



I READ CANADIAN AUTHOR VISITS

Having authors connect with readers is a great way to form connections with books. Any budding young authors will get a first-hand encounter that may further develop their interest in writing.

A single presentation usually takes 45 to 60 minutes, and authors can typically do up to four in a single day.

Checklist to prepare for the Author's visit

- Have an email exchange or a phone call with the author well in advance of the visit.
- What is the exact cost of the visit, including travel, HST, and any other costs?
- Ask the author to email you an invoice in a PDF attachment at least 3 weeks prior to the visit.
- How will the author be arriving? By car? Do they know the exact address?
- How can the author get in touch with you urgently on the day of the visit? How can you get in touch with them while they're in transit? Exchange mobile telephone numbers.
- Are there access issues, for example, parking spots, a particular door that they must enter?
- Are there mobility issues for this author? Some may need assistance with equipment/books, others may have a physical disability.
- If the author is arriving by public transit, will transportation be provided to and from the train station, or subway station?
- If the sessions are all day, is lunch provided? Are there any dietary restrictions for this author? This is especially an issue for authors coming from a distance and from out of province.
- What does the author require in terms of table, microphone, audience configuration, and any other set-up requirements? An ideal venue for most authors is a school library or a room in the public library with good acoustics. A gymnasium is less effective but sometimes necessary.
- Make sure the author has water during the presentation, plus time for lunch and bathroom breaks throughout the day.

Most importantly...

- Can you ensure the attendees of the visit are familiar with the author before they come for the visit?
- Can you confirm you have a copy/copies of the author's book in your library and they are visible to the author?

Book signings

- Would you like the author to bring in books for sale and autograph? If so, check if this is something your author offers and confirm arrangements prior to the visit.
- Factor in 15 minutes after the presentation for book sales and signings, if this has been arranged. Ideally, the author will prepare an order sheet that can be sent home ahead of time.
- Signing library copies: Gather up your library copies and ask that the author sign them before leaving. Most will be delighted to do this as long as there is time. In the case of hundreds of books, this is not always possible.



Prepare your readers

- Let them know well in advance when the author will visit.
- Read the nominated book ahead of the visit. This is the single most important part of preparation! Students respond to and benefit from author visits to a much greater degree if they are familiar with the author's work prior to the presentation.
- Have readers prepare questions. Ask readers to research the author and/or the topic of the book.

During the Visit

- Have a reader or staff member greet the author at the door or provide instructions as to where the author should go upon arrival.
- Have the author taken to the presentation location in time for any set-up he or she may need to complete. Other details, such as chairs, display tables, microphone and water should also be taken care of prior to the readers arriving.
- Make sure the author knows where the bathroom is, and is provided with a place to hang their coat and bag.
- Review and confirm the exact end time for the presentation and coordinate clocks. Some authors may ask you to indicate when they have 5 minutes left.
- Stay in the room while the author is presenting. Discipline issues must be dealt with by school or library staff.

Follow-up

Students like to stay in touch with the author after the visit. Some authors will exchange messages with students on their blog or via e-mail. Others will answer the group's questions if they are forwarded via e-mail by the teacher. Ask the author what they prefer, ahead of time.