspace.com/writersdigest
- myspace.com/writersmarket
- myspace.com/wdbooks
- myspace.com/alice_cwim

To see where you can find WD on other social networks, check out Page 41.

authormba.com



This site discusses the business side of writing and offers free downloads on marketing, research and career planning.

booksandtales.com/pod/index.php

This chart comparison of print-on-demand publishers helps you learn the basics about each company. (Remember, prices and services change, so don't rely on this exclusively. Just use it as a starting point.)

carolkluz.homestead.com/index1.html **M**

Are 101 resources not enough for you? Swing by Carol Kluz's site for a few dozen more.

easywaytowrite.com/articles.htm **B**  **F** **M** 

The pop-up ads are a bit aggravating, but worth putting up with for the valuable info on this site. "Becoming a Better Writer: A 10-Step Guide" is a perfect place to start browsing.

editorunleashed.com **B**  **F** 

Former WD Editor Maria Schneider helps writers by sharing her expertise and writing tips, as well as providing interviews with high-profile authors.

fictionwriting.about.com B 

Updated in blog fashion, this site has great advice on fiction writing. Be sure to take its Figurative Language Quiz.

meredithsuewillis.com/writingexercises.html 

This author offers more than 100 free writing exercises.

misssnarksfirstvictim.blogspot.com B 

Miss Snark may be gone, but her victims live on. And this victim—the first of many—returns the favor by passing along (not-so-snarky, but useful) advice in her Secret Agent contest.

newpagesblog.blogspot.com B

This invaluable free blog provides news, information and guides to literary magazines, alternative media and more.

oncewritten.com B  F 

Need more content on your blog or website? OnceWritten.com offers free, self-updating "sticky content" graphs.

pageonelit.com 

Page ONE is a one-stop shop for author interviews, contest news, inspirational quotes and writing resources.

plotwhisperer.blogspot.com B 


We love this blog's name. We also think it offers great plot tips for writers.

querytracker.net B F

In one place, you can search for agents, view example query letters and schedule e-mail reminders to follow up on queries and submissions. What else do you need?

vsgrenier.com/newsletter.aspx  YW

Sign up for VS Grenier's SFC Newsletter for Writers. It contains writing success stories (and trial-and-tribulation stories), tips, contests and markets. Plus, all the newsletters are archived so you can go back and catch up.

winningwriters.com  

Gain access to 150 poetry contests just by subscribing to Winning Writers' free e-newsletter. Of course, we would be remiss if we didn't mention the Wergle Flop Humor Poetry Contest (for the "best humor poem that has been sent to a 'vanity poetry contest' as a joke").

writenews.com B

Read up-to-the-minute news for writers about the publishing industry.

writerschatroom.com B   

Jump at the chance to connect with authors—bestsellers and up-and-comers alike—during live chats. And don't miss Celebrity Sundays.

writersweekly.com   F \$ M 




A great place for self-publishing resources and new writer

tips, this site also offers a substantial bank of reprinted articles on writing.

writingcontests.wordpress.com B 

Often updated multiple times a day, this site hosts info about any and every writing contest its editor can find.

JOBS AND MARKETS

absolutewrite.com B   F \$ M 

This site contains more than 1,000 pages of useful content, including international market listings.

duotrope.com M 



Duotrope's Digest is a free database of more than 2,300 markets for short fiction, poetry and novels/collections.

ed2010.com B F \$

Track down a new magazine gig through the Whisper-Jobs postings—job listings, some public and some, well, whispered on the sly. After sending off a résumé, peruse the salary reports and soak up the advice section.

fundsforwriters.com  \$ M   YW

Editor C. Hope Clark delivers the inside scoop on grants, markets, contests and fellowships. Sign up for her free e-newsletter—you'll be glad you did.

fwintl.com B   F \$ M

Freelance Writing Organization—International is a free online database with thousands of job listings and freelance opportunities.

helium.com   \$ M




Search Helium's marketplace for freelance gigs.

journalismjobs.com \$

This site is updated daily with job listings for journalists, editors, online media and more.

marketlist.com B  M

This database of markets and contests that pay has been going strong for more than a decade.

mediabistro.com B   F \$ M 

Every freelancer should bookmark this site and frequent it often for the latest industry news and the great section dedicated to job listings.

mediajobmarket.com \$

Calling itself "the most powerful media job search engine online," Media Job Market houses hundreds of job postings along with several must-read articles on job hunting in the writing industry.

writergazette.com Ⓜ F \$ M 📄

Visit *Writer Gazette* regularly for weekly submission calls to paying markets.

WRITING COMMUNITIES

alongstoryshort.net 📄 Ⓜ ✍ F 📄

Celebrating their sixth anniversary this year, the editors of this e-zine pride themselves on their accessibility: They reply personally to every author who queries and offer suggestions on how to improve work.

bksp.org F 📄

Backspace features articles, columns and news from industry insiders. For access to the forum—which hosts literary agents, editors and authors—you'll have to cough up a \$30 annual fee.

bookglutton.com ⚡ ✍ 📄 YW

BookGlutton lets you share your manuscripts (in full, or chapter-by-chapter) with others, right in your browser, complete with built-in annotation and chat functions.

critiquecircle.com ✍ F

Writers of all genres are welcome to give and receive reader feedback at Critique Circle. The site is free, but donations to support it are welcome.

editred.com Ⓜ ✍ F

Give and receive peer critiques, and hone your skills with Edit Red's weekly writing challenges.

librarything.com F

Upload your personal library and network with others who love the same books you do.

mywriterscircle.com ✍ F \$

Boasting nearly 8,000 members, this forum has a Q&A section, a job thread and a critique section (for novels, nonfiction and scripts).

ning.com ⚡ F YW

Sure, you can create fan groups on Facebook or MySpace, but Ning allows you to create your very own social network page. Highlight your brand, add your own members, customize it to look exactly as you want and more.

rallystorm.com F

Need an online destination for your writing group? Create your own forum here. Setup is easy and relatively painless.

spawn.org 📄

The Small Publishers, Artists and Writers Network helps you research sources, publishers, printers and the media.

writersbbs.com ✍ F YW

On more than 50 active forums, members post daily writing challenges to keep you on your toes. Kids are welcome.

writerunboxed.com B

Learn about the craft and business of genre fiction through this site. The many author interviews are a plus.

writing.com B 📄 Ⓜ F

This community offers free e-mail accounts, online writing portfolios and more.

writingforward.com B

Writing Forward shares a wealth of writing information. "Are You Cut Out for Freelance Writing?" in particular is a real gut-checking article.

GENRES/NICHES

CHILDREN'S WRITING

kidmagwriters.com Ⓜ M 📄

Get a better understanding of the ins and outs of writing for children's magazines.

FANTASY/SCIENCE FICTION

sfwa.org Ⓜ F

The Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America's website houses news, notes and writing tips for all who love these genres. Just be aware that some of its functions (including the forum) are for members only.

FICTION

fictionfactor.com 📄 Ⓜ F M 📄

Everything you want to know about fiction—how to write better fiction, how to get your fiction published, how to promote and market your fiction—is here on this fun and useful website. You'll also find genre-specific links.

Set Your Sites

We're looking for the writer with the best personal website (or blog), one that was created and is maintained without outside design help. Sites will be judged on presentation, ease of use and marketing effectiveness. Send your nominations—and don't be shy, you can nominate your own site—to writersdigest@fwmedia.com with "Best Writer's Site" as the subject line. The deadline to enter is June 10, 2009.

Sites will be judged by the editors of *Writer's Digest*. The top 10 will be listed in our October issue, as well as our e-newsletter and on writersdigest.com. The writer with the best site will receive up to \$250; the nine runners-up will receive one-year subscriptions to *WritersMarket.com*.

FREELANCE

freelance-zone.com B

Two editors share freelance tips and post frequently on topics such as career resources, media and getaways for writers.

HORROR

horror.org/writetips.htm

Mort Castle, Tim Waggoner and others chime in on the art, craft and business of writing horror.


POETRY

jpicforum.info B  F

Give and receive feedback on your poetry. Be aware that The Poetry in Color forum is a "non-censoring community"—meaning there are some R-rated posts.

moontowncafe.com B   F  YW

This site wears several hats, including social networker and publisher. We also like MoonTown's YouTube channel, where you can upload videos of your poetry readings.

wildpoetryforum.com  F

"Wild Poetry Forum is an online, interactive community of writers and poets striving to improve their writing skills and to share their creative thoughts with others." Yes it is.

ROMANCE

coffeetimeromance.com B   F 

These romance writers feature live chats and interviews with authors and maintain an active forum.





romancedivas.com B   F 

For the fifth year in a row, the Romance Divas make the list. The site is useful, inspiring and easy to navigate.



romancejunkies.com  

Get a romance-writing fix of interviews, contests and chats.

SCRIPTWRITING

moviebytes.com    M 

Find screenwriting contests, markets or software that suits your needs in this site's giant database.

scriptwritersnetwork.org  

Check out this nonprofit's articles on feature script and TV script formatting, as well as its lengthy free newsletter.

SPIRITUAL

christianstoryteller.com  

While a little hard to navigate, this nonprofit site is dedicated to showcasing Christian authors, helping them to network, support and market their books.

host-a-jewish-book-author.com 

Need a Jewish book author to speak at your conference or to your writing group? This site has all the info you need, along with author interviews and podcasts.

muslimwriters.blogspot.com B

Read up on items of interest to Muslim writers, including scholarships, writing competitions, jobs and more.

THRILLER

murderby4.blogspot.com B

Murder by 4 follows four thriller/suspense authors who share their unique styles and diverse experiences, along with articles, author interviews and reviews.

WOMEN'S WRITING

literarymama.com B  

This site publishes fiction, poetry, nonfiction and so on—all centered around mothers writing about motherhood.



momwriterslitmag.com B  

Paula Schmitt's literary magazine for moms is a great read. We really enjoy the "Ideas that Spark" section.

wow-womenonwriting.com B  

WOW! Women on Writing is designed to support women throughout all stages of the writing process.

FUN FOR WRITERS

armchairinterviews.com B  

Plug in your headphones and let these author interviews inspire you as you write.

bookmooch.com

Earn points on this site for giving away your books, and redeem them to get books you want.

coolstuff4writers.com  


CoolStuff4Writers.com is home to the Book Doctor, who offers tips on book titles, word choices and ghostwriting.

ninthmoon.com

OK, so this site doesn't technically offer anything for free, but it does offer a great listing of gifts for writers, including books, journals, necklaces, coasters, t-shirts and more.

online-stopwatch.com

Have trouble getting motivated? Use this free online countdown clock to get your rear in gear.

thesource4ym.com/teenlingo  YW

Are your teenage characters authentic? Dig into this teen-lingo dictionary to bring their slang up to speed.

thinkexist.com/quotations/writing

Enjoy hundreds of inspirational quotes on writing. [WD]

BRIAN A. KLEMS (blog.writersdigest.com/qq) is the online managing editor of *Writer's Digest*.

[Author's note: Complete listings of these and many other publication/contest opportunities appear in *Go Public!—Encouraging Student Writers to Publish*. These listings include a more detailed description of each publication's needs, requirements, and guidelines, as well as payment rates and specific comments on the publication/contest.]

Cobblestone, The History Magazine for Young People

Cobblestone Publishing, Inc.
Suite C
30 Grove Street
Peterborough, NH 03458-1454
Phone: (603) 924-7209

A magazine of American history for readers ages 8–14. Accepts nonfiction, fiction, and poetry from writers of all ages.

Creative Kids

P.O. Box 8813
Waco, TX 76714-8813
Phone: (800)998-2208

A magazine of writing and artwork by students ages 8–14. Accepts stories, poetry, plays, editorials, and songs.

How on Earth!

P.O. Box 339
Oxford, PA 19363-0339
Phone: (717) 529-8638

A magazine published by the Vegetarian Education Network and accepting submissions from writers ages 13–24. Accepts nonfiction, interviews, food reviews, and creative writing.

Letters about Literature Contest

LAL - Level I (or Level II)
King's College
c/o The Graduate Reading Program
133 N. River Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711

An annual letter/essay contest for students in grades 4–7 (Level I) and grades 8–12 (Level II). Accepts letters directed to an author—living or dead—that describe how the author's book changed the reader's view of the world.

Listen Magazine

55 W. Oak Ridge Drive
Hagerstown, MD 21740
Phone: (301) 745-3888

A monthly publication for teenagers that encourages physical, social, and mental well-being. Accepts teen-oriented articles and true-to-life fiction from 1000–1200 words.

New Moon: The Magazine for Girls and Their Dreams

P.O. Box 3620
Duluth, MN 55803-3620
Phone: (218) 728-5507

A magazine published six times a year for girls 8–14, edited by girls 8–14. Accepts work from young writers for many departments.

Raspberry Young Authors Writing Contest

Raspberry Publications, Inc.
P.O. Box 925
Westerville, OH 43086-6925
Phone: (800) 759-7171

Contest open to students in grades 1–12. Contestants design a picture book (fiction or nonfiction) suitable for children in grades 2–5.

Read Magazine - Ann Arlys Bowler Poetry Prize

Bowler Poetry Prize
Weekly Reader Corporation
200 First Stamford Place
P.O. Box 120023
Stamford, CT 06912-0023
Phone: (203) 705-3406
Web: www.weeklyreader.com

An annual poetry contest for students in grades 6–12. Accepts up to three poems in any genre.

River of Words Contest

P.O. Box 4000-J
Berkeley, CA 94704
Phone: (510) 433-7020
Web: <http://www.irn.org>

An annual environmental poetry contest for students ages 5–19. Accepts poetry up to 32 lines about watersheds.

TeenInk

Box 30
Newton, MA 02161
Phone: (617) 964-6800
Web: www.TeenInk.com

Monthly publication of writing by high school and junior high school students. Accepts fiction, poetry, and nonfiction (in various categories including Opinion, Review, Community Service, Sports, etc.) *TeenInk* also publishes a separate *Poetry Journal* three times a year.

Writes of Passage

P.O. Box 1935
Livingston, NJ 07039
Web: <http://www.writes.org>

A journal featuring the poetry and prose of writers ages 12–19. Accepts poetry and short stories (up to five pages).

Figure 2. A sampling of publication and contest opportunities for student writers

Places to publish student writing

1. **English on line:** <http://english.unitecology.ac.nz/> Go to the writer's workshop and post student writing and/or respond to student writing from around the world.
2. **Scholastic: Kids are authors:** www.scholastic.com/kidsareauthors
3. **International Reading Association:** Student writing contests: www.reading.org. go and search the site.
4. **National Council of English Teachers:** Student writing contests <http://www.ncte.org/parents/students/108196.htm>
5. **Publishing students:** Crated by a teacher, has tips and lots of links: <http://www.publishingstudents.com/>
6. **Web English Teacher:** <http://www.webenglishteacher.com/publish.html>. A site that has links to places that publish student (Of all ages) writing.
7. **KidPub:** children's publishing: <http://www.kidpub.org/kidpub/> Kids can post their own writing and read other's writing.
8. **Student Publishing:** A list of links that publish student writing: <http://www.amphi.com/~pgreenle/EEI/studentpublish.html>
9. **The Write Moves:** <http://www.unit5.org/cjhsimc/hotlists/writemoves.htm> A site that publishes student writing and links to other places to publish
10. **Young Author's Workshop:** <http://www.planet.eon.net/~bplaroch/Publish.html> A list of links to places to publish
11. **KidsCom:** <http://www.kidscom.com/create/write/write.html> Publishes on line
12. **Kid Authors:** <http://www.kidauthors.com/>
13. **Kid's Haven:** <http://pages.sssnet.com/ohiobar/kids.html>
14. **Creative Writing for Kids:** <http://www.creativewriting4kids.com/>
15. **Splatterbox Press:** <http://www.splatterbox.co.uk/> Poetry website for children
16. **Young Poets:** <http://www.loriswebs.com/youngpoets/> Publishes children's poetry

Magazines that publish student writing:

1. **Highlights for children**
2. **Stone Soup:** <http://www.stonesoup.com/main2/printmagazines.html>
3. **Crunch:** An online magazine that publishes student writing; <http://nces.ed.gov/nceskids/crunch/>
4. **Young Writer:** The magazine for children with something to say <http://www.mystworld.com/youngwriter/>
5. **Merlyn's Pen:** <http://www.merlynspen.org/> This is a magazine that publishes pre-teens and teen's writing.

Teacher resource from Heinemann:

Publishing with Students: A Comprehensive Guide (2002) by Chris Weber, Atkinson School, Oregon

Just Google: publishing student writing or something similar and you will get tons of sites!

Markets for Student Writing

Creative Kids Quarterly literary magazine that publishes poetry, stories, editorials, plays, and songs. Ages eligible 8-14.
P.O. Box 8813, Waco, TX 76714 (512) 300-2220

Stone Soup Literary magazine of writing and art by children. Published six times a year. Ages eligible up to 13.
P.O. Box 83 Santa Cruz, CA 95063 www.stonesoup.com

Word Dance Quarterly magazine of children's writing. Encourages submissions in specified categories—including narratives about travel and haiku. Ages eligible K-8
Playful Productions, Inc, P.O. Box 10804, Wilmington, DE 19850
www.worddance.com

New Moon Writing by girls and women on the experience of being a girl. Looks for feature articles on such topics as famous girls in history, body awareness, and experiences with sexism. Pays for accepted pieces. Ages eligible 8-14.
34 E. Superior St, #200, Duluth, MN 55802
www.newmoon.org

The Writers' Slate. Published three times a year by the Writing Conference, Inc. Features poetry and prose by students and teachers. Ages eligible K-12.
Shelly McNerney, 7619 Hemlock St, Overland Park, KS 66204

Potato Hill Poetry Web site that publishes student poems and provides information on youth poetry contests. Ages eligible 1st-12th grade
www.potatohill.com

Teen Ink Magazine written exclusively by teenagers publishing poems and stories plus reviews of Web sites and other teen-friendly genres. Ages eligible 13-19.
P.O. Box 30, Newton, MA 02961 (617) 964-6800

