

WOOF!

RUFF!

BOOK
ABOUT
MY
DOG

(ABOUT MY DOG)

CHRIS
→ BARTON.

Sarah
HORNE



HOW TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW TO MAKE A BOOK (ABOUT MY DOG) (AND EVERYTHING ELSE)

It doesn't matter how much or how little you already know about a subject when you start researching it; becoming more knowledgeable about something can feel great and be just as rewarding as it is challenging.

I think the most satisfying type of research is when you're focused on a topic that you're interested in—interested enough to write a book about it, or to consider studying it in school, or to pursue it purely for fun. For me, the hardest thing about researching is stopping my research. Ever hopeful that I'm *just one more* source away from learning the single most fascinating detail of the entire project, I always want to keep digging and digging.

If you're like me in this respect, reading a book such as *How to Make a Book (about My Dog)* may be only a first step in an inquiry into something you care about. In fact, a book like this might make you come up with new queries that you never considered before.

In that case, here are some further steps you can take:

Be specific. Do you want to know more about *writing* books? *Illustrating* them? *Agenting*? *Editing*? *Art directing*? *Publishing*? *Printing*?

The clearer you are about which aspects of a subject you want to research, the better you'll be able to ask for the information you want. This can also help limit the amount of information you receive that you don't need.

Make sure you think about synonyms or other common names for the aspects that interest you. For instance, you might want to research "writers," "authors," and "novelists."

Look for glossaries. There's a good chance that someone who is knowledgeable and trustworthy has shared a list, with definitions, of terms relevant to the subject you want to research. A web search for, say, *publishing* and *glossary* can be helpful in two ways.

First, having those terms already explained in writing means that you don't have to memorize them. You can just refer to the glossary when a source of information about your topic uses a term you don't know. Over time, you'll get familiar with the important ones.

Second, whoever provided that glossary might be a terrific source of additional information about your subject. What else can you learn from them?

Identify the experts. Besides compilers of glossaries, there are other types of experts that might be useful to you.

- Groups. We're talking associations and organizations, also known as societies, institutes, councils, and guilds. There's a good chance that at least one such group—perhaps even located nearby—provides reliable information about your subject to other people in that field or to the public.
- Museums and archives. Whatever the field or topic, if even just a few people are passionate about it, there might well be at least one museum or archive dedicated to it, with exhibits and other information available in person or online.
- Authors, podcasters, and filmmakers. As you know, when someone is really into a subject, they might devote a big chunk of their life to writing about it for books (or magazines, or newspapers, or websites). Or recording themselves talking about it. Or making a documentary movie or TV show about it. You can't trust *everyone* who has that sort of passion, but many of them are careful to get their facts right and to share where they got their information. They may not have exactly what you're seeking, but they can help point the way forward.

Ask a librarian. Librarians know so much about how to help people like you and me find the information we need, even if we don't know what it is. And the best ones are experts at using the single most powerful research tool: the question.

The question is the perfect combination of humble acceptance that something is not known and patient confidence that an answer can be found. (Why else would you ask?) There's one question in particular that I urge you to keep in mind no matter whether you're getting information from a representative of an association, a curator at a museum, an author, or a librarian.

When someone has been helpful, thank them—and ask, "Is there *just one more* source that you'd recommend?"



GOOD LUCK GETTING STARTED ON YOUR RESEARCH,
AND HERE'S HOPING YOU NEVER WANT TO STOP!

TIMELINE OF MAKING THIS BOOK

Kids sometimes ask me, “How many books can you write in a day?” My answer surprises them: It usually takes four and a half or five years between the day I start working on a story idea and the day the book is available in schools and libraries and bookstores. (And that’s assuming a story of mine *does* get turned into a book; many of my stories never do.) Sometimes, it takes less than three years, but one book of mine took fourteen. Along the way, I’ve learned how important it is not just to care about the book I’m trying to create but also to love the process of getting there. If you’re going to be in a process for a long while, you’ll be much happier if you find joy and satisfaction along the way. With this book, I certainly did.

Photo courtesy Chris Barton



8 years, 2 months before publication (BP): Chris Barton and his family adopt Ernie through Austin Dog Rescue.



5 years, 9 months BP: While writing his book about the use of dazzle camouflage on ships during World War I, Chris experiments with a version called *How to Write a Book about Dazzle Ships*. Editor gently suggests that this approach might be “a better fit for a simpler topic. Something like: *How to Write a Book about a Dog.*”

3 years, 3 months BP: Chris emails Editor to ask if she’d be interested in a nonfiction picture book about how a book is made, mentioning he often gets asked about that process during his school visits.

2 years, 8 months BP: Editor brings Chris’s outline and sample text for *How to Make a Book (about My Dog)* to an acquisitions meeting. The group says yes! (Chris usually has to write a complete manuscript before this happens, so he is especially excited by this news. Plus, he’ll get to write about Ernie!)

2 years, 7 months BP: Editor sends an offer to Chris’s agent for the manuscript, and they negotiate contractual details.

2 years, 3 months BP: Chris drives from his home in Texas to Minnesota to visit the offices of Lerner Publishing Group. As part of his research process, he interviews the editor and art director along with the publicist, a premedia operator, a production designer, a typesetter, the digital product

manager, the purchasing manager, a customer service representative, the warehouse manager, the marketing director, the editor in chief, the publisher, and the publisher’s dog, Percy.

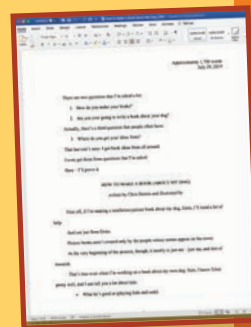
LAST, BUT NOT LEASHED!



Photo courtesy Chris Barton

2 years, 2 months BP: Chris sends Editor a complete manuscript (well, except for the part about the illustrator’s process).

1 year, 10 months BP: Editor sends Chris initial comments on the manuscript, and he sends back a revision two days later. Art Director shares samples from portfolios of illustrators who might be a good fit for the book.



1 year, 9 months BP: Editor shares the manuscript with another editor, who makes some comments and suggestions, and shares these thoughts with Chris. Once again, Chris sends in a revision in two days.

1 year, 8 months BP: Art Director hires Sarah Horne to illustrate. Editor sends (mostly) final text to typesetting. Art Director decides what size the book will be, how many pages it will have, and chooses a typeface for the text (though this might change after the art director sees how the type looks with the art).

1 year, 7 months BP: Chris interviews Sarah about her illustration process so he can correctly describe it in what until now has been a blank spread in the middle of the book.

1 year, 2 months BP: Chris, Editor, and the sales and marketing departments decide what the book's final title will be. (Sometimes it changes completely from what the author first called the book. In the case of this book, everyone agreed that the title Chris had given it was exactly right.)

1 year BP: Sarah turns in sketches. Chris, Art Director, and Editor review them, and Art Director provides feedback.

11 months BP: Sarah turns in revised sketches and several cover sketches. Art Director provides any final notes for little tweaks that Sarah should make when creating the final art. Art Director also shares cover sketches with the cover review group and receives many opinions on what will make the best cover. (The orange needs to be even more orange!)

10 months BP: Sarah turns in the final cover art, and Art Director again shares it with the cover group. They agree it's excellent! But are Chris's cowboy boots too close to the word "TO"? Perhaps they are. Do we really need cowboy boots on the cover at all? Well, they are a fun touch . . .

9 months BP: Sarah turns in the final art. The team rejoices! After reviews by Editor and Chris, Art Director decides whether to request any changes. They also review the text and mark changes that will help it sound better, be more accurate, or fit better with what's being shown in the art.

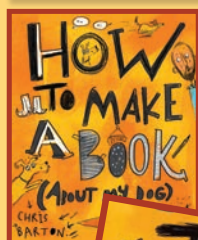


Photo courtesy Danielle Carnito
Photo of Ernie in photo courtesy Chris Barton

7 months, 2 weeks BP: Chris, Sarah, and everyone else working on the book review the layout with the updated final art and full back matter in place.

7 months, 1 week BP: A proofreader reviews the layout to check spelling, grammar, punctuation, and consistency. Publisher sends information to wholesalers (companies that sell books to bookstores and libraries) and online stores so they will be able to sell the book.

7 months BP: A premedia operator makes any necessary digital changes to the art, such as fading backgrounds behind the text so it will be easy to read.

6 months, 3 weeks BP: Chris and Sarah review the final layout. Art Director decides what color paper to use for the endsheets (the solid-colored pages that are glued to the inside of the front and back cover).

6 months, 2 weeks BP: Chris, Sarah, and everyone on the team reviews the seriously, we mean it, this-is-the-last-chance final version of the layout.

6 months, 1 week BP: The print buyer sends the final jacket, cover, and interior layout files to the printer. The premedia operator creates an ebook PDF.

6 months BP: The printer prints the cover, jacket, and pages of the book. To make the hard cover, a machine glues boards to the printed covers, and the cover art is wrapped around the edges of the boards. The printer folds and trims the pages and sews them together to make what's known as a book block. To attach the cover to the interior pages, the book block is glued into the spine, and the endsheets are glued down to the boards.

5 months BP: Early copies of the book are sent to reviewers so that bookstore and library buyers will be able to find out about the book and order it.

2 months BP: Finished books arrive in the warehouse.

3 weeks BP: Book shipments to wholesalers and other customers begin.

Publication Day: HOORAY! People can buy and read and share this book—yes, the very book you are reading right now!

For Karen Blumenthal, her excellent books,
and her excellent dog, Franklin
—C.B.

For Hazel
—S.H.

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For reading levels and more information, look up this title at www.lernerbooks.com.

Edited by Carol Hinz. Designed by art director Danielle Carnito.
Main body text set in PencilPete.
Typeface provided by JoeBob Graphics.
The illustrations in this book were created in Indian ink with a dip pen. Color and texture finished in Photoshop.

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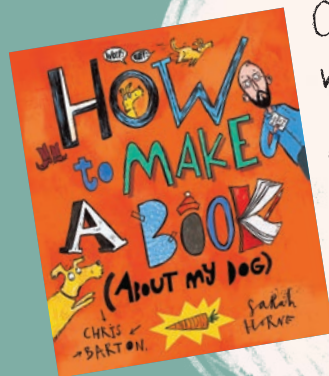
CHRIS BARTON has worked with several illustrators, editors, art directors, and publishing teams to make nonfiction picture books about subjects ranging from dazzle camouflage, daylight fluorescence, and the Super Soaker water gun to *Reconstruction*, *The Nutcracker*, and *Congresswoman Barbara Jordan*, but he's had only one Best Dog Ever, and that's Ernie. Chris and Ernie live in Austin, Texas, with their family. Get updates about Ernie (and occasionally Chris) at www.chrisbarton.info.



SARAH HORNE learned to draw while trying to explain her reasoning for an elaborate haircut at the age of nine. She has been an illustrator for almost twenty years, working on over seventy books, including *I Got a Chicken for My Birthday* and the *Puppy Academy* series. Sarah loves animals and grew up with pets, including a herd of goats—each of which was named after a dinosaur. When not working in her London studio, Sarah enjoys running, painting, photography, cooking, film, and a good stomp up a hill. See her work at www.sarahhorne.studio.

Jacket illustrations © 2021 by Sarah Horne
Ernie photo (also shown: Chris Barton) by Heather Gallagher
Sarah Horne photo by Hazel Thompson/True Image

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Oh, so THIS is what he
was working on instead of
playing with me?

Better be good.

—Ernie the dog

