

# Growing Ideas:

## Some thoughts on getting started from Nina Crews

Here are some suggestions to help get the energy and excitement about a book idea to come through on the page.

- Fresh air. Sit outside, take a walk, do yoga, bounce a ball, move the body. When the body flows the mind can follow.
- Doodle. Those drawings on the margins of the page are not a waste of time. They are a way for the brain to get loose. Scribble, sketch, and don't worry about what the drawing looks like. Use doodles to get thoughts onto the page.
- Image boards. Collect images that will help to visualize ideas in a more concrete way. The items might inspire color scheme, mood, show important landmarks, or highlight important details.
- Surf the web. What questions need to be answered in order to tell the story? The internet is a great place to quickly research images and important facts.
- Experiment. Take notes, write word lists and fragments. Make 3-d models, collages, paintings or drawings. Remember these are not meant to be part of the finished project. Take chances and keep it loose.
- Read. Writers read other writers. Illustrators study other illustrators. Consider why something appeals or doesn't. Articulating thoughts about another's work can help make decisions about one's own work.
- Copy. Copying isn't such a bad thing when working out ideas. It can be a great way to look deeply at something admired and understand its mechanics whether it is a drawing or line of poetry.
- Throw it away. There are many good ideas, sentences, or sketches that may not end up in the finished work. They are still good, but don't use them if they hurt the story.

### Persistence and Patience

Many people may have the same great idea, but very few will *persist* and develop that great idea into book. Be that *persistent* person.

Eventually every author/illustrator must sit down to work in earnest, but remember everything needs time to grow. Be *patient* and be kind when the work frustrates, disappoints or takes longer than expected to develop.