

# PiBoIdMo

6<sup>th</sup> Annual • November 2014

Picture Book Idea Month



30 Ideas  
30 Days

Tara  
Lazar!



## What is PiBoIdMo?

It's Picture Book Idea Month! PiBoIdMo is a free November writing challenge for picture book writers and illustrators. The object is to jot down one picture book concept daily. By the end of the month you'll have at least 30 bright & shiny new ideas! You can then refer to these ideas throughout the year to jumpstart your creativity and write new manuscripts.

## Where is PiBoIdMo?

It's hosted on author Tara Lazar's blog at [taralazar.com](http://taralazar.com). Each day a picture book professional will post an article with creative inspiration to help you brainstorm that day's idea. Guest bloggers for 2014 include Caldecott Honor Award-Winner Molly Idle, Golden Kite Award-Winner Pat Zietlow Miller and NY Times Best-Selling Author Aaron Reynolds.

## When can I register for PiBoIdMo?

Registration begins October 25<sup>th</sup> at [taralazar.com](http://taralazar.com) and closes on November 4<sup>th</sup>. You do not have to register to participate, but those who do register will be eligible for prizes! You register by simply putting your name in the comments of the registration blog post and by following Tara Lazar's blog. There will also be an optional "Official Participant" badge for you to download and display on your social media site(s).

## How do I "win" the PiBoIdMo challenge?

Simply end the month of November with at least 30 new picture book ideas! Then you can sign the PiBo-Pledge (posted in early December) confirming you have completed the challenge. Those who register AND sign the pledge are eligible for prizes, like a consultation with a literary agent, a professional picture book critique, original signed art, plus much more!

## How do I prove that I have 30 ideas?

Taking the PiBo-Pledge is on the honor system. If you say you have 30 ideas, we'll believe you. And please keep your ideas to yourself. Don't send them to us and don't post them online for someone to steal. They are your precious creations.

## How do I connect with other PiBoIdMo participants?

Join our Facebook discussion group! Link to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/265963663444660> or search Facebook for "PiBoIdMo 2011". Press the "request to join" button and wait to be approved.



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## Exercises from PiBoIdMo's Past

### **Pimp Your Character (Zacharia O'Hara, 2013)**

- Draw a character. (I don't care if you're not an artist. Do it anyway.) Keep adding unique accessories—clothing, equipment, furniture, whatever. What do these things say about your character? Need animal ideas? Go to [CuteOverload.com](http://CuteOverload.com) or [FYeahCuteAnimalss.tumblr.com](http://FYeahCuteAnimalss.tumblr.com). "If done right, your character will reveal its own story."

### **Start with a Title (Tammi Sauer, 2013)**

- Tammi's "Princess in Training" began with just a title. So did Tara's "The Monstore". What clever and engaging word play can you invent for a title? Mash-up words to create portmanteaus, rhyme words that you wouldn't normally put together, or take a common phrase and change one or two words.

### **Relive Your Childhood (Peter Harren & Kayla Skogh, 2012)**

- Recall what YOU LOVED as a child. Really dig into your feelings about that thing/action. "Childhood is all feeling."

### **Make a Creativity Chart (Steve Barr, 2013)**

- Make a chart with three columns: "main character" (dog, rhino, fireman), "setting" (jungle, school, igloo), and "supporting character" (cowboy, baby, dragon). Write at least 20 entries in each column. Then pick one entry from each and create a story situation. Vary your columns, too! Try adding a column for emotion or problem.

### **Take a Hike (Paul Schmid, 2013)**

- Get up and get away from your desk. (Ryan Sias, 2013, suggests going to a gallery/museum or a bookstore/library. Ward Jenkins, 2012, rides the bus. Donna W. Earhardt, 2012, takes a shower. So does Tara.)





## More Tips from PiBoIdMo's Past

### **The Idea Box (Susan Taylor Brown, 2009)**

- Be a collector of lost items. Place them in a box you can access regularly. Imagine each item's backstory.

### **Great Beginnings (Shutta Crum, 2011)**

- Tuck your reader into the story with a beginning that answers who, what, where and when but leaves the reader wondering *WHY*? Write an opening sentence that answers the 4 W's.

### **Picture Book Structure (Tammi Sauer, 2012)**

- Picture books can be categorized by their story structure: traditional, concept, circular, cumulative, mirror, parallel and reversal. Try building your idea using these frameworks. For definitions and examples, search "Tammi Sauer structure" at taralazar.com to find this post.

### **Go Shopping (Pam Calvert, 2010)**

- Even if you're not an illustrator, storyboard paper can help you develop your ideas. Doodle to get unstuck; doodle to discover.

### **Keep an Image Board (Carolyn Crimi, 2011)**

- Similar to the idea box, stick images from magazines, greeting cards, photos, brochures and other printed materials on a corkboard to inspire you.

Visit the PiBoIdMo CaféPress shop at [cafepress.com/piboidmo](http://cafepress.com/piboidmo) for official merchandise, like the 2014 Idea Journal. Proceeds benefit Reading is Fundamental (RIF)!

