



# PICTURE BOOK SUMMIT PITCH FORMULA

A pitch - also called an elevator pitch, hook or logline, is a 1-3 sentence mini-synopsis that captures the story and spirit of your picture book, without giving the whole thing away.

The pitch is the most important part of a query letter, and is also used alone when pitching via a submission form, through social media “pitch party” events, or when discussing your manuscript in person. Here is our tried and true pitch formula for narrative stories - whether fiction or nonfiction.

## Purpose of the Pitch

- To pique an agent or editor’s interest in your work
- To show an agent or editor that you write well
- To entice the agent or editor to want to read your manuscript

## Elements of a Narrative Pitch

- Who is the **HERO** of your story?
- What does the hero want? What are their **GOALS**?
- What or who is standing in their way? What are the **OBSTACLES** or **PROBLEMS** the hero faces in pursuit of their goals?
- What **ACTIONS** do they take in pursuit of solving their problem or achieving their goal?
- What is the **TAKEAWAY** or **THEME** for the young reader?

[picturebooksummit.com](http://picturebooksummit.com)

# Narrative Pitch Formula

**(HERO)** wants more than anything to **(GOAL)**, but they can't because **(OBSTACLE)**, so they **(TAKE ACTIONS)** and learn **(THEME/TAKEAWAY)**.

## Pitch Dos

- **Do lean into the voice of your manuscript** to evoke your narrative voice and approach.
- **Do keep it short:** 1-3 sentences is best.
- **Do include the title, word count, and genre** (fiction, non-fiction, bio), either in an intro sentence or in the pitch itself.
- **Do proofread carefully!** Make sure to avoid any grammar, spelling, or punctuation mistakes

## Pitch Don'ts

- **Don't reveal the whole story.** You want them to be curious enough to read the manuscript to find out what happens.
- **Don't rhetorical questions** - esp when the answer is yes or no.
- **Don't overuse adjectives and adverbs.** Show rather than tell by focusing on strong, specific verbs and nouns.
- **Don't compare yourself or your book to extremely famous authors** or boffo bestsellers.
- **Don't use superlative adjectives for your story** that might lead the agent or editor to think, "I'll be the judge of that!"