



## **Authors in Schools Program**

### ***What is an Author Visit?***

It is an arrangement whereby authors visit a school and speak to at least a portion of its student body, either in the auditorium, the library, or even a classroom, usually on the topics of reading, writing and/or the content of their book(s). Usually, it's free to the school and furthers the important goal of getting kids to read. If you were to set these up on your own, it could cost thousands of dollars in author fees, but since they would already be slated to appear at The Book Bungalow, the publisher will generally foot the bill for their expenses. After all, they want exposure for their authors and they want to sell books. Typically, an author will visit 2-4 schools per day. If they have any particular requirements in terms of set-up or presentation (AV equipment, specific targeted grades, or a certain audience size), we would provide you with that information before you decide if you'd like to host them.

### ***How do I schedule an author to visit my school?***

We try to let our subscribers know in advance through both the newsletter and the calendar on our website which authors are coming in the next few months. When we know they would have particular appeal to school age children, we try to send out an email to those schools' librarians or media center directors to alert them. If you learn about one that looks like it would be a good fit for your school, please contact us through our website, typing "School Visit" in the subject line, and addressing it to Tanya Mills. Please include:

- Name of your school:
- Name of the author:
- Date you'd like to host the author:
- I've checked that school is in session that day and that there is no testing or other conflicts: \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
- Morning or afternoon slot?
- I've read The Book Bungalow's "Authors in Schools Program" information sheet: \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
- I've read and agree to all the terms in the School Visit Contract: \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

### ***Are there any requirements for the school?***

Yes. We require three things:

1. You or your principal read and sign the Author/School Visit Contract to make certain things go smoothly. We kindly ask that you read and sign this contract *before* committing to host an author at your school. (Each author you host requires a new contract to be signed.)
2. By committing to host an author, the school agrees to purchase a minimum of 25 copies of the book(s) being promoted (unless the author is offering to appear under different arrangements). Schools usually hit this number very easily. Below, you will find a list of ways the school can help promote the visit to encourage book sales.
3. That the school will handle all the money that comes in from the students. The school keeps all of this money (including the money earned from sales on the day of the event) and The Book Bungalow will send a single invoice at the very end to the school.

### ***I've scheduled an Author Visit. Now what?***

As soon as the event has been confirmed, The Book Bungalow will email you an official confirmation, and ask you a few logistical questions. Following that, you'll receive a "Next Steps" email that will include an Order Form/Flyer. We'll order 25 books for you to sell at your school (regardless of whether the author has made different arrangements) and let you know when those come in so you can pick them up at our store.

### ***What is an Order Form/Flyer?***

This is a flyer letting students and their families know about the event, the author, and their book(s), and it gives them the opportunity to buy a book in advance of the event so they can have it signed by the author (either at the event or before-hand, depending on the author's schedule). This form helps us know if we need to order additional books, and it is a requirement if the publisher is sending the author to the school free of charge. An actual order form, the flyer is also designed to help advertise and promote the Author Visit, and can be used both before and after the event (students may want to order the book after the author's presentation . . . even up to a week later). Please emphasize to students, however, that if they want a signed copy, they'll need to pre-order the book (although some authors will leave signed book plates that can be placed inside later).

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### ***How do I prepare for the Author Visit?***

If The Book Bungalow weren't just getting started and if it had several part-time staff to help out, we would do some of the following for you, but, at this point, we are stretched about as far as we can go. For the time being, then, it is the responsibility of the school to promote the event and distribute the Order Form/Flyer.

Getting ready for the visit can be a lot of fun, and a learning experience in and of itself! The author is a guest of the school, and this is your chance to roll out the red carpet, so to speak, and show off your school. None of the following is required, but consider these tips that have worked for other schools, and pick four or five that will work for you:

- Include the Order Form/Flyer in Weekly Folders that go home with students (definitely do this one)
- Post the flyer around the school in the weeks before the event
- Post it on the school's and PTA's or PTO's website
- Share it on social media outlets
- Send out eBlasts about the event from the school and PTA/PTO
- Include the Author Visit in the morning announcements in the week leading up to it (some do it daily, and some have students make the announcement)
- Have the students/art teachers create posters to hang around the school
- Have the library buy copies of the books for their shelves, so they're available to students afterward to check out
- See if the PTA/PTO would like to buy some as prizes as prizes throughout the year - remember to get them signed!
- See if the teachers would like to buy any for their classrooms
- Create giant Welcome banners for the author to hang outside the school's entrance and other key spots inside where the author will see them
- Have the librarian print a list of all the author's titles that are available in the library (Adding the book covers makes a nice visual too)
- Have the librarian create a book display of the author's books (maybe even add in other titles, noting "If you liked this, then you'll like this")
- Have the librarian talk to all classes during their Media/Library special about a week or so before the author comes. Mention who the author is, the books they've written, what they're about . . . even do a read aloud
- Put flyers up in the bathrooms (and stalls)
- Talk to the PTA/PTO about helping to promote the Author Visit
- Read the book in the school's book group if they have one
- Have students write blurbs for the author's books (and don't forget to send them to Tanya at The Book Bungalow so we can publish them on our website and in our newsletter and even create shelf talkers!
- Use the student blurbs in advertising around the school
- Teach a lesson in marketing and advertising and have the students come up with ideas to promote the Author Visit
- Teachers can read some of the book aloud in their classes, do writing assignments based on the book, and conduct a book club around the title
- Have a contest where a student can be selected to introduce the author
- Make a "Reserved for [the Author]" sign and put it in one of the parking places . . . or attach the sign to an orange cone. (Be sure to tell us which spot it will be so we can let the author know.)
- If you have a band/orchestra/chorus in your school, welcome the author to the school's entrance with music
- Assign a student escort to the author for their visit

- Have an author visit ambassador(s) who can visit classrooms and briefly talk about the upcoming visit: author's name, date, read a short bio of the author, name some of their books, etc. (This is a great lesson in public speaking!)
- Bake the author cookies! They could even be decorated with something from one of their books. This is especially great when there's a particular food mentioned in the book.
- Just have fun and get creative!

### ***What logistics do I need to take care of in advance of the event?***

There are really only three things:

1. Provide the information noted below in an email to The Book Bungalow, so we can prepare the Order Form/Flyer
2. Have the books for sale and collect the forms and money
3. Promote the Author Visit (see the bulleted list above)

The Book Bungalow will create the Order Form/Flyer for the school to distribute. It will be emailed to you as a PDF file. Although it's in color, it copies nicely in black and white. There are a few items on the form that will be unique to each school, so we require the following information:

### **QUESTIONS TO HELP US CREATE THE ORDER FORM/FLYER**

1. Exactly who will collect the forms/money? (The Main Office? The School Librarian? The PTA?) The line on the Order Form/Flyer that says, *Please return order forms to your teacher or the Main Office*, may need to be modified, according to your school's decision.
2. Typically, schools or PTAs can accept cash and checks. If they can accept credit cards, please let us know and we'll add it to the form.
3. Who should the checks be written out to? The line on the Order Form/Flyer that says, *Payment: Cash or check. Please make checks payable to . . .* needs to be worded correctly according to your school's desires. Is it the school? The PTA? Please let us know.
4. The author will need to be introduced at the beginning of the event. In addition to having a school administrator welcome the author and get things started, it's often a unique and memorable opportunity for one of the students to introduce the author (particularly if they happen to be a fan). You may want to conduct an "Introduce the Author Contest" to help promote the event.

## BOOKS FOR SALE & MONEY COLLECTION:

1. About two weeks before the Author Visit and for about one week afterwards, the school will have books available for sale. The Book Bungalow will have these books ready to be picked up at the store. The school will make them available to students. We'll note the titles and quantities at the beginning, and then whichever books are left over one week after the event will be returned to The Book Bungalow. We'll tally what sold and a single invoice will be sent to the school for payment for whatever books sold. That means there will be one invoice for all pre-order sales, on-site sales, day-of sales, and post-event sales. This way students can buy the books on the spot when it's convenient for them. We know how many we start with, and we subtract however many we end up with to calculate how many sold. Then we send a single invoice.
2. Hopefully, any orders made via the Order Form/Flyer in advance can be fulfilled with the books for sale at the school. If not . . . if you're running low, please let us know ASAP by the deadline date so we can get them ordered in time for the visit. (The Order Forms/Flyers will need to be matched up with the books, so please have them handy.)

*\*Please note: Sometimes the book the author is promoting doesn't come out until just days before their visit - or sometimes that very day. Therefore, the book wouldn't be available to you (or us) until then. We'll let you know if this is the case, and adjust accordingly. (Usually, in these cases, the author has older titles we can get in advance and await the new one.)*

### ***Why do we have to work so far in advance and why are there deadlines?***

Publishers schedule authors on their book tours 4-6 months in advance. That's when they contact bookstores like The Book Bungalow. There are a lot of moving parts when trying to coordinate all travel logistics for an author who will be traveling all over the country. While we don't need to do everything 4-6 months out, the publisher needs to know that the school is committed to hosting the author, and that scheduling conflicts (such as testing or school break) won't frustrate the author's visit.

Event logistics should begin 4-6 weeks in advance of the Author Visit. This has to do with preparing the Pre-Order Form, giving the school enough time to share it and enough time for the school to let us know which books have been pre-ordered by the students, and giving us enough time to order, receive, process, and get the books ready to go to the school. This takes weeks. Please pay close attention to the deadlines!

### ***How is money collected from the students who buy books?***

Once the Order Form/Flyer has been distributed, the school chooses its own method of collecting the forms and money, then writes a single check to The Book Bungalow for the full amount a week after the visit has occurred.

### ***What happens on the day of the event?***

#### ARRIVAL, SET-UP & INTRODUCTIONS:

- The author should arrive 30-45 minutes before the start time of the event (there may have to be some flexibility here if he/she is doing more than 2 visits that day)
- The author, a Media Escort (possibly), and most often a Book Bungalow staffer will be there
- They'll need a place to set any jackets, bags, etc.
- Determine a place for the author to sign books for the students
- They'll want to see the event space and make sure all AV needs are met and the room is set and ready to go
- It's always nice to meet and say hello to the principal--and any other important school officials

#### SHOWTIME:

- Begin by having the school welcome everyone and introduce the event and The Book Bungalow. (Since we're so new, it would be nice to give our staff person a brief minute to talk about the store and its programs and events.) Then either hand it over to the designated student (if one has won the competition or otherwise been chosen to introduce the author) to introduce the author or introduce him/her yourself. Either way, we can provide you with information about the author.
- The author will give their presentation

#### AS THE PRESENTATION ENDS:

- At the conclusion of their presentation, please have school staff come up on stage (if this is in the auditorium) to thank the author, dismiss the students, and talk about any school-related housekeeping needs. (This gives the author a chance to get in position for signing books.)
- Feel free to post photos and such on social media to let the community know about this fun event! Please tag us! (#book\_bungalow) Tag the author, too. (It's usually just "#" and their full name and/or book title. Just ask us if you're not sure.)
- The author can begin signing books for those students who already have them
- The Order Form/Flyer should be distributed again at the end of the event, or sent with the teachers to hand out that day while the event is fresh in the students' minds.

#### DEPARTURE:

- After the event is over, most likely we'll need to leave pretty quickly, either to the next event or to get the author on a plane or on the road home.

### ***What happens after the event?***

The school will return to The Book Bungalow any unsold books that were left on the day of the Author Visit. (We'll coordinate the timing of this in advance. It's usually one week after the event.) We'll tally all books sold and send the school a single invoice. If the books aren't returned on the agreed upon date, the school will be charged for all the outstanding books.

Don't forget--feel free to send photos from the Author Visit and they may get posted on our website or in our newsletter! Some students are ambitious and like to send thank you notes. We can send them to the author via their publisher, if your students would like to do this.