

# Writing and Illustrating for Young Readers

## June 12-16, 2023

Morning Workshops 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. MDT

Lunch Break 12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

Announcements, Introductions, Author Readings 2:00 – 2:15

Expanded Afternoon Schedule

Monday June 12	
2:15 - 3:00 pm	<p><b>Plenary</b> Room 314</p> <p><b>Eating the Elephant</b> Carol Lynch Williams</p> <p>You're in school. A parent. A child. You have a full-time job and a part-time job. You have obligations. Responsibilities. Life is hard. How do you do it all? Including writing, rewriting, and re-rewriting that book that you love so much? There has to be a way! Together we'll come up with solutions to eating the elephant one bite at a time and, hopefully, leave with an attainable goal or two to accomplish once WIFYR is over.</p>
3:10-3:50 pm	<p><b>Plenary</b> Room 314</p> <p><b>After the Query: Working with an Agent</b> Amy Jameson</p> <p>You've sent off your perfectly polished query letter to a list of potential agents - what happens next? Learn what to expect from an agent, including offers of representation (what to do if you have more than one), signing an agency retainer, submissions to editors, publication offers, contracts, etc.</p>
4:00-5:30 pm	<p><b>Hands-On Workshop</b> Room 230</p> <p><b>Irresistible Pitches</b> Scott Rhoades/Aubrey Allie</p> <p>Writers frequently need to pitch our books. Query, synopsis, pitch contests—even here at WIFYR. But let's face it: many of us are just bad at pitches. How do you write one that catches an agent's attention? What are these stakes everybody wants to see? In this HOW, we'll discuss the different kinds of pitches, then workshop our own 25-word pitches to make them irresistible.</p>
4:00-4:40 pm	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 231</p> <p><b>What to Expect When You're Querying</b> Krista Van Dolzer</p> <p>Krista has spent years slugging it out in the query trenches, and now she wants to teach you everything she knows. Learn how to build an agent list uniquely tailored to your book, manage and keep track of your queries, and ask the most important questions if—no, when!—you get an offer.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 232</p> <p><b>The Nuts and Bolts of Picture Book Writing</b> Lezlie Evans</p> <p>So you want to write a picture book. What are the key elements that hold a great picture book together? We will explore the nuts and bolts of picture book writing from word play to pacing, hook to the “ah-ha” ending. We'll talk about those things that make your picture book text stand out in a crowded field and stand up to the test of time.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 233</p> <p><b>What Comes Next?</b> Carol Lynch Williams/Kyra Leigh</p> <p>Not sure what to do in the opening of your novel? Let's work those first few pages together and see if we can get going on a new book this very afternoon!</p>
4:50-5:30 pm	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 231</p> <p><b>Edit Yourself Into Print: Giving Your Work a Professional Polish</b> Michael Carr</p> <p>Otherwise compelling stories can stumble over clumsy prose or repetitive sentence structure. Learn how to add a sophisticated touch to your writing and how to clean up your work to show competence to agents and editors. In addition, we will talk about how to identify flaws in our own writing, when to use beta readers, and ideas for shoring up structural weaknesses.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 232</p> <p><b>Adaptation: The Art of Changing Story Mediums</b></p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">Mickey George</p> <p>This class will focus on adapting stories both from previous IP work (a movie to a comic, for example), or adapting a story from one medium to another (novel to graphic novel). Learn the questions to ask yourself when starting an adaptation, including what themes strike you within the source material, why must this be in your desired medium, and what makes this an exciting project for you.</p> <p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 233</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>7 Tips for Your Fast-paced Thriller</b> Tiffany Rosenhan</p> <p>A thriller can be under-thrilling for many reasons: an exaggerated length, a slow pace, and often: clarity. We are not thrilled by that which we do not comprehend, or care little about. In my “twisting turning thriller” debut, GIRL FROM NOWHERE, I used techniques observed from twentieth century spy authors and have now consolidated these observations into simple tips which can be easily adapted to any thriller genre. This course will discuss how to maximize pace and increase the thrill of your plot, all while staying true to the tone, setting, and narration of your story.</p>
<b>Tuesday June 13</b>	
2:15-3:00 pm	<p><b>Plenary</b> Room 314</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Archtype</b> Heidi Taylor Gordon</p> <p>Don't leave your character's growth to chance - Explore the different character journeys as we look at the most common archetypes (and some not-so-common ones). We'll also discuss how identifying your character's archetype early in your writing process can have a dramatic, transformative effect on your overarching storyline.</p>
3:10-3:50 pm	<p><b>Plenary</b> Room 314</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Importance of Place: How Setting Unlocks Superior Storytelling</b> Lori Steel</p> <p>Plot, Character, and Setting are the magical three elements of story construction, but rarely does setting get the play time it deserves. When crafted with intention, setting affects decisions as broad as voice and character, and as detailed as what your protagonist eats for breakfast. When a writer is stuck or the project feels flat, a fully realized setting can be helpful. We'll spend time diving into the concept of setting and how its power can unlock your story to become the standout project it deserves.</p>
4:00-5:30 pm	<p><b>Hands-On Workshop</b> Room 230</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Beyond Spelling and Grammar: 7-Step Process to Take Your Manuscript to the Next Level</b> Tracy Daley</p> <p>Very few writers can sit down and create great voice, musical sentences, and powerful imagery in the first draft. The truth is, the greatest writers are amazing re-writers. This class will break revision down into a seven-step process that will go beyond simple grammar and editing mistakes and into the realm of great writing.</p>
4:00-4:40 pm	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 231</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Power of Yes: How Stepping Out of Your Comfort Zone Strengthens Your Writing</b> Amy Newbold</p> <p>Writing opportunities are all around. Saying yes to new challenges gives you the chance to practice your craft and develop your skills. Come learn how stepping out of your comfort zone and developing a growth mindset can make you a better writer.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 232</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Researching and Writing Kids' Nonfiction is Fun</b> Sierra Wilson</p> <p>Today's nonfiction for kids is anything but boring, and the children's nonfiction field is full of opportunity for writers. In this class, we'll review current trends in children's nonfiction publishing. Then we'll walk through how to choose and research a topic, how to find a unique angle, where to submit nonfiction work, and more. This class will also include in-class activities to jumpstart your own nonfiction project.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 233</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Best Practices in Representation: That They Matter and How to Start</b> Emily Inouye Huey</p> <p>What is "inclusive representation"? Why does it matter? And also... why is it so hard to do it appropriately? In this intensive, we'll describe WHAT inclusive representation is, WHY it matters, and HOW to do it appropriately. The class will end with a Q&amp;A. We want attendees to be able to ask any and all sincere questions, but also understand that this topic can be sensitive. Please send questions ahead of time to <a href="mailto:emilyhuey.com">emilyhuey.com</a>.</p>
4:50-5:30 pm	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 231</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>How to Write in Rhyme and Not Get Rejected for It!</b> Annie Bailey</p>

	<p>You've probably heard at some point in your writing journey that editors and agents hate rhyme. But in reality, many editors and agents love it—IF it's well written. But writing rockin' rhyme is no easy task. In this class, we'll discuss what makes great rhyme, common mistakes to avoid and tips to give your manuscripts the best possible chance of avoiding rejection.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 232</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>What I Wish I Had Known: Tips for Making Better Illustration</b> Greg Newbold</p> <p>Touching on topics ranging from compositional techniques to ideas for better character design.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 233</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Maximizing Character Agency: Balancing Conflict and Choices</b> Kathryn Purdie</p> <p>Some writers have trouble adding enough conflict in their stories while others add too much. Conflict is necessary for good storytelling. Too little and you have no tension. Too much and your characters lose agency—the capability to choose a course of action that can change their outcome. Without character agency, your reader loses hope that the protagonist can achieve the main story goal. He or she becomes a victim to the plot, rather than the driver of it, and consequently loses reader interest and appeal. In this class, you'll learn tips to enhance and troubleshoot the critical element of agency in your stories.</p>
<b>Wednesday June 14</b>	
2:15-3:00 pm	<p><b>Plenary</b> Room 314</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>How to Hook an Agent: From the Query Letter Through the Opening Pages</b> Michael Carr</p> <p>An agent must sift through hundreds, even thousands of queries. Learn what makes an effective query letter and how to write a compelling opening for your sample pages. We will discuss how to write a grabby opening while avoiding the dreaded white room and its evil twin, the cliffhanger.</p>
3:10-3:50 pm	<p><b>Plenary</b> Room 314</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Building a Sustainable Creative Career</b> Kelsy Thompson</p> <p>Let's set the craft lessons aside for a moment and focus on you—the writer! Using a holistic approach, this presentation will discuss the caring and keeping of your inner creative and offer strategies to help you be a healthier, happier, more sustainably creative you.</p>
4:00 - 5:30 pm	<p><b>Hands-On Workshop</b> Room 230</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Picture Book Process</b> Julie Olson</p> <p>In a world full of screens and constant stimulation, kids often miss out on an integral part of language and creative development...the picture book. The world needs well written, beautifully illustrated books now more than ever. In this 2 part, hands-on workshop, Julie will guide you through the process of writing and illustrating picture books and provide you with the tools to get your book ready for submission.</p>
4:00-4:40 pm	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 231</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Writing Strong Characters</b> Heather B. Moore</p> <p>What do you love about your favorite books? Most likely, it's the characters. But now that you're working on your own manuscript, how do you create that character readers will love? Characterization might sound elusive, but it doesn't have to be. Character is what makes your story worth reading and what leads readers recommending your book to a friend. Author Heather B. Moore will teach the key components of how to make each character in your book memorable, whether they appear for one scene, or serve as a main character.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 232</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Creativity Takes Courage</b> Kristyn Crow</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 233</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Making the Ordinary Come Alive: Pacing Tips for Realistic Fiction</b> Rosalyn Eves</p> <p>Most writers know how to make high-stakes scenes exciting--the tension already present in the scene makes it come alive. But what about more ordinary scenes that are nevertheless important to the story, such as critical conversations, a bonding moment between friends, a moment of internal struggle? In this workshop, we'll talk about basic scene structure (scene-and-sequel) as well as techniques of microtension to help build tension and strengthen pacing in your book, even if the fate of the world isn't at stake.</p>
4:50-5:30 pm	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b></p>

	<p>Room 231</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>So Your Protagonist is an Actor?</b> Susan Phelan</p> <p>Have you got an actor in your story? Find out how to make them and the situations they are in both real and personal. So much so that an Oscar Winner reading your story thinks you must be in the biz.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 232</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Illustrator and Author Working Together</b> J. Scott Savage/Brandon Dorman</p> <p>In this class, award-winning artist Brandon Dorman will remotely join Scott Savage to discuss the relationship between the author and artist creating book covers, inside illustrations, picture books, and hybrid graphic novels.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 233</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Working the HQ: Revision and Writing When Your Day Job is Writing, Too</b> Michelle Hubbard/Jacob Miller</p> <p>How revision and other writing tasks differ from your professional job and your own work. Michelle and Jacob, both writers and editors for Blade HQ, discuss the revision and writing processes for day jobs and fiction.</p>
<b>Thursday June 15</b>	
2:15-3:00 pm	<p><b>Plenary</b> Room 314</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Agent/Editor Panel</b> Michael Carr, Lori Steel, Haley Casey Q &amp; A with an agent and editor panel.</p>
3:10-3:50 pm	<p><b>Plenary</b> Room 314</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Keynote: Bushel, Peck, and You</b> David Miles</p> <p>Get your foot in the door at one of America's fastest-growing children's publishers: Bushel &amp; Peck Books. Since launching their first list just a few years ago, Bushel &amp; Peck has experienced a meteoric rise fueled by innovative publishing and a steady stream of starred reviews and accolades. Today, their authors include such notable names as Jane Yolen, David Archuleta, Nancy Kerrigan, Irene Latham, and many others. In this keynote, founder and publisher David Miles will offer a glimpse into the inner workings of the press, their newest middle-grade imprint, and, most importantly, what they're looking to acquire next. Hear what topics are working in the market, what catches their eye in a submission, what turns them off, and participate in a live critique of pitches from the audience.</p>
4:00 - 5:30 pm	<p><b>Hands-On Workshop</b> Room 230</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>For the Love: The Writer's Rollercoaster Journey and What Fulfills Our Passion and Purpose</b> Robert Liddle/Tracy Daley</p> <p>From the first time a writer dips their toe into the swells of a story to the hundredth battering wave of rejections, writers are plagued by the question, "Should I keep writing?" This class will explore the parts of us that make us writers, the moments that make us want to quit, and the passion that pushes us past the doubt. We'll talk about building a life raft that allows us to ride the ups and downs of the writing reality with hands in the air and joy in our hearts.</p>
4:00-4:40 pm	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 231</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Historical World-building: Crafting Your Fictional World Through Research</b> Rosalyn Eves</p> <p>One of the joys of historical fiction can be exploring ideas and historical eras we don't know much about—but writing about what we don't know inevitably requires research. In this workshop, I draw on my experience as a PhD researcher and writer of historical fiction to discuss where to find sources, particularly the specific details that help your time period come alive for readers, and how to incorporate that research into your writing to build a believable historical world.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 232</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Backstory Wounds: How to Use Trauma to Create a Better Story</b> Erin Stewart</p> <p>Every good character has wounds—mental, physical and emotional. In this class, we'll learn how to create believable backstory wounds that will make your characters more compelling and realistic. By digging deeper into this psychological baggage, you'll create a stronger plot as your main character faces their trauma, overcomes it, and transforms into the person they were always meant to be.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 233</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Creating a Compelling Protagonist</b> J. Scott Savage</p>

	<p>Your main character doesn't have to be likeable, but they do have to be compelling. How do you ensure that the reader connects with your protagonist(s) early—especially if the character is not a knight in shining armor doing good and saving the world? And how do you keep the reader caring through the course of a character arc that might include bad decisions, mistakes, and eventually growing and changing?</p>
4:50 - 5:30 pm	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 231</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Getting Graphic: Graphic Novels 101</b> Mickey George</p> <p>This class gives an overview of the basics of writing/illustrating comics and graphic novels: from formatting, pitching, pacing, and how the genre came to be.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 232</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>If You Give a Writer an Idea . . . She May Not Know What to Do With It</b> Annie Bailey</p> <p>Every story starts with an idea. But when you get that creative spark, what should you do with it? In this class, we'll talk about generating ideas, keeping track of those ideas and how to decide which ideas deserve your time. I'll share the journey of several of my published books, from initial inspiration to publication, to help you find your own way of taking manuscripts from idea to completion. Please note, this class will focus on board books and picture books.</p>
	<p><b>Afternoon Session</b> Room 233</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Bullseye! How to Nail What Kid-Lit Publishers Are Looking For</b> David Miles</p> <p>"It's so hard to get published." Not so! The real problem is that too many authors are missing the mark—or aiming at the wrong target altogether. The truth is, publishers are as hungry as ever for good content, and we'll even compete to get it. We want books—but we want books that will succeed. And while any honest publisher must acknowledge that there can be an element of luck to all successes, we usually have good instincts about what will work. As an author, you just have to know what that is—and nail it. In this session, we'll lift the curtain on what it takes to hit a kid-lit bullseye: what's trending, what's selling, why some submissions win, why others get rejected, and other insider secrets to breaking into children's publishing directly from the veteran of two of America's fastest-growing publishing startups. And since there's nothing like learning from the real thing, you'll even get a front-row seat as David takes a first look at some recent submissions and offers quick, honest critique.</p>
<b>Friday June 16</b>	
2:15-3:00 pm	<p><b>Plenary</b> Room 314</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Dialogue as a Literary Device</b> Haley Casey</p> <p>Dialogue does more for your story than simply allow your characters to communicate. It can build characterization, propel a plot forward, and reveal (or conceal) key information for your audience. Poor dialogue can also pull a reader out of your story, so how do you write it in a way that sounds natural? In this class, we'll discuss what makes dialogue effective, explore tips to help written dialogue flow, and dive deep into how dialogue works with other elements of story to make a successful manuscript.</p>
3:10 - 3:50 pm	<p><b>Plenary</b> Room 314</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Editing: What it is, What it isn't, What You Can Do Yourself</b> Lisa Mangum</p> <p>Every book requires editing, whether developmental editing or line editing. This class will discuss the various levels of editing as well as offer tips and suggestions for authors looking to do a final self-editing pass before submitting a manuscript to an agent or publisher.</p>
4:00-4:40 pm	<b>Book Signing</b>
4:50-5:30 pm	<b>Party and Prizes</b>