

An Author Visit from Michelle Mulder



I am the author of eight books for children, including *Out of the Box* (Orca 2011) and *After Peaches* (Orca 2009), which was shortlisted for the Bolen Books Children's Book Prize, the Chocolate Lily Award and the Rocky Mountain Book Award. My presentations are lively, interactive, and curriculum-linked, and I love sharing my enthusiasm for reading, writing, and social activism. I have spoken at schools, libraries and festivals in across Canada and make my home in Victoria, B.C. Below are some samples of my presentations. For more information, please contact me at michelle@michellemulder.com

Novels (ages 7-13)

I begin by asking what the students like to read and why. I talk about falling in love with the true stories that I recount in my novels, and I explore how to develop the "story" in "history," while sharing interesting bits of my research (photocopies from Canadian newspapers of 1947; radio broadcasts that I listened to; film footage; and photographs that inspired scenes in my books).

We discuss the process of writing, rewriting, editing and publishing, and I offer a glimpse of the extensive red ink on my early drafts. My novels focus on social justice, and through anecdotes, thought-provoking questions, and plenty of discussion, I aim to inspire young people to reconsider their place in the world and what they can do to make their mark.

This presentation lasts about an hour and is designed for up to 70 students.

Writing workshops (ages 9 and up)

I come to each workshop with questions, ideas for brainstorming, a handful of writing exercises, and plenty of flexibility. Led and fed by the experiences and interests of the students, I explore the idea of inspiration, where to find it and how to keep it; how to develop characters, plot and setting; and revisions. I aim to spark lively discussion and excitement about reading, writing, and the power of story.

My workshops last two hours and work best with up to thirty students.

Picture books (ages 3-6)

With props, a silly storyteller's hat and a set of hand actions, the children and I talk about the three main ingredients for a story: character ("Who?"), plot ("What?") and setting ("Where?"). I read one of my books, asking questions about story elements that we've talked about, and then I tell them how the book was put together. I discuss how I got my ideas, what happened when the publisher accepted the manuscript, and how I worked with an illustrator. I also share anecdotes about a few of my favourite pictures in the book.

This presentation lasts half an hour and is ideal for groups of forty or fewer.