

Do the adults in your story, if there are any, threaten to take it over?

If the main character in your story is an adult, then certainly the story will be his or hers. However, there are many manuscripts written about children that the authors allow to be stolen from the children by a well-meaning adult in the story. Either the adult steps in as the authority on something that the children might learn more joyfully through their own discovery, or the adult steps in to solve a problem that has grown too large for the poor incompetent children at the end of their resources. In both of these instances the story no longer belongs to the children in it and therefore does not belong to its child readers either.

The problem is not that adults aren't more knowledgeable about some subjects than kids, or that they aren't sometimes needed to help solve problems. But most kids do not want to be reminded in books of their dependence on adults. They need to feel a sense of their power, in their lives and, at the very least, in their literature.