

## Make Your Child a Hero

### How I Came up with Stories for Each of My Grandsons

First, I'll start with "Why." I wrote stories about my grandsons because: (1) I wanted to create a memorable gift for each of them, and (2) I wanted to help them realize they are unique and special, and (3) I wanted them, early in life, to think of themselves as heroes, and (4) From their early years, I wanted to help instill in them a love of books and of reading.

As for the "How" of coming up with the stories, each started with a "sprint" observation. For each boy his story branched away from the historical and into fantasy fiction. When I witnessed how a rising harvest moon mesmerized little Langston the first time he saw it, *Langston's Moon* begged to be written. The following day at his preschool when Langston announced he wanted to learn more about the moon, I had the factual beginning and end of Langston's story. Between those points I let my imagination loose (i.e., silenced my Inner Critic) to come up with the rest of the story.

*Eli's Mouse* sprang from grandson Eli's toddler night-owl habits linked to my crocheting a yarn mouse for him as a gift. From those two facts, fantasy moved the story forward. The yarn mouse came to life; he slept during the day and played all night (just as the real Eli would have liked to do). The story ended with the mouse changing from his nocturnal habits so he could play with Eli all day and sleep all night long. That was the personal family story. In the book, *Eli's Mouse*, to be published as Book 2 in the Nana Series, Eli will still have his magical mouse, but the rest of the story is new.

For *Coltrane's Caper*, only an active adventure would do. Coltrane is the grandson who showed athletic strength and physical coordination by the time he was three years old. His story involves his fanciful adventures when he chases down a ball that he kicked over a fence.

**What to Do Now:** Working either from the Historical format or Fantasy Fiction, "Write, write, write."