

# Details of School Author Visit

## With Children's Author, Mary Bleckwehl

[www.marybleckwehl.com](http://www.marybleckwehl.com)

A visit from an author is indeed a special event meant to inspire young readers and writers! The following guidelines will help in planning a successful, fun and rewarding experience for school staff and students. Adjustments to the following are possible but need to be discussed prior to the visit. One school staff person will be the key contact person to work with the author to schedule details of the visit. Often this is a Media Specialist, principal, teacher, or parent volunteer.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR/GOAL OF VISIT** Mary Bleckwehl is a parent of three, has been an educator for her entire career-mostly as an elementary teacher, and is now an author of three children's picture books including her 2018 release of *CLAIRE'S HAIR*. She loves promoting literacy. Her primary goal is to inspire young readers and writers by stirring excitement and imagination in them. As an author, Mary applies creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking-which are part of the *Common Core Standards*. She enjoys sharing these authoring tools with students.

### VISIT DETAILS

**Presentations:** are tailored to age groups. Author presents to pre school through 8<sup>th</sup> graders, although typically K-5. Her books are picture books targeted for ages 4-9 but her presentations are age specific, ranging from read-alouds to writing/editing/publishing information.

Preschool – gr. 1    30-35 minute presentation

Gr. 2 and above    45-50 minute presentation

Size of student groups varies but is best to limit them to 100-150 students/session.

Typically four presentations in one school day is the max. Allowing 15-20 minutes in between each session gives time for author to sign books for children who have placed orders. This is a special time where students get to chat 1:1 with the author as they have their book/s signed. It is expected that school staff will accompany and provide supervision of students.

**Author will email her book order form to the school contact person.** A highlight of a school visit is the chance for students to stand by the author as their book is signed! The author presents only to schools willing to send paper versions of book order forms home with each student unless otherwise agreed upon. The contact person is asked to download it, complete the top line (date of visit and deadline for order returns), run copies for all students and send a paper copy home with each student about 10-14 days before the author visit. An attached note from the media specialist, principal or teacher is strongly recommended so parents know it is a school sponsored event and that ordering a book their child can get autographed in person is indeed an inspirational happening! **It is fine to email the book order form as well, but is not a substitute for the paper copy sent home with each student.**

### CREATING EXCITEMENT AND AUTHOR VISIT BUZZ...PROMOTION!

The school contact person (often a media specialist) is asked to spearhead this all-important task that goes beyond the scheduling details.

1. It is very important that students have at least one of author's 3 books read to them prior to her visit. **HENRY! YOU'RE LATE AGAIN!** **HENRY! YOU'RE HUNGRY AGAIN?** **CLAIRE'S HAIR** The books are available from her website [www.marybleckwehl.com](http://www.marybleckwehl.com) or online from Amazon or Barnes & Noble as well

as in many Barnes & Noble and independent bookstores. If you wish to get signed copies from the author ahead of the visit, she is willing to mail them to you for the \$15/book school price plus shipping.

**Note:** Pls have students in gr. 2 and above hear HENRY YOU'RE LATE AGAIN! read to them prior to visit.

2. Author will provide contact person with digital images of her published book cover images and author photo for the purpose of having the school use them to promote the author visit. Flyers, posters, newsletter and newspaper announcements, etc are just some of the possibilities for use of these items.

3. Setting out copies of author's books on media center counters and in classrooms (or at least colored images of the book covers) visually catches the attention of students and brings them into the conversation of the visit. Bulletin Boards work well for this as well.

4. Directing teachers to author website for classroom extension activities, coloring sheets and info such as author bio, illustrations from books, awards earned, and you tube videos initiates a lot of buzz! (videos are accessible from her website.)

**IMPORTANT:** please email teachers to remind their students (often!) the week prior to the visit to return book orders/payment if they plan to order an autographed book. Have extra order forms available for those who need one. The author will bring extra books for last minute orders.

Encourage staff to place orders if they wish, for personal or classroom use. Regular bookstore price is 16.95 + tax so this **school discount price of \$15.00** per book is worth the consideration. Checks are to be made to BOOK CITY. Cash is accepted. Any returned checks will be the responsibility of the party who wrote them including the bank charge for a returned check.

### **DAY OF VISIT**

Please leave a media cart near main entrance for author to use upon arrival to transport items to presentation room. When possible, make arrangements for a school staff person to meet author and/or direct author to presentation room. Author generally arrives 45 minutes before first presentation.

Arrange for author to present from one location rather than have her move from place to place for presentations. If it's in a location where a microphone is needed (cafeterias and gyms are examples), please arrange for a wireless clip on microphone, not a hand held one.

**Technology Needs:** Please provide a screen/computer/projector. Mary will bring her flash drive only. If a technology staff person is available when Mary arrives, it may help to ensure everything works properly.

**FEES PER DAY**-Presentations: \$450 - \$550 per one day visit depending on distance to event. In addition, travel reimbursement (\$0.55/mi for mileage; hotel costs if applicable). Lunch at the school is appreciated.(Family Reading Nights: \$150 plus travel expenses)

**Complimentary visits** (earned as result of door prize/special drawing) are good for 1-4 presentations during one school day for present academic year. The presentations are free **but schools who accept complimentary visits agree to**

1. purchase at least one copy of all three books and read them to students prior to the visit
2. promote the event with staff/students/families to generate enthusiasm!
3. photocopy and send home paper copies of author book order form with each student
4. reimburse author for travel at \$.55/mile; provide lunch. If overnight stay is necessary (travel distance dictates this), school is responsible for hotel cost and meals. Please inform author if invoice is required.

Email author at [mary@marybleckwehl.com](mailto:mary@marybleckwehl.com) or call at 507 581 0970

Happy Reading!