

# My Program- The FAQ's

## What do you talk about in your presentation?

I talk about life as a professional photographer and writer, and where my career has taken me in the world and what goes into creating a photograph. I also talk about each book, perform poems and discuss how and why I did things the way I did. I also talk about my interests as a person and how that determines what projects I decide to do.

“It’s really nice that you get to combine all the things that you love to make a good career for yourself. It was funny that you had an AFRO when you were a kid.”

- **Amy, Mrs. VanAlstyne’s 5th grade class, Birchwood School**

## What grades do you speak to most?

With over 20 titles to my credit, I’m able to speak to all grades from K through 12. The performance aspect is popular with everyone, teachers and student teachers alike, but most of my books skew to middle school, so that’s the group I speak to most.

“The students loved your high energy level presentation. Who would have thought that poetry would be so enthusiastically received by middle schoolers!”

- **Margaret Hankamp, Librarian, LaGrange Middle School**

## How large a group will you speak to?

I’ve spoken to as few as 5 and as many as 3000 at one time, so size doesn’t matter to me. All that I ask is that students and faculty are comfortable and a sound system is provided for groups larger than 75.

“I have never seen more students in tune and captured from a presentation. We were so impressed with your creativity, ‘spunk’ and high energy!”

- **Ms. Percic, 7th & 8th Grade Language Arts teacher, Marrington Middle School**

## How long is your presentation?

My standard program is about 50 minutes plus 5-10 minutes for questions; about 30-40 minutes for kindergarten.

## How many presentations do you do in a day?

3 presentations are included in my fee. I prefer to have at least a 15 minute break between presentations to regroup. Anything after 3 presentations is an additional fee. You can also mix and match presentations and workshops if you choose. For instance, you could do 2 presentations and 1 workshop; a total of 3, for the same fee.

“We like how you used metaphors in your poetry and expressed your ideas. We think you were the best presenter we ever had!”

- **Mrs. Opiela’s 4th Grade class, Birchwood School**

## **Do you do writing workshops or residences or anything other than school presentations?**

Yes. I now offer writing workshops, multiple day workshops, photography workshops, teacher in-services on how to teach poetry, PARP nights, and anything else you can think of. Over the years I've done numerous types of events, so feel free to ask for something different.

Workshops are for one class period in middle or high school or 1 hour per group for other grades.

"The children were very impressed by your knowledge and enthusiasm!"

- **Ann P. Irrera, Principal, Walter Francis Bishop Elementary School**

## **What about lunch?**

Lunch is to be paid for and provided by the school. I don't eat red meat, but do eat fish, pork and chicken. I prefer mustard over mayo on sandwiches. Once your visit is booked, dietary needs can be discussed.

## **What is your fee?**

Click the school visit [request page](#) to receive an e-mail with fees. All fees are now all-inclusive. This means the fee quoted is all you pay; nothing extra for air, hotel or other travel expenses.

"I love the way you engaged the kids during your presentation. You were a big hit!"

- **Linda Livingston, Teacher, 6th grade, Haverford School**

## **What can teachers or librarians do to prepare the kids?**

The simplest answer is to introduce the books to the kids in depth at least 3-4 weeks before the visit. They should also check out as much of my website as possible. Librarians can offer a webquest where students have to find specific info by navigating through the site. There's nothing that aggravates an author more than to speak to a group who's not familiar with their work. It gets the kids excited and allows them to ask informed questions when it's done.

"The third graders truly enjoyed meeting you and using your poetry as a model for writing. Thank you for being an inspiration to our children."

- **Robyn Marenstein, 3rd Grade teacher, Menands School**

## **Should we sell books?**

Yes, yes, a thousand times YES! Once kids (and teachers) see the books brought to life they will definitely want their own copies. Everyone misses out when my (or any author's) books are not offered for sale. A book order will require time, organization and effort, but it's not that hard and can also serve as a fundraiser for the school.

"Our students and teachers enjoyed your visit so much!.....Hearing your writing in your voice brought a new light to the work they have been enjoying."

- **Leslie Zackman, Principal, Beekman Hill, International School**

### **OK then, how do I order books?**

You can choose a number of ways; from ordering from the publisher (you get a great discount, but you do all the work), online (same thing), or my recommendation, ordering from a local bookstore. They will usually handle the orders and provide you with a discount that you can keep for fundraising or pass on to your students.

### **Should we sell books before the visit or after?**

You should always sell before but order extras to have available on the day of the visit. (You only pay for what's sold, so it's ok to order more.) It's important for students to be introduced to the books before the visit but even still, once I perform from my books, those that were reluctant to order before will most likely buy after.

“Your poems are like the mellow wind blowing through the green grass.”

- **Matt, Crossroads Middle School**

### **Great, I'm ready to book a date, now what?**

My wife handles all bookings and once you fill out the [request page](#), she will reply with the fee. Once you agree on the fee, the details will be hammered out between the two of you. As the date gets closer, you will provide a schedule for the day and she will inform you of my AV needs. Lunch will be agreed upon and if applicable, travel arrangements will be made one month prior to the visit.

### **Who do I contact?**

You can book visits by filling out the email form at [www.charlesrsmithjr.com](http://www.charlesrsmithjr.com). Please fill out the form as thoroughly as possible for a speedy reply.