

Session Title: Writing “If/Then” Stories – The Fun That Results When One Thing Leads to Another

Session Description:

In this writing workshop styled presentation, we’ll explore “If/Then” stories like Laura Numeroff’s *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* (and its sequels), David LaRochelle’s *The End* (a fabulous backwards if/then story!) and Aimée’s own *Do Not Rake Your Garden in a Party Dress*. Students will collaborate on their own stories in groups using the “If/Then” format, with a focus on brainstorming, story arc, and page turns. Instructions for making an accordion folded popup book will be provided.

This session can be adapted for a variety of elementary school ages, as well as for a larger, auditorium-style presentation. Aimée will send a copy of one of her books in advance of her visit for teachers to read and share in their classrooms.

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be introduced to a writing strategy in which they will use spoken, written, and visual language to create enjoyable stories.
2. Students will gain an understanding of prediction and sequencing, and how those concepts can help move a story along.
3. Students will gain experience with the concept of conditional statements – a fun writing structure but also a precursor to geometry and computer coding.

Specifically, we will explore:

- How writers benefit from using mentor texts to structure their own writing.
- Why writers like telling - and readers love reading - predictive stories.
- How the illustrations in picture books provide clues about what’s going on in a story and help readers predict what will happen next (and how books for older readers often include clues, too).
- Why brainstorming works best when we turn off our “internal editor” and allow ourselves to get silly (the sillier the better).

Classroom Activity:

Teachers will be provided with a lesson plan after Aimée’s visit that will help students continue their work with regard to predictive storytelling and sequencing.

A list of related classroom activities available online will also be provided to teachers.