

WriteShop

# StoryBuilders

## Christmas Mini-Builder



by Kim Kautzer

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## WriteShop®

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*for help, comments, questions, or ordering information*

Christmas Mini-Builders

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WriteShop®  
**StoryBuilders™ Christmas Mini-Builder**  
For all ages.

**INCLUDES**

- 1 mini-deck (96) Christmas StoryBuilders cards, black print
- 1 mini-deck (96) Christmas StoryBuilders cards, colored print
- Instructions and Ideas

**ABOUT STORYBUILDERS™**

What's this? A ragged fir tree helps a stranger on a cold night? A weary homeless man finds a wallet full of money outside a bakery? A bad-tempered candy maker finds a magic candy cane and disappears into a snow globe? What kid wouldn't love to write a holiday story filled with such hope, whimsy, or intrigue?

StoryBuilders card decks help to jumpstart a creative writing project by providing students with the basic elements of a story—character, character trait, setting, and plot—laying a foundation for a joyful writing experience with some clever surprises thrown in along the way.

StoryBuilders may be used by students of all ages, from kindergarten through high school. Using the StoryBuilder Cards, they'll develop their tales by picking one card from each category. Does the hero save the day? Will the notorious bad guy learn a lesson? And what twists and turns appear in the character's path? A blizzard? A bag of loot? A mysterious note?

Break up your routine or add punch and variety to writing lessons by offering StoryBuilders occasionally. Use them in addition to or instead of a daily writing activity. At first, to help your student write concisely, limit her to a specific number of sentences or paragraphs. As she improves (or if she thrives on writing creative fiction), let her compose longer, more thoroughly developed stories. And with hundreds of possible story combinations, no two will be alike!

## 1. PREPARE THE CARDS

**PRINT** – Print black-text cards on four different colors of card stock, or print color-text cards on white card stock. You may also use copy paper, though it's not as sturdy.

**CUT** – Cut cards along dotted lines.

**STORE** – Keep cards in separate zip-top sandwich bags (one for *Characters*, one for *Character Traits*, one for *Settings*, and one for *Plots*).

## 2. CHOOSE STORY ELEMENTS

Students can use various methods for choosing one of each card. Then, based on the cards selected, they will construct a story, whether fanciful, funny, or serious.

For example, a student might draw randomly, resulting in a silly mix of cards (a gingerbread man takes a trip to New York City). Or she might purposefully choose the elements for her story (a wealthy man passes by a homeless shelter and makes a choice).

Here are three ways students can pick their cards:

- **Blind Pick:** Draw one card from each category. No peeking allowed!
- **Roll the Die:**
  1. Make 4 stacks of cards on the table, one stack for each category, with 6 cards in each stack.
  2. First, the student picks a character card by rolling the die. If he rolls a five, he must draw the fifth card in the stack. This becomes his story's main character.
  3. Repeat to pick trait, setting, and plot.
- **You Decide:** Choose the character, character trait, setting, and plot that you want to write about.

## 3. WRITE

Once the student has drawn or selected four cards, he may begin to write his story. Here are ideas for using StoryBuilder activities::

- **Pick-a-Plot:** Let the student draw a new card if a plot or problem seems too outrageous for the character
- **Add-a-Card:** If the student wants his story to take a different turn, he may draw one or more new cards to add another character, perhaps, or introduce a twist to the plot.
- **Daily timed writing**
  1. Each student chooses four cards.
  2. Set the timer for 5, 10, or 15 minutes.
  3. Students write till the timer goes off, stopping mid-sentence if need be.
  4. Daily (or less often), set the timer and let them continue with their stories.
    - Optional: Do the Add-a-Card activity every day.
  5. On the last day of the week, students must wrap up their tales with a conclusion.

- **Round Robin:** A “Round Robin” is a good activity for a group of students or siblings to practice narrative or imaginative story writing. Teach them that even though they may have fun with a topic, they must always remain gracious. Stories may be humorous but not crude, realistic but not graphic.
  1. Each student picks 4 StoryBuilder cards.
  2. Set the timer for 2-3 minutes and let them write.
  3. When the bell rings, pencils must be set down (students may finish the word but not the sentence).
  4. Students then pass their papers to the person on the left.
  5. Set the timer again and tell students to add to the story that’s before them.
  6. They will continue exchanging papers every 2-3 minutes for as many rounds as you decide (4-6 rounds work well).
  7. Before they begin writing during the last round, inform them that they must now write a conclusion.
  8. Instruct students to write neatly and legibly, since others must read their work. If younger and older students are writing together, you may need to have everyone print rather than use cursive.
- **Poetry Fun:** Instead of writing a story, students can compose a short poem.

#### 4. EDITING AND GRADING

Though most parents and teachers use StoryBuilders for fun, you may certainly require editing and revising with the goal of giving a grade. But don’t be afraid to just let your kids write for pure enjoyment, leaving writing lessons, history reports, and other assigned compositions for teaching writing skills.

Full-length **StoryBuilders** are available through [www.writeshop.com/store/categories.php](http://www.writeshop.com/store/categories.php), where you can also learn more about WriteShop’s line of writing and grammar products. With WriteShop, teaching writing has never been easier!®

- [WriteShop I](#) and [WriteShop II](#) for junior high and high school
- [WriteShop Primary](#) for grades K-3
- [Additional grammar and writing resources](#) for your family

WriteShop® Inc.  
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**baker**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**candy maker**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**children**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**elves**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**fairy godmother**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**fir tree**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**gingerbread  
man**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**homeless man**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**little boy  
or girl**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**mother**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**nutcracker**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**old woman**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**policeman**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**postman**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**poor family**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**prince  
or princess**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*



**puppy**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**reindeer**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**shepherd**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**snowman**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**St. Nicholas**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**stranger**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**store owner**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**wealthy man**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**bad-tempered**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**cheerful**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**delightful**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**discouraged**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**enchanted**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**faithful**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**gentle**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**generous**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

# haughty

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

# helpful

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

# jealous

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

# joyful

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

# kindhearted

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

# lazy

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

# lonely

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

# mean-spirited

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**miserable**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**ragged**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**resourceful**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**selfish**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**trusting**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**uncaring**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**weary**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**worried**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**bakery**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**bookstore**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**by a  
crackling fire**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**candy shop**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**castle**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**cold night**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**cozy  
cottage**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**deep dark woods**

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**enchanted  
forest**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**English manor  
house**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**homeless shelter**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**icy palace**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**igloo**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**inside a  
snow globe**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**kingdom**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**lonely road**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**Main Street**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**New York City**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**North Pole**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**snowy field**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**street corner**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**toy store**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**under the  
Christmas tree**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**workshop**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**alone in a  
strange place**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**Christmas Eve**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**comes to life**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**delivers a special  
package**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**disappears**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**far from home**

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**finds a  
magic \_\_\_\_\_**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**helps a stranger**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*



**learns  
the true meaning  
of Christmas**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**lives all alone**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**lost in a blizzard**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**makes a choice**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**makes a friend**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**mysterious note**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**prepares a feast**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**receives good  
news**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**snowed in**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**solves a problem**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**surprises someone**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**takes a trip**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**tries to stop  
Christmas**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**unexpected visitor**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**wallet full of  
money**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

**wish comes true**

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

## Color-Print Cards

In addition to the complete set of black-and-white print cards, the StoryBuilders card deck includes a duplicate set of color-print cards for printing on white card stock.

The following pages contain the complete set of color-print cards.

baker

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

candy maker

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

children

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

elves

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*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

generous

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

haughty

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

helpful

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

jealous

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

joyful

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

kindhearted

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

lazy

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

lonely

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

mean-spirited

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*



miserable

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

ragged

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

resourceful

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

selfish

*WriteShop® Christmas Mini-Builder*

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