

Finding an Author or Illustrator

IN TENNESSEE AND KENTUCKY

<http://www.scbwi-midsouth.org/speakers.htm>

Members of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators who live in Tennessee or Kentucky, their areas of expertise, and their publications

NATIONWIDE

http://www.scbwi.org/links/mem_links.htm

Click on Society of Children's Book Writers & Illustrators members' websites.

<http://usawrites4kids.drury.edu/>

A state-by-state breakdown

THROUGH PUBLISHERS

http://www.cbcbooks.org/contacts/visits_contacts.html

The Children's Book Council lists publishers who are members. Check publishers' individual websites for information on which of their authors/illustrators do school visits.

Finding Funding

http://www.leeandlow.com/p/administrators_grants.mhtml

This site lists many websites for general school grants, library grants, literacy grants and grant-writing resources.

In addition: Investigate sources through PTAs, Adopt-a-School Programs, Title I, Title VII, Friends of the Library, School Improvement Plan (SIP), local service clubs (Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, etc.), community or educational foundations, local businesses.



<http://www.scbwi.org>



Hosting an Author for a School Visit



A Guide for Planners

Planning

1. Establish a Day-With-An-Author team:

- Author Helper: This person will be in direct communication with the author and act as host on the day of the visit. This person will make sure that the assembly room has the equipment needed by the author and will arrange to escort the author around the campus. (Students are great helpers!)
- Media Liaison: This person publicizes the event (see “Publicizing” section)
- Book Coordinator: This person makes sure that the author’s books are available for teachers and students to examine and read in advance of the visit. He or she coordinates the book orders and autographing session.
- Luncheon Coordinator This person makes sure that the author is fed! Some schools use this opportunity to arrange a pot luck lunch that can be enjoyed by the staff and planning team as well as the author. Be sure to find out if the author has any food allergies or is a vegetarian.

2. Read promotional materials about your author. Visit his or her website.

3. Examine the author’s scheduling preferences and equipment needs.

Scheduling

The Author Helper should do the following:

- Prepare an event schedule. Have it approved by your principal and the visiting author before publicizing it to the staff. Make necessary adjustments.
- Ask your author if he or she has materials that will help teachers prepare students and incorporate the author’s works into the curriculum.
- Schedule presentations for consecutive grades (K-2, 3-5, etc.) Allow time for breaks between presentations so that the author can reset props. Allow time for autographing books.
- Provide written confirmation of the details to your author. Include a map, directions to your school, and parking information.

Publicizing

The Media Liaison should do the following:

1. Create “advance publicity”. Advance publicity builds anticipation for the author’s visit and helps make the experience much more meaningful to students. It gives teachers time to build curriculum links. It also sends a message to the community that you value books and the people who create them.
2. Announce the author visit and the availability of books for autographing in the following places:
 - School newsletter and PTA bulletin
 - Other publications read by students, teachers and parents
 - Local community newspapers
3. Copy and distribute author information to teachers to share with their classes. It is very important for students to read at least one of the author’s books prior to the visit. This helps make stronger connections when the author describes the writing process during assemblies and classroom visits.
4. Announce the author’s visit on your school marquee / billboard and over your school’s public announcement system.
5. Encourage classrooms to make welcome banners or posters for the author.

Hosting

The Author Helper should do the following:

- Test all equipment requested by the author (projector, screen, microphone, overhead, etc.) Make sure that the room can be adequately darkened if slides or overheads will be used. Have a back-up projector and bulb.
- Brief student helpers and escorts. Students can escort the author, help unpack and pack, act as an aide (work lights, provide water) and assist the author at the “autograph party.”
- On the day of the visit, reserve a parking spot close to the school for the author.
- Greet the author in the morning. Introduce the author to the principal, librarian, and student assistants.
- Be sure that the school provides lunch for your author. A lunch break in the faculty lounge gives the author and teachers a chance to visit and make helpful connections.

Book Sales

The Book Coordinator should do the following:

- Distribute copies of the author’s books for the teachers and librarian to review in advance.
- Complete, copy and send home an Order Form for Autographed Books with each student. (Often booksellers will offer you a discount. Schools often pass this discount along to students, or use it as a fundraiser for the school.)
- Collect and count book orders. Place your order with the bookstore no later than four weeks before your author visits. To find a local independent bookseller to assist, go to www.indiebound.org and type in your zip code.
- Note: Booksellers can offer books to you “on consignment.” This means that you can return any undamaged, unsold books.
- Plan an “autograph party” in the library. Duties will include set-up and distributing books.
- Two weeks ahead of the visit, call the bookseller to confirm that your book order is being filled and to make arrangements for pick-up.
- Following the Author Visit, return any unsold books to the bookseller.

Following-Up

1. Write a thank you note on school letterhead to your author. Be specific about what worked. Include news clips, photos, and artwork.
2. Encourage students to write to the author expressing their reactions to the author and his or her books.
3. Let sponsors know you appreciate their generous support of your Day-With-An-Author Program.

Involving Students

Build excitement among students by having them:

- Read the author’s books in advance
- Visit the author’s website
- Help decorate to welcome the author
- Prepare questions for the author
- Write thank you notes to author and sponsors

