

## FOR WRITERS

### SO YOU WANT TO WRITE A SERIES?

Particularly suited to SCBWI virtual events and in-person conferences. This program explores the following topics:

1. What do agents want to pitch
2. The arc or lack of arc of a series
3. Unifying themes of series.
4. Character development and ageing
5. Tricks and tips for writing a series
6. The Burning Question of your pitch.
5. What happens once you've sold the series
6. Marketing
7. Pitching the next series

### WRITING FROM YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE – REMEMBER, FORGET AND REMEMBER AGAIN

Using our own experiences, makes our writing richer. Sometimes we want to write a story totally based on an actual event or experience that happened to us, a loved one, or a someone we know. But everything in our experience isn't interesting, pertinent to the story, or cable to convey the message we would like to convey. Using Jennings' own *The Little House of Hope* and other picture books such as Andrea Wang's *Watercress*, Jennings explores the process of creating an engaging and impactful story from memories.

## EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE

### HONORING DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM READING

This is a presentation for elementary school teachers beginning with the history of (lack of) diversity in the United States. What were the first books portraying Black children? Latino children? Jennings shares data on diversity in children's publishing, since 1995 and comparing this data, not only to the population of each ethnicity, but to the population of school age children in each ethnicity. Jennings further discusses using diverse books in the classroom, not as a special occurrence, say for Hispanic Heritage month, Black history month, but as a regular part of the classroom reading. The pros and cons of using books which portray difficult parts of history. The pros and cons of using books which portray children from diverse cultures coping with everyday life. The need for fun books with diverse protagonists. This presentation includes a slide presentation of children's books for elementary classrooms that deal with ethnic and cultural diversity, race, SEL, gender diversity, ability, body shaming. Particularly useful for pre-service teachers at Universities.

## **USING SCIENCE BASED NARRATIVE NON-FICTION AS MENTOR TEXTS FOR STUDENT WRITING**

Using Jennings' *Gopher to the Rescue! A Volcano Recovery Story* and *Sounds of the Savanna*, Jennings provides educators a way to use the books as mentor texts, discussing the use of description, timing, research, and storytelling. Educators would then guide students to write their own story from the point of view of a chosen animal.

## **DISCOVERING OUR COMMON HUMANITY THROUGH WRITING**

This presentation begins by exploring the history of (lack of) diversity in the United States. What were the first books portraying Black children? Latino children? Jennings shares data on diversity in children's publishing, since 1995 and comparing this data, not only to the population of each ethnicity, but to the population of school age children in each ethnicity. The Jennings provides teachers with a lesson plan for exploring our common humanity.

Students will write a story about when someone had an impact on their lives, or a person they admired or loved. The first exercise is to list the character's inner traits. Using those traits, educators poll their students as to what traits they admire and document those choices. They then make the connections that we all admire the same traits, regardless of where we come from, our skin color, our gender preference, our physical ability and all of us can exhibit those traits regardless of where we come from, our skin color, our gender preference, our physical ability. Reading books with diverse protagonists, extend this exploration of traits.

## **THROWING AWAY THE LABELS AND CONCENTRATING ON STUDENTS' HISTORIES**

This presentation explores how we use labels to categorize "others" and "put them in their place." But this place is harmful. Jennings, drawing on her own experience as an immigrant delves into how harmful this can be and how we can grow beyond stereotypes by getting to know individual histories.