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### ARE THERE TWO AUDREYS?

**Fan Question; Do I write my stories so that adults can enjoy them also?**



In the back of my mind, I like to imagine that there are two of me when I write, sitting side-by-side. One Audrey is the adult me (who is writing the story) and the other Audrey is the child me of long ago. As my story matures, an imaginary audience arrives like invisible ghosts to listen to me read or sing my revisions out loud. My imaginary audience consists of children and people of all ages, and the child me is always among them.

Now this may sound strange, but in truth, I always begin with the idea of writing a story to entertain myself. If a story idea does not intrigue me, I figure it won't interest anyone else either.

To find an idea I often search within my

### ART DRAGONS

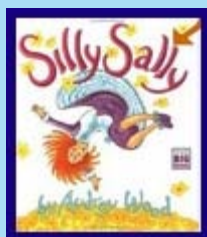
**Fan Question: Where do you write and what writing tools do you use?**



If I am not writing on a plane, at the beach or while waiting in line at our post office, I enjoy writing in my studio. Because I am also an illustrator of picture books, I have two areas in my studio, one area dedicated to each of my two passions, writing and art. When I illustrate I work at a drawing board or an easel in one end of my studio. Depending on the book I'll be illustrating, my art area will be filled with brushes, canvases, art papers, paint, colored pencils, chalk and inks. Two dragons define this area of my studio. One very large carved dragon sits on a table staring down at my work and seems to be cheering me on. A 10 foot long flying kite dragon is suspended above my drawing table keeping watch from an even higher altitude.

The rest of the studio is lined with book cases for my library and two enormous beds, each smothered with pillows. The beds are important writing tools. A low bamboo queen bed is placed below a wall which displays one of each of the books I have written, illustrated or collaborated

interests, personal experiences and observations, there I can often discover a wealth of possibilities which I can then feed into my imagination machine (my brain!). I enjoy the process of using my imagination to create a story and I am always excited and curious to discover where a plot or a concept will take me. Not all stories I write become published books. Some of them weaken and fizzle out – I grow disinterested in them and set them aside. Sometimes in the middle of writing a story I'll get struck by idea for



a better story. This happens often to me, for instance, I was writing a circus story when I suddenly thought of an idea about a funny girl who

loved to walk on her hands and tickle animals. I immediately dropped the story I was working on and began to write a poem which later became SILLY SALLY. <http://www.audreywood.com/books-written-by-audrey-wood/silly-sally/silly-sally>

So, in a sense, I do write stories for adults to enjoy because I am the adult writing the story and I have to enjoy it. If a story I am writing makes me feel an emotion (happiness, sadness, delight, wonder) I know immediately that I am on to something and others will enjoy it too.

Perhaps this is the reason that many have said that my books have both child and adult appeal.

on with my husband, my son, or other illustrators. I like to lie down and gaze at my books when I am in the writing or book designing mood. Contemplating my book covers reminds me of the many wonderful stories people have shared with me, stories about their experiences while reading my books, or enjoying one of my books as a child, or with their child. It's also inspiring to recall where I have been and to wonder what may be next up on the wall. My books feel like old friends.



The other bed, a king size, is where I prefer to write or pursue ideas for my stories. I consider this bed my desk. As I relax back into the pillows, I spread out with all of my papers, research materials, a sketch book, pencil and notebook, my lap top computer and my two adorable pugs. Sometimes I close my eyes and let my imagination begin to weave a story. I play with the story, seeing it like a little movie running forward and backward. If I am working on a story idea that is more developed, I sketch, write a first draft in pencil, or work on a final draft of the manuscript on my laptop.

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF SNORING

Working in my writing bed is very comfortable and helps me to move quickly into a dreamy mood which sparks my imagination. Both of my pugs snore, as all pugs do, and the rhythmic sounds they make are very



relaxing.  
Sometimes if I  
get stuck trying  
to figure out where my story is going, or I have a  
problem I want to solve, I close my eyes and fall  
asleep. Often, upon awakening 15 minutes later, I  
know just what to do.

*Audrey Wood*

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