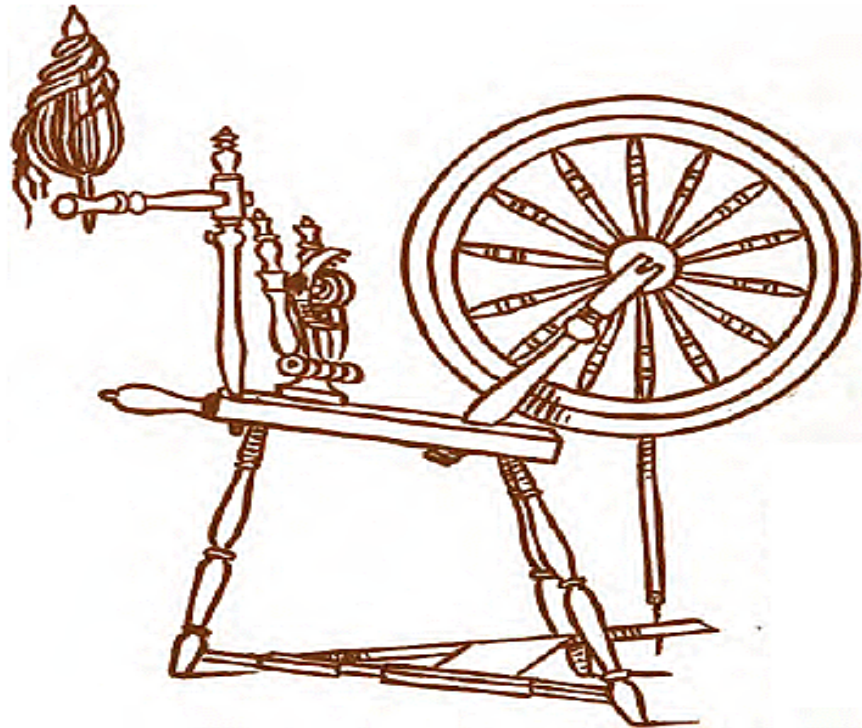


# Spinning Straw Into Gold



**or**

*The Fairy Tale  
World of Grant  
Writing*

# **Librarian to Librarian Networking Summit**

**East Carolina University**

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Chapter 1:  
If the Shoe Fits

*Cinderella*

The messenger went with the slipper from house to house, and the young ladies who had been at the ball tried to put it on, but it would fit none of them, and at last he came to the two sisters...

The eldest tried it on first. She could have worn it if her great toe had not been so large so her mother offered her a knife and the maiden cut the toe off and forced on the slipper in spite of the pain.

"When you are a queen," said her mother, "you will not want to use your feet much."

When the messenger found the shoe full of blood, he led her back and told the next sister to try. She found that she could not get the slipper over her heel. "Cut off a piece," said her mother. "When you are a queen, you will not have to use your feet much."

# **MORAL:**

Unless you are a queen, you will need to use your feet.

Modifying your mission to squeeze into an ill-fitting RFP can leave your organization lame.



Check the fit before  
buying the shoes.



**Chapter 2:**  
**Be Careful What You**  
**Wish For**

*The Fisherman*  
*and His Wife*



**Flounder, flounder, in the sea  
Come to me, O come to me**



**Weigh costs and benefits  
before applying for funds.**

# **Does your organization have the capacity to implement the project ?**

- Personnel
- Knowledge and/or skills
- Space
- Equipment
- Vehicles
- Matching Funds

Little is gained if a grant award threatens the stability of the applicant organization or compromises its ability to deliver core services while managing a new project.

"Husband, go tell the enchanted prince that I wish to be equal to the Creator and make the sun rise." The fisherman went down to the shore and heard a voice from amidst the storm. "Your wife wishes to be equal to the Creator. Go home, man, and find her again in her dirty hovel by the sea."

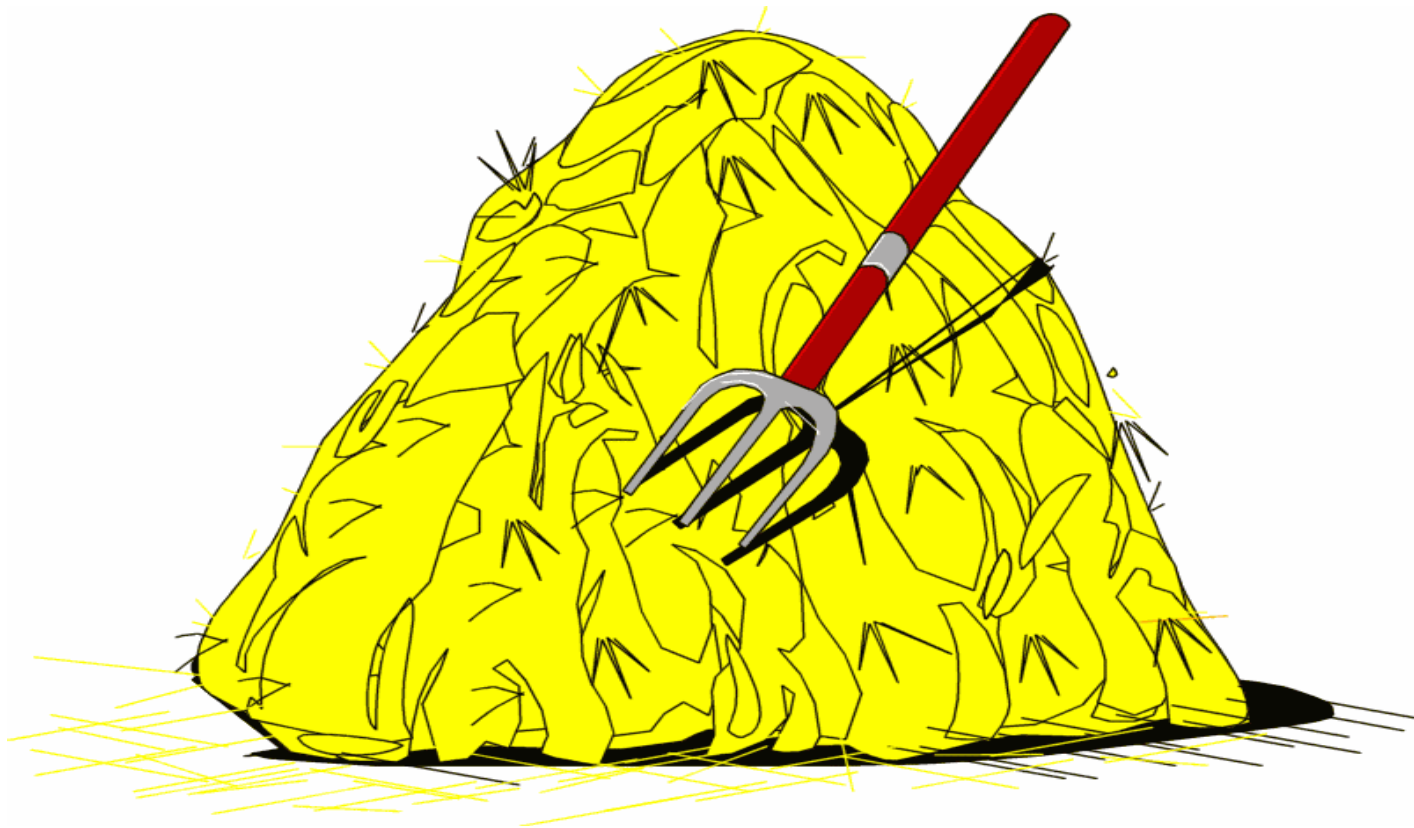


**MORAL: WISHES CAN COME TRUE...**



# Chapter 3:

## Show Me the Straw



# Why librarians make great grant writers:

- We are good storytellers
- We are great researchers
- We are proficient readers and writers
- We are detail-oriented
- We understand the big picture

An effective grant proposal tells a story, beginning with the problem and ending with the solution.

Like other stories, a grant proposal relies upon the skillful use of words and illustrations to communicate with the reader.

# SETTING



*Once upon a time...*

*There once was a...*

**Long ago, in a galaxy far,  
far away...**

# Part 1: Needs Assessment, Need for Project, Community Assessment

- Introduce readers to the community
- Describe existing conditions, needs and resources
- Define problem to be solved by project

# Where to find Information

<http://www.census.gov>

<http://www.ncchild.org>

<http://www.schoolmatters.com/>

<http://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/>



<http://core.ecu.edu/umc/enc/index.htm>

<http://www.osbm.state.nc.us/>

<http://www.ncruralcenter.org/>

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org>

# PLOT



“Begin at the  
beginning and go on  
till you come to  
the end: then stop.”

*Lewis Carroll, Alice's  
Adventures in Wonderland.*

## Part 2: Project Description, Project Design, Goals and Objectives

- Describe actual operation of project
- Explain what program will accomplish
- Link all program activities to needs established in Part 1

**The devil is in the  
details.**

**Read and re-read proposal  
guidelines and follow all  
instructions precisely or  
your application may be  
DISQUALIFIED.**

Note essential details like number of pages allowed, margins, font size and style, line spacing, number of copies to send, and **COLOR OF INK** used for signatures.

# *Seek and rectify all:*

- Spelling and grammar errors (Do not trust "Spell Check" or "Grammar Check")
- Typos
- Inconsistencies (factual, stylistic, graphic)
- Printing problems
- Omissions/oversights

Grantors will be reluctant to trust you with their money if you appear careless in your proposal.



Avoid fuzzy language. Quantify anything and everything you can. Don't use words like "many," "few," "some," "most." Learn to use data sources like the U.S. Census, ABC tools, DPI website, etc. Make objectives measurable whenever possible.

Avoid jargon; spell out all acronyms the first time you use them; assume readers don't understand how we do business in North Carolina.

## Part 3: Evaluation

- Describe how progress toward goals will be measured and documented
- Link evaluation to project design and needs assessment
- Seek both formative and summative data
- Consider employing a professional evaluator

**CHARACTERS**

## Part 4: Management

- Outline how project will be administered if funds are awarded
- Describe structure and capacity of applicant organization
- Address fiscal accountability

**THE  
BOTTOM  
LINE**

## Part 5: Budget

- Outline how funds will be used
- Explain usage of funds in budget narrative
- Use realistic numbers for expenses and in-kind contributions

# CAUTION

**Before proceeding with any grantseeking efforts, discuss your idea with your principal or supervisor. Your school or district may have administrative procedures and policies that must be followed regarding grants. Be especially wary of grants that require matching funds or obligate you, your students, your school, or your district to ANYTHING, whether monetary or non-monetary, which you may be unable or unwilling to fulfill.**



**Also be aware that the school or district authorizing the project is the recipient of the award, not the teacher who writes the proposal. Grant funds are deposited in the school or district account and materials and/or equipment purchased with grant funds are owned by the school in which a teacher works and not by the individual teacher.**

**The person authorizing submission of a grant proposal is legally obligated to do everything proposed and/or required if funds are awarded. Seeking forgiveness instead of gaining permission is not a good choice when money and contracts are involved.**

# Grant Newsletters

RFP Bulletin:

<http://foundationcenter.org/newsletters/>

Federal Notifier:

[http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/  
email\\_subscription\\_signup.jsp](http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription_signup.jsp)

# Sources of grant money for libraries

<http://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/lsta/lsta.htm>

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/isl/index.html>

<http://www.neafoundation.org/pages/educators/grant-programs/grant-application/books-across-america/>

[http://www.dollargeneral.com/dgliteracy/  
Pages/b2s\\_grants.aspx](http://www.dollargeneral.com/dgliteracy/Pages/b2s_grants.aspx)

[http://www.laurabushfoundation.org/we  
b2/index.html](http://www.laurabushfoundation.org/web2/index.html)

<http://www.ncbrightideas.com/>