

## MAY 2016 BEHIND THE CURTAIN JOURNAL ENTRY

### *FOUR DRAFTS DOWN, EIGHT TO GO*

BY CHILDREN'S AUTHOR JENNIFER PHILLIPS

I reported earlier that I joined the [12x12 challenge](#). I'm trying to write 12 rough picture book drafts over 12 months. It's stimulating and difficult. I'm hitting the place where the "challenge" part of the event title is feeling too true.

I've submitted four drafts so far:

- **Nellie's** Nutty Knittables
- I Can
- Scissors Rock Paper
- The Girl Who Cried Help (Too Many Times)

The stimulating part? Actually making a deadline and getting feedback from fellow writers. **There's** the thrill of accomplishment and anticipation of seeing what people think about your creation. And the online education through webinars and the discussion boards **can't** be beat.

The difficult part? Actually making a deadline and getting feedback from fellow writers. **There's** the stress of having something worthy to share by end of month and then hearing how much more work you have to make it ready for submission to editors or agents.

The extra challenging part? Knowing whether I can sustain this pace for the next several months. Already, I'm deep-sixing several ideas I thought I'd draft this year. Other ideas still are attractive, but are requiring much more upfront research than planned.

Do I plan to persist? Yes. I've found some great online critique partners. **We're** being supportive and kind to each other. If I run into a month where I **can't** deliver, it will be my self-induced pressure to submit a draft and not the **group's**. Everyone understands that life juggles sometimes get in the way. But I will have produced many more stories through this challenge than I would have otherwise. And my work will be in much better shape thanks to the generous collaboration of other **children's** writers who all just want to improve their own writing and your writing as well.

**Children's** authors are an amazing community! I'm very happy I joined this year-long event.

VISIT MY WEBSITE AT [JENNIFERPHILLIPSAUTHOR.COM](http://JENNIFERPHILLIPSAUTHOR.COM) TO CATCH UP ON OTHER BEHIND THE SCENES JOURNAL ENTRIES, MY BOOK PROJECTS, RESOURCE DOWNLOADS AND MORE.