

STEVE SKIDMORE AUTHOR VISITS

I hope that I will be able to offer you an author visit that will inspire and enthuse your students. I am an ex-teacher and understand both what makes a successful author visit and what you want to achieve by inviting me in to talk to and work with your students.

I offer a wide range of sessions, so please do also get in touch if you have a specific need for a visit – I am very flexible in what I can offer!

I can talk to small groups or large audiences (1000 + is the current record!)

I am also available to be a **Patron of Reading** at your school – please look at the relevant section on my website. I can also undertake **writing residencies** in schools. These schemes allow a closer and more rewarding relationship between schools / teachers/ students and can lead to some fabulous work and experiences!

SESSIONS OFFERED

I can offer 3-4 sessions a day (depending on the type of session chosen).

HOW TO BE AN AMAZING WRITER

An interactive and engaging presentation on what is entailed in being “an author” and writing from personal experience.

This session encourages students to regard themselves as writers and to value their experiences as source material for their work. It also promotes self-esteem and aims to encourage even the most reluctant writer to help realise their potential. There may also be time for a Q & A session.

Suitable for: Ages 7 – 14 (each talk can be adapted to the specific ages of the audience)

Numbers: 20 – 250+ these are negotiable depending on age of students and size of room. If numbers rise above 250, there may have to have a suitable PA system in place (lapel radio mic).

Time: 45 – 75 minutes

THINGUMYBOB

An interactive play reading with lots of audience participation / role play. There is potential for follow up activities in drama, art and other curriculum areas.

Suitable for: ages 4 - 7

Numbers: 25 – 120

Time: 45--60 mins

ACTION DOGS

A lively and funny interactive literary game show based on the Action Dogs series.

Suitable for: ages 5 – 12 and mixed audience (families and friends).

Numbers: 50 – 250+ these are negotiable depending on age of students and size of room. If numbers rise above 250, I may have to have a suitable PA system in place (lapel radio mic).

Time: @60 minutes

I HERO

A lively and funny interactive literary game show based on the I Hero series.

Suitable for: ages 6 - 12 and mixed audience (families and friends).

Numbers: 50 – 250+ these are negotiable depending on age of students and size of room. If numbers rise above 250, I may have to have a suitable PA system in place (lapel radio mic).

Time: @60 minutes

WRITING MASTERCLASSES

May be combined with any of the above sessions. The aim of the workshops is to:

- enthuse students about the writing process
- give students confidence in formulating and planning their work
- encourage students to concentrate on use of language for maximum effect

Suitable for: ages 7 – 18 (each talk can be adapted to the specific ages/needs of the audience)

Numbers: No more than 60 – it is better for smaller “class-size” numbers

Time: negotiable, but at least 60 minutes

DRAMA/ORACY WORKSHOPS

I also offer interactive drama workshops using conventions such as role play, hot seating, forum theatre, still images, improvisation etc.

The theme of these can be negotiated and may be used in conjunction with the visit.

INSET / CPD

I can offer sessions on:

“Struggling” Readers

Creative Writing

Active Learning

Engaging and Enthusing Boys to Read.

I can also deliver Key Note speeches / workshops for conferences.

BOOKS – THE FUTURE?

An engaging, interactive and humorous 45 minute talk exploring how books are developing in the digital world from their early beginnings. I will also examine the potential for attracting readers and reaching new audiences.

I helped to create the Outernet in early 2000. This ground-breaking project was a fusion of book and internet content, developed with Barry Cunningham (the discoverer of Harry Potter).

I then helped to develop the first e books for the market in 2007/8 and has was part of the creative team behind the NSS G story App (nominated for the 2017 British Media Awards) – the book you play and the game you read...

I will also talk and demonstrate how choice and interaction in reading can engage and enthuse the most reluctant readers and speculate what the future might bring with Virtual Reality and 3D screens just around the corner!

ENGAGING AND ENTHUSING - MOTIVATING STUDENTS TO READ AND WRITE

Practical techniques to encourage reading and writing in schools

I will:-

- Demonstrate how children's authors approach their craft in order to produce materials for readers at every stage of their development
- Give advice on choosing appropriate texts and motivating students to read
- Demonstrate techniques for breaking down the task of writing with practical examples
- Examine ways in which developing writers can be encouraged to use their experiences as a stimulus to writing
- Give practical tips for planning a story – from a professional's point of view
- Suggest strategies to encourage reading and writing
- Developing active learning skills to enhance oracy – spotlight on hotseating, forum theatre, role play, reflection etc.

This session is intended to disseminate the practical ideas and experiences that I employ in the creation of material in an attempt to **ENGAGE AND ENTHUSE** children in reading and writing activities.

CHARGES AND REQUIREMENTS

FOR SCHOOLS/LIBRARIES PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

NUMBER OF SESSIONS

The maximum number of sessions in a single day is usually 3 x 1 hour (ish!) presentations. These may be combined with classroom workshops in which I would work with smaller groups for extended periods. Please contact me for more details.

COST

England/Wales

For a full day's workshops and/or presentation, depending on location: **£450 - £550 (inclusive of all expenses) PLUS VAT** (schools can usually claim this back). Please contact me to discuss. I may be able to offer half days (especially if shared with another local school/library). Please contact me to discuss.

Scotland/N.Ireland

I may have to add further costs for travel.

Rest of the World

Please contact me to discuss costs.

NB.

I realise that for small schools, the cost may be difficult to meet: however, experience shows that families of small schools can reduce these costs by organising short tours over 2-5 days, and splitting the travel expenses accordingly, or by organising evening shows where a charge can be passed on to parents. There are ways and means of getting visits paid for!

INSET / CPD

Charges are variable and will depend on the type of event planned. When inquiring about my fee for INSET/CPD work, please send me the following details:

- Who is organising the event and how is it funded?

Is the event:

- a conference-style event with a number of speakers and workshop leaders involved?
If so, how many speakers and how many delegates?
- a small scale event for a single school or family of schools? What charge (if any) will be made to attendees?

FESTIVALS

Please contact me for further details about appearing at literary festivals.

MAKING THE DAY A SUCCESS

REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESENTATIONS

For all sessions: an appropriate space big enough to accommodate the audience with some left for me! For most sessions I will need a table(s), a jug of water and glass!

I may also need access to a large screen projector / smart board to connect an iPad (I have connectors!). If there is a large audience, I may have to ask for a PA system (radio lapel mic). I will need access to a flip chart or smart board for writing workshops.

BEFORE THE VISIT

I have found it to be beneficial to the children's experience if they are familiar with some of my books, (perhaps within a scheme of work) before the visit takes place. The anticipation of the visit, followed by the meeting with a "real author" has had positive effects in schools throughout the world.

The following points are taken from the *Guide to Organising an Author Visit* and are endorsed by several organizations. As I helped write them, I'd like to think that you will agree with them! I have cherry picked several of the points that are applicable to my visit and expanded on one or two.

THE VISIT

The following are guidelines to ensure a successful day:

- Remind staff of the day's activities.
Be ready to meet and greet the author (Make sure that the school receptionist or equivalent is aware of the writer's arrival - a welcoming cup of coffee generally goes down well!).
- Have refreshments available throughout the day. (Please discuss lunch arrangements before the visit!)
- Make sure that the venue is clean and equipped with suitable seating / technical requirements.
- Make sure children and staff are in place on time for the session(s).
Introduce the author to the audience.
- Make sure that staff / children do not wander through the venue when the talk is taking place.
- Don't leave the author to fend for themselves in staffrooms at break times or lunch.
- Make sure that books are available for sale and book selling is organised in an orderly manner. **I insist that the children will have the opportunity to be able to buy my books.** I understand that not all children are able to buy books, but I do feel that it is important to encourage book ownership. I always positively promote library membership for all children. I am more than happy to bring along books, or if you have an arrangement with a local bookshop, I am happy for them to organise sales.

Some common pitfalls to be aware of:

- Do not leave the author alone with the pupils at any time. Authors are not to be regarded as substitute teachers and left with a class or classes. (There are public liability insurance and safeguarding implications). I have both public liability insurance and a DBS certificate.

The members of staff who would normally teach the children in the audience should be present, (and other teachers / teaching assistants, if available) and should be fully engaged with the presentation, not filling in forms or marking books.

- It is important to let the author know of any children with special needs or behavior problems. I am very happy for my presentations to be signed.
- Make sure that there are no problems with noise in other classrooms (or from author's sessions). Exams and author visits tend not to mix!
- If having a local press photographer, make sure that they do not arrive mid-session. Photos should be taken before or after sessions in order not to interrupt the event.

I trust that these guidelines will be of use in helping to make the visit a wholly enjoyable and educational experience.