

STEVE BARLOW AND STEVE SKIDMORE

AUTHOR VISITS

We are both ex-teachers with 20+ years teaching experience. Since leaving the classroom, we have undertaken hundreds of school and library visits over the past 15 years, so we are able to offer a variety of sessions that are appropriate for your children. We are of course, always willing to listen to specific requirements you may have. We aim to be as flexible as possible to meet your requirements and so make the visit an enjoyable and rewarding visit for all concerned.

SESSIONS OFFERED

HOW TO BE AN AUTHOR

A presentation on what is entailed in being “an author” and writing from personal experience.

This session encourages students to regard themselves as writers and to value their experiences as source material for their work. It also promotes self-esteem and aims to encourage even the most reluctant writer to help realise their potential. There may also be time for a Q & A session.

Suitable for: Yrs 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9

Numbers: 20 – 250+ these are negotiable depending on age of students and size of room. If numbers rise above 250, we may have to have a suitable PA system in place (2 lapel radio mics).

Time: 45 – 75 minutes

(Steve Barlow or Steve Skidmore may be able to offer this session on an individual basis. Please contact us for further details).

THINGUMYBOB

An interactive play reading with lots of audience participation / role play. There is potential for follow up activities in drama, art and other curriculum areas.

Suitable for: KS1, lower KS2 (Yrs 3/4)

Numbers: 25 – 120

Time: 45-60 mins

I HERO

A lively and funny interactive literary game show based on our *I Hero* series.

Audience: KS2 (all yrs) Yr 7s and mixed audience (families and friends)

Numbers: 60 – 300 (more may be possible by agreement)

Time: @60 minutes

CHALLENGER

A lively, interactive literary game show, based on our *Challenger* series.

Audience: Yrs 5/6/7 and mixed audience (families and friends)

Numbers: 60 - 300 (more may be possible by agreement)

Time: @60 minutes

HIT AND MYTH!

This lively and hysterically funny show is based on our *Mad Myths* series. It is a fully interactive literary game show centred around Greek myths and legends.

Audience: KS2 (all yrs) Yr 7s and mixed audience (families and friends)

Numbers: 60 – 300 (more may be possible by agreement)

Time: @60 minutes

WRITING WORKSHOPS

May be combined with any of the above sessions. The aim of the workshops is to:

- enthuse students about the writing process
- give students confidence in formulating and planning their work
- encourage students to concentrate on use of language for maximum effect

Audience: Yrs 5/6 / KS3 / KS4 and 6th Form

Numbers: No more than 60

Time: negotiable, but at least 60 minutes

Please contact us for more details of this session.

TRANSITION DAYS

We can offer a combination of the above sessions as part of a transition day for yr 6 students visiting their new secondary school.

Please contact us for more details.

DRAMA WORKSHOPS

We also offer interactive drama workshops using conventions such as role play, hot seating, forum theatre, still images, improvisation etc.

The theme of these can be negotiated and may be used in conjunction with an “author” visit.

EVENING EVENTS

These are becoming more popular with schools inviting a paying audience of parents and friends for an after-school session in order to:

- Involve parents and the PTA in a literacy event
- Help cover some of the costs of the visit.

We usually recommend one of our literary game shows for this event as it is appropriate for all ages and works on many levels!

WRITERS IN RESIDENCE

We are also able to offer a Writer in Residence scheme.

This could be spread over a period of time, with support being offered via e mail/web cam.

Please contact us for further information about these options.

INSET

We can offer sessions on: “Struggling” Readers; Creative Writing; Active Learning; Engaging and Enthusing Boys to Read.

We can also deliver Key Note speeches for conferences.

Appropriate fees can be negotiated for these sessions.

CHARGES AND REQUIREMENTS

FOR SCHOOLS/LIBRARIES PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

NUMBER OF SESSIONS

The maximum number of sessions in a single day is usually 3 x 1 hour (ish!) presentations.

These may be combined with classroom workshops in which we would work with smaller groups for extended periods. Please contact us for more details.

COST

England/Wales

For a full day's workshops and/ or presentation: **£600** (inclusive of all expenses) **PLUS VAT** (schools can usually claim this back). You will get both Steves for this amount! Accommodation will normally be required for visits outside the range that we can reasonably be expected to drive for a 9.00 am start, though we may be able to waive this in the case of a later start. We may be able to offer a reduction in costs if accommodation is not required.

Scotland/N.Ireland

We may have to add further costs for travel.

Rest of the World

Please contact us to discuss costs.

*It is sometimes possible for one of us to offer a limited range of presentations individually: contact us for more information.

NB

We realise that for small schools, the cost may be difficult to meet: however, experience shows that families of small schools can reduce these costs by organising short tours over 2-5 days, and splitting the travel expenses accordingly, or by organising evening shows where a charge can be passed on to parents. There are ways and means of getting visits paid for!

INSET

Charges are variable and will depend on the type of event planned. When inquiring about our fees for inset work, please send us the following details:

- Who is organising the event and how is it funded?

Is the event:

- a conference-style event with a number of speakers and workshop leaders involved? If so, how many speakers and how many delegates?
- a small scale event for a single school or family of schools?

What charge (if any) will be made to attendees?

FESTIVALS

Please contact us for further details about appearing at literary festivals.

MAKING THE DAY A SUCCESS

REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESENTATIONS

For all sessions: an appropriate space big enough to accommodate the audience with some left for us!

For most sessions we need table(s), a 13 amp electrical socket, a jug of water and glasses (to drink from not to see out of!)

If there is a large audience, we may have to ask for a PA system (2 radio lapel mics and 1 stand radio mic).

We will need access to a flip chart or smart board for writing workshops.

BEFORE THE VISIT

We have also found it to be beneficial to the children's experience if they are familiar with some of our books, (perhaps within a scheme of work) before the visit takes place. The anticipation of the visit, followed by the meeting with "real authors" has had positive effects in schools throughout the world.

The following points are taken from the *Guide to Organising an Author Visit* and are endorsed by several organizations. As we wrote them, we like to think that you will agree with them! We have cherry picked several of the points that are applicable to our visits and expanded on one or two.

THE VISIT

The following are guidelines to ensure a successful day:

- Remind staff of the day's activities.
- Be ready to meet and greet the author (Make sure that the school receptionist or equivalent is aware of the writer's arrival - a welcoming cup of coffee generally goes down well!).
- Have refreshments available throughout the day. (Please discuss lunch arrangements before the visit!)
- Make sure that the venue is clean and equipped with suitable seating / technical requirements.
- Make sure children and staff are in place on time for the session(s).
- Introduce the author to the audience.
- **Make sure that staff / children do not wander through the venue when the talk is taking place.**

- Don't leave the author to fend for themselves in staffrooms at break times or lunch.
- Make sure that books are available for sale and book selling is organised in an orderly manner. **We insist that the children will have the opportunity to be able to buy our books.** We know that not all children are able to buy books, but we do feel that it is important to encourage book ownership. We always positively promote library membership for all children. We are more than happy to bring along books, or if you have an arrangement with a local bookshop, we are happy for them to organise sales.

Some common pitfalls to be aware of:

- **Do not leave the author alone with the pupils at any time.** Authors are not to be regarded as substitute teachers and left with a class or classes. (There are public liability insurance and CRB implications).
- The members of staff who would normally teach the children in the audience **should be present**, (and other teachers / teaching assistants, if available) and should be **fully engaged with the presentation, not filling in forms or marking books.**
- It is important to let the author know of any children with special needs or behavioural problems. **If any children have hearing difficulties and need audio aids, please remember that there are TWO of us – we will need two microphones or a multi-directional one. We both speak at the same time and cannot pass a microphone to each other during the presentations. We are very happy for our presentations to be signed.**
- Make sure that there are no problems with noise in other classrooms (or from author's sessions). Exams and author visits tend not to mix!
- If having a local press photographer, make sure that they do not arrive mid-session. Photos should be taken before or after sessions in order not to interrupt the event.

We trust that these guidelines will be of use in helping to make our visit a wholly enjoyable and educational experience.