

Mary Bleckwehl  
**SCHOOL AUTHOR VISITS**  
for preK- 8<sup>th</sup> grade

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**My goal is to:**

\*Entertain and educate students with an interactive experience they won't forget!

\* Share my experience to inspire students to express themselves

\*Present tips to shift creativity into overdrive

\*Allow students to meet a local author and see the results of perseverance

**PRESENTATION OPTIONS\***

**Size:** I do large group (up to 150 or so students is max for the kind of programs I offer) as well as smaller classroom size programs. I find that an audience of 80-100 is best. It is best to group students by age. Example: PreK and K together but not PreK and gr 3. I will do up to 4 presentations/day. If more are required, a second day or half-day may be necessary.

- ❖ **Preschool:** 25-30 minutes. A fun interactive time with young ones-getting to know the author, making connections, defining key roles of author/illustrator, a read-aloud with audience participation and seeing a few friends try on a character costume. Color sheets, stickers!
- ❖ **Kindergarten and grade 1:** 35 minutes. Similar to preschool only more in depth on connection to student's own writing-idea generation, characters, story plot, and a little magic followed by a read-aloud by author and character dress up. Color sheets.
- ❖ **Grade 2-8:** 50 minutes. I tailor this presentation to the age group I am with. By way of hands on materials, power-point and audience participation, I share my unexpected journey to becoming an author, the publishing process from idea generation to finished product, the importance of editing and the fun (using student volunteers!) of using one's imagination to create story. Bookmarks, color sheets, magic, character dress up and Q&A of course!
- ❖ **Picture Book Workshop and/or Presentation** (recommended for gr 4 and above): This is for a group size of one or two classes who are planning to make a picture book for a class assignment. I cover steps of the process including storyboarding, the importance of having someone give you feedback, etc and would be happy to partner with the teacher/s to decide on direction of this.

**(con't by scrolling down)**

- ❖ **Family Literacy Nights:** *What fun for the whole family to come back to school in the evening, meet an author and hear her read a book or two! My tips for families on how to squeeze reading and even writing into their busy days is shared. I give door prizes for this event!*
- ❖ **Autograph time!** *(Allow 15-20 minutes after each presentation for this or I can do it at the end of the day.) The most exciting thing about an author visit, other than meeting one, is to get a signed book she wrote! It is indeed special for those students who choose to purchase books to stand by me and chat a bit while I personalize their book and sign it. I love it as much as they do! For those who don't purchase books, I expect they will be rushing to check them out from your media center soon!*
- ❖ **Optional Small Group Lunch with author:** *Teacher selected students eat with me.*

***\*I'd be happy to design a program for your literacy goals***

**Preparation for visit:** Occasionally I visit a school and students haven't heard anything about my books or me. Sometimes teachers do not attend my presentation or there may be very few students getting books. It becomes clear that little preparation was done to make the author visit a successful and fun learning experience for all. When students are prepared, they will get much more from it.

I do ask schools to purchase at least one copy of all my books to pass around to classrooms for teachers to share/read with students. Later, these can be catalogued in media center for student check out.

I encourage teachers to share something from my website ([www.marybleckwehl.com](http://www.marybleckwehl.com)) with students in advance of my visit and encourage students to think of questions for me.

There are **class extension activities** on my website for teachers to check out.

**Book Orders:** The person coordinating my visit will provide teachers with the book order form to send home with each child about 2 weeks before I come. From years of classroom teaching experience, I know it's important to remind kids about the due date for returning them if they choose to get an autographed book from me. I always bring extra books, so staff and students can order the day I visit too.

I love hearing from teachers and students following a school visit and will respond!

**Fees:** I strive to keep my fees affordable so all children can benefit from hearing from an author. Please do not hesitate to talk to me if you need to discuss options for financing.

\$450/day (for schools within one hour) – up to 4 presentations

\$550/day (for schools beyond one hour) – up to 4 presentations

Travel reimbursement of \$.55/mile and hotel costs if applicable

Lunch is appreciated.

Family Reading Nights \$175 plus travel expenses