

PATRICIA NEWMAN

How to Make the Most of your Virtual Author Visit

Technology can step in to fill a void when an in-person author visit is not possible. Like an in-person visit, however, a successful video chat requires preparation. Please read the following suggestions carefully for a glitch-free visit that will inspire your students and reinforce school-based curriculum. As with in-person visits, my goal with a virtual visit is to supplement your curriculum. I hope to leave your students inspired to create their own work and with a deeper understanding of my process from idea to publication.

Video chat platform set-up

- Most schools project a video chat on a large monitor, smart board, or screen for students to see.
- If more than 30 students are expected, connect the computer to a sound system so everyone will hear the chat.
- Consider a microphone that students can use to ask questions.

Available formats – please email me to request a price for your specific needs:

- **The 20-minute Book Club Q and A**
 - Generally, student questions focus on where my ideas come from, research, working with an editor and illustrator, and revision, but I'm willing to go wherever the questions lead.
 - This question-and-answer session works best with individual classrooms of students.
 - Ideally, every student in the class will have the opportunity to approach the computer to ask me a specific question.
 - Suggestion: Work with your students to develop different questions to cover a wider variety of topics. Write the questions out ahead of time to save time.
- **The 45-minute Virtual Assembly**
 - I incorporate readings and demonstrations to talk about the writing process, research, revision, publication and various curriculum concepts that mesh with my books
 - Groups of 125 or less work best due to the more intimate nature of video chats.
 - Select a handful of students ahead of time to ask questions. Write the questions on index cards to save time.
- Email me with your preferred date(s)/time(s). Once a date is scheduled, I will send you a digital invoice.

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

- Encourage staff to read my books in their classrooms. Many of my books are available as e-books or on Epic. Discuss the content and illustrations. Lesson plans are available on my website if you would like to integrate the books into your curriculum (<http://www.patriciamnewman.com/teacher-guides/>).

- Share biographical information about me with the students, staff and parents.
- Connect with me online before my visit:
 - Website: www.patriciamnewman.com
 - Blog: <http://www.patriciamnewman.com/blog-4/>
 - Twitter: @PatriciaNewman
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PatriciaNewmanBooks/>
- Publicize our virtual chat in your school newsletter, acknowledging your funding source(s).
- Encourage parents to attend the virtual visit.
- If possible, display of my books 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 the virtual visit draws near.
- Invite your administrator to attend a session and perhaps ask him/her to introduce me to the students.
- Plan a week of innovative events to correspond with my virtual visit:
 - Invite students to deliver daily announcements regarding reading topics
 - 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

Signed bookplates

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

- I have an order form you can send to you so students may pre-order books. Send these forms out in a timely manner, and plan to send them out multiple times.
- Books may be ordered through me or my publisher(s).
- Many of the schools I have worked with have had great success with Barnes & Noble's Book Fair/fundraising program or fund raisers with independent book stores. Contact your local Barnes & Noble Community Relations Manager or indie owner for details.
- Email me with the list of books ordered and the preferred inscription. I will send a personalized and signed bookplate for each book.
- If students already own my book(s), I will be happy to include a personalized, signed bookplate for each book.

Questions? Please email me at newmanbooks@live.com.