Thank you for your interest in contributing to the *Friend*. Here’s a list of story needs as well as some sample work. Please remember that all stories must be based on actual events, and involve main characters between three and 12 years of age.

We welcome stories that feature various family situations, and that show children standing up for what’s right even if the immediate consequence isn’t a happy one. We are always especially looking for stories with a setting outside of the United States. If you don’t feel confident submitting a polished story, send us a simple summary and we will consider it and possibly work with you to develop it. Thanks again!

**Winter 2014 • We need stories about...**

**Standards**
- Avoiding crude language
- Media decisions
- Respecting others while maintaining standards
- Sticking up for standards, even when it’s hard

**Milestones**
- Baptism
- General conference experiences
- Transitioning from Primary to YM / YW

**Sensitive Topics**
- Bodies (health, body image issues, etc.)
- Bullying / cyberbullying
- Disabilities (living with, supporting a family or friend with, kindness towards those with)
- Emotional development
- Finding a safe person to talk to about issues
- Forgiving
- “I can do hard things!” mentality; seeing failure as part of progress and learning
- Listening in Church and other places instead of being focused on electronics
- Loneliness
- Overscheduling
- Peer pressure
- Questioning your testimony and finding answers

- Showing respect to the opposite gender

**Families**
- Being friends with children from same-sex marriages
- Children helping their families choose the right
- Children who interpret for immigrant parents
- Stories featuring non-traditional families (part-member, convert, divorced, adoption, working toward temple, etc.)
- Sibling relationships
- Temple and family history work
- What to do when parents leave the church

**Other Principles**
- Characteristics of Jesus Christ
- Scripture study and associated blessings
- Following the prophets
- Life of Jesus Christ
- Mission prep and member-missionary work
- Obedience
- Repentance
- Reverence for sacred things
- Roles of Jesus Christ
- The Restoration and Joseph Smith

*(For examples of effective stories, see pages 3–6 of this document.)*
Other types of content

In addition to full-length stories, we accept the following:

**Poetry:** We are looking for easy-to-illustrate poems with catchy cadences and consistent meter. Poems should convey a sense of joy and reflect gospel teachings. We especially need brief gospel-themed poems that will appeal to preschoolers.

**Activities:** The *Friend* publishes family- and gospel-oriented puzzles and games. We also welcome simple recipes and craft projects that appeal to children.

**Music:** We occasionally publish short songs or hymns. All music entries should be submitted to the Church Music Committee. [(Visit music.lds.org)](http://music.lds.org)

**Children’s Submissions:** We welcome children’s submissions. In “Friends by Mail,” children share their feelings about the magazine. “Show and Tell” includes art, poetry, and experiences about children following the example of Jesus Christ. Submissions should include the child’s photo, age, and address. Submissions should not exceed 200 words. “Written by You” stories are child experiences that are longer (up to 300 words) and have a plot. The *Friend* does not pay for children’s contributions. Due to the number received, they cannot all be published, nor can they be returned. *Please note that children’s submissions must include a written statement by a parent or guardian giving permission to publish the child’s submission and photo.*

Submitting your work

**Mail:** Please print your submission double-spaced on one side of 8 ½-x 11-inch white paper. Include your name, address, and telephone number with each submission. Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like your manuscript returned. Address submissions to Friend Magazine, 50 East North Temple Street, Room 2432, Salt Lake City, UT 84150-0024, USA.

**E-mail:** Send your submission to friend@ldschurch.org, or use the “Submit Your Material” link on friend.lds.org.

**Review process:** Editors will review your submission, and a staff member will let you know whether we would like to accept your submission for our files. If your submission is accepted, you will be asked to sign a contract that allows the Church to publish it in the future. Due to our lengthy planning and editing process, a submission will usually not appear in print for at least a year, and often much longer. Two copies of any issue containing your work, not including child submissions, will be sent to you upon publication.

The *Friend* currently pays by commission only. If you would like your work to be considered for purchase, please send a query to the mailing or e-mail address above. Or you can just send us your material as a donated piece. Thanks again for your interest in the *Friend* magazine!
What makes a good photo story?

Most of our photo stories feature an individual child. Here are some elements we look for when deciding which photo stories to publish.

- Please send high-resolution photographs so pictures can be printed large.
- The first paragraph should introduce the child to the readers. We are especially eager to accept stories about children from countries outside of the United States.
- Notice that the page consists of photos and captions rather than a single body of text. The captions are written in first-person format, as if the child were speaking to the reader.
- Please include pictures of objects the child describes without including the child in the photograph.
- Please include pictures and captions that describe the child’s hobbies and interests, favorite scripture story, Primary song, etc.

Possible photo-story themes include: a child involved in a service project, a child with an unusual hobby or skill, a child faithfully dealing with a disability or illness, a child living in an exotic location, etc.
What makes a good illustrated story?

We publish 6-8 illustrated stories in each issue of the magazine. Here are some elements we look for when deciding which stories to publish.

Stories must be based on actual events. Dialogue and other minor details may be fictionalized.

The story is written from the child’s perspective. The author tells us what the child is thinking but shows the thoughts of adults by words and actions.

The author uses vivid, descriptive words to set the scene. Words like “hummed” and “hissed” bring the reader in.

There is conflict in the story. The author is honest about how the main character feels—the author doesn’t try to make him unrealistically good or stereotypically bad.

These words show us what guilt feels like rather than just saying “Josh felt guilty.” Instead of relying on labels or jargon, the author describes a feeling in a way a child would understand.

The child in this story is working to try to solve his own problems. There is no preachy adult telling the child what he should or should not do.
The story contains a mix of description and dialogue, and both move the story forward in meaningful ways. The dialogue sounds realistic.

The character models the ideal—in this case, the steps of repentance—for the reader.

The blessings described are realistic and not overly miraculous or exceptional. Rather than stating a “moral of the story,” the story clearly shows the blessings that come from good decisions. There is still emotional honesty in the description.

In this story, the imagery of a bee is used multiple times to describe emotions and give the story a sense of continuity. This recurring image also lends itself well to interesting artwork.

“Look what we found!” Tanner held up the pocketknife. Josh tried not to look guilty. “Where did you get that?” he asked.

“We followed a bee,” Tanner said. “You followed a bee?” Mom repeated.

“We were bored,” Tanner said. “We chased the bee to the end of the street. It crawled into a hole in the brick wall, and that’s where the pocketknife was.”

Josh felt sick. Even though he’d hidden the knife, Heavenly Father knew where it was. He went to his room and counted the dollar bills in his wallet. Then he prayed for the courage to tell the truth. When he got up from his knees, the anxiousness in his mind quieted. He felt a little nervous about telling his parents and the cashier at the hardware store what he had done, but he felt lighter than he had all day—like a bee sipping over the rooftops toward home.

The knife’s weight in Josh’s pocket reminded him of the wrong choice he had made.
What makes a good “For Little Friends” story?

We publish one “For Little Friends” story in each issue of the magazine. These stories are written for young children and formatted as read-aloud stories.

“For Little Friends” stories are broken up into five sections, each with its own illustrated panel. Please format your manuscript in five sections, and write in a way that lends itself to illustration.

Notice the shorter sentences and simple vocabulary. Be sure to include fun details—like capes—in your story.

Use simple, realistic dialogue.