



Hello Fellow Writers,

I started writing when I was very young. And lots of people gave me advice about what I should put into my stories. Some of it was good advice. So it took me a long time to realise that the only person who could decide what I would write about was *me*.

It's true for you, too. You get to choose what your book will be. When you're writing, you're free. You don't have to discuss your book with anyone else, unless you want to. You don't have to show it to anyone else, unless you want to. Inside your book, you're the monarch of your own kingdom, and what you say goes.

That's not to say you should ignore helpful advice about *how* to write. Far from it. Good use of language, plot and structure, characterisation and scene-setting are all important. But the subject matter, and the view you take of it, are all yours.

This is even more true if you're hoping your book will be published. Editors aren't looking for imitations of other books, movies, or TV shows. They want *your* original ideas. *Your* unique vision.

This is one of the greatest things about being a writer. You can create wonderful new worlds, full of awesome characters: weird-looking aliens, magicians with special powers, or monsters that will scare your socks off. Or you can write about an ordinary town, with ordinary people living there—but make your readers look at them in a new way, as if they'd never seen them before. The only limit is your own imagination.

So go for it!

Cherith Baldry (Erin Hunter)