**CHECK LIST for Top Notch School Visits**

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**Preparation is the key!**

—Who is your audience?

—Are there themes your classroom(s) are focused on?

—What is your budget? (Orders vs honoraria); Grant money? GoFundMe? PTA?

—Pick a range of dates ahead of time.

—What are your goals for the presentation? How many presentations will you need to meet these goals?

—Will this visit occur during the day? Or is it geared toward family engagement?

—Make a list of materials you can provide to increase excitement before and during the visit. Most authors/illustrators post teachers’ guides on their sites.

**PRO TIP:** Sharing your goals with the author/illustrator will help them create a great presentation!

**Once you have booked the visit:**

—To engage all the students, create a kickoff slide show to introduce the author/illustrator to your readers.

—Create activities to do in class.

—Create a contest around the books. By creating a contest, you will engage families, too.

—Use virtual tools to add excitement.

—Send a note to parents about what is happening and how they can get involved.

—Create a book order form in conjunction with your local independent bookstore. (Many authors have premade online order forms. Just ask!)

—Create a script for the visit. Who is introducing the storyteller?

—How many ways can you engage students and different kinds of learners? Posters? Projects?

—Don’t forget to send directions to your author/illustrator! If you can reserve a parking space, that’s great, too!

**PRO TIP:** If you have a limited budget, contact Read Local Illinois! Also, many authors and illustrators will consider a lower honorarium in exchange for bigger book sales.

**The day of the visit:**

Have fun! Take pictures!

When authors and illustrators visit with readers:

—The school benefits! The students get to meet a real-life author or illustrator!

—The storyteller benefits, too. There is nothing more rewarding than meeting readers.

--School visits promote literacy. They promote joy. They promote social and emotional learning.

**PRO TIP:** Who are your students who are most excited about the visit? Make sure they getinvolved. Or maybe schedule a lunch for these students to have extra time with your guest.

**After the visit:**

—Celebrate!

—Build onto the experience. What did they like best? How were they inspired?

—Have students write thank you notes. (Storytellers LOVE those!!!)

—Create a slide show of the visit to share with families. (This may help you raise money and buy in for future visits.)

**Are you in Illinois????**

There are many great authors and illustrators living near YOU.

Advantages of scheduling a school visit through an independent bookstore:

—Connections to great librarians.

—FREE! Save your budget!

—Take a chance on a new author.

—No travel expenses!

—Getting a taste of an author

—Don’t be choosy! Trust your bookstore!

—Educators should tell bookstores what they are looking for. Don’t be afraid to ask! It NEVER hurts to ask!!!! Be flexible!

—This is a book selling opportunity. Focus on book sales. They will arrange order forms.

—They are in touch with publishers so they know what’s coming! They can get you what you

need.

—If the timing isn’t right, tell the bookstore! Be persistent!!!

—Virtual events open doors! Many bookstores will offer free shipping!

*Note to friends: I would love your feedback! Is there something else YOU did to make a school visit amazing?*