

# PATRICIA NEWMAN

## I've Scheduled an Author Visit: Now What Do I Do?

The key to a successful event is preparation! There is no such thing as starting too early to be sure my visit becomes a genuine connection with your students--my goal is to supplement your curriculum, not distract from it. I hope to leave your students inspired to create their own work and with a deeper understanding of my process from idea to publication.

### After booking the date, you must make some decisions:

- What type of program do you want—small groups or assembly presentations? I can perform both, but will need to know the following for each group you would like me to address:
  - How many students in each session?
  - What grade level(s)?
  - What topics would you like me to cover—please refer to my list of presentations on my website (<http://www.patriciamnewman.com/author-visit-programs/>)
  - Where will the presentations take place?
  - Is A-V equipment available? Generally I need a LCD projector, a screen, a table, and a microphone for large groups (clip on works best, but I can make hand-held work, too).
- Is my visit part of a week-long reading event? If so, how do the two relate?
- If I am not local to your area, is there a neighboring school willing to host me as well, thereby splitting travel and lodging expenses?
- Will you have books available for me to autograph to your students?
- Will you use the book sale as a fund raiser to offset the cost of the author visit?
- How will you fund the visit? Please visit <http://www.patriciamnewman.com/author-visit-programs/author-visit-fags/> for some creative funding ideas.
- Ensure that my honorarium is prepared in advance. Do I need to submit a W-9 or complete district paperwork prior to my visit?

### How to make our time together meaningful for students and staff:

- Complete a schedule that you share with your administrator and me, taking into consideration lunch times and recess times.
  - Once the day's schedule is finalized, please send it to me so I can forward my contract.
  - Please be kind enough to provide my lunch, and tell me whether I will be eating with staff or students.
- Encourage staff to read my books in their classrooms. Discuss the content and illustrations. Teacher guides are available at <http://www.patriciamnewman.com/teacher-guides/> if you would like to integrate the books into your curriculum.

- Share biographical information about me with the students, staff and parents.
- Connect with me online before my visit:
  - Website: [www.patriciamnewman.com](http://www.patriciamnewman.com)
  - Blog: <http://www.patriciamnewman.com/blog-4/>
  - Twitter: @PatriciaNewman
  - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PatriciaNewmanBooks/>
- Publicize the event in your school newsletter, acknowledging your funding source(s).
- Encourage parents to attend the author visit.
- Display my books in school and encourage parents to peruse them prior to my visit.
- Work with students to make posters for the school hallways.
- Follow-up with additional newsletter articles as the day of my visit draws near.
- Invite your administrator to attend a session and perhaps even introduce me to the students.
- Plan a week of innovative events to correspond with my visit:
  - Deliver daily PA announcements regarding reading topics; invite students to deliver these announcements
  - Sponsor a bookmark-making contest
  - Cover classroom doors to look like book jackets
  - Video students sharing book reviews of my books and play them on classroom TVs
- Inform your local public library of my visit. Perhaps the library can partner with your school for an evening program for parents (*Note: there is an additional fee for an add-on evening program*).

### Face Time with the Author

Consider offering my books for sale to the students and staff for autographing.

- I have an order form you can send home with students to pre-order books. Send these forms out in a timely manner, and plan to send them out multiple times.
- Many of the schools I have visited have had great success working with Barnes & Noble and running the author visit through their Book Fair program. Contact your local Barnes & Noble Community Relations Manager.
- If Barnes and Noble is not an option, consider an independent bookseller in your area.
- Books can also be ordered through Amazon or my publisher(s).
- When books arrive, make sure they are tagged and ready for me. Be sure to set aside a specific time for me to sign them on the day of the visit. I enjoy saying a few words to each child as I sign his/her book. I regret that I cannot sign students' slips of paper, hands, arms, bookmarks, etc.
- If a student already owns my books, encourage them to bring them in to school on the day of my visit to have them signed.

### Final tips for the day of the event:

- Celebrate Author Day with a welcome banner or a delegation of students to escort me.
- Set up the AV equipment ahead of time and test it.

- Ensure that teachers are seated with their students during my presentations. The author visit coordinator should always be present to ensure things are running smoothly and according to schedule.
- Double check that all books are signed prior to my departure to alleviate unnecessary tears.

**Questions?** Please email me at [newmanbooks@live.com](mailto:newmanbooks@live.com).