

# DANA MEACHEN RAU

AUTHOR OF BOOKS FOR CHILDREN



## AUTHOR VISIT TIPS

Over the 20 years that I have been visiting schools, I've had a string of wonderful experiences. My primary goals are to inspire children to persevere in their reading and writing journeys and to support teachers in building a positive creative culture in their classrooms. I try to align my presentations with current writing standards so that students can connect my process to their own.

I thought I'd summarize some simple things you can do as a school to make my visit (or one from any visiting author or illustrator) the most valuable for your students:

- It's most helpful to tell students ahead of time that I'm coming so they can anticipate the opportunity to learn about writing from someone who has made it a career and to think about their own writing processes. The more you hype the visit, the more engaged the students will be when the day arrives.
- If you have some of my books in the school's library, think of ways to make them easily available. Perhaps a display for easy checkout or a focus of a story time or library lesson. My name might not mean anything to an individual student, but they might connect to a topic I've written about.
- My website is a good resource to familiarize kids with my books and my journey as a writer. My bio and blog pages can help kids get to know me before I arrive.
- I try to leave as much time for questions at the end of the presentation, so ahead of time you can brainstorm questions with students, especially regarding their own writing process. Even if I don't get to all of the questions, having them in mind beforehand will help keep students engaged as they wait to see if their questions are answered during the presentation.
- After the visit, don't hesitate to compile more questions and send them to me as a class. I am always willing to continue the conversation beyond that day.
- Handouts that I provide can be useful after the presentation to reiterate important points. The more memorable we can make the presentation day, the more valuable it will be as a touchstone the rest of the school year as you teach the writing process.

My job is to support you, enrich the curriculum, and hopefully make your jobs a little easier as you build enthusiasm for writing and reading in your school community!

