

SCBWI 43rd Annual SUMMER CONFERENCE August 1-4, 2014 | Los Angeles, California

MONDAY - AUGUST 4, 2014 - CRAFT INTENSIVES

9:00am -12:15pm **MORNING**

A. JOSH ADAMS - GET IN CHARACTER: CREATING MEMORABLE PROTAGONISTS

This intensive covers really getting to know your characters, developing and deepening them (and thereby also helping the plot by increasing the stakes), and includes several hands-on exercises to that effect.

B. BONNIE BADER - START: HOW TO HOOK READERS FROM THE BEGINNING OF YOUR BOOK SO THEY'LL NEVER LET GO

This intensive is all day. If you sign up for am you must sign up for pm.

This full-day, hands-on intensive is designed to help writers refine the first pages of their works-in-progress. In this class we will warm up with writing exercises, then dig in to answer the following questions:

- Does your first line grab your reader? After reading the first page, will the reader want to read on?
- Are you really starting your book in the right place?

Be prepared for a full day of writing, brainstorming, rewriting, discussion, polishing, reading, and refining!

Assignment: Please submit the first chapter of your novel (chapter book through YA—no picture books) no later than June 30 to sararutenberg@scbwi.org.

C. LAMAR GILES - A YA THRILLER INTENSIVE

Author Lamar Giles will help you examine the premise, prose, and structure of your novel, spotlighting opportunities to ramp up tension to keep readers turning pages in breathless anticipation of what happens next!

Assignment: E-mail a one-page synopsis and the first chapter (ten pages max) of your completed or work-in-progress YA Thriller to sararutenberg@scbwi.org no later than July 1. Be prepared to share your work and revise in real-time.

D. DEBORAH HALVERSON - CRAFTING A YOUTHFUL NARRATIVE VOICE AND SENSIBILITY IN MG/YA FICTION

Whether your narrator is your young main character or an all-knowing omniscient being, there are ways to convince young readers that you understand them and their view of the world—and to hook'em good and hard in the process. This workshop teaches techniques for creating a narrative sensibility that reflects the way teens and tweens think, and arms you with strategies for analyzing and revising your own manuscript's sensibility. Includes lecture with examples, group revision exercises, and individual revision exercises.

Assignment: Each attendee must bring three copies of the first five pages of their current MG or YA work-in-progress.

E. KRISTA MARINO - MG/YA INTENSIVE: WORLD BUILDING

Take your fiction to the next level by learning the ins and outs of world building. Participants must have a work-in-progress (required in class).

Assignment: Turn in a synopsis of your world and its rules by June 15, and read three (to be assigned) novels for this class. (This class is most helpful to those writing what could be classified as fantasy, science fiction, and speculative fiction.)

F. LINDA SUE PARK - WRITE HERE RIGHT NOW!: A NOVEL REVISION WORKOUT

Learn practical revision tips and put them to work on the spot! We'll explore ways to see your story with an objective and critical eye, and try them out as we go. Come ready to get a great start on trimming the fat from your manuscript and getting it into submission-ready shape.

Assignment: Participants must bring a completed MG or YA manuscript that's ready for fine-tuning. Hard copy is okay, but electronic copy (i.e. on a laptop) is preferred. Also required: Attendance at Linda Sue Park's keynote address for an introduction to the techniques that will be practiced during the intensive.

G. JEN ROFÉ - PICTURE PERFECT: COMPONENTS

OF A GOOD PICTURE BOOK

What elements do successful picture books have in common? Jen Rofé will walk you through them, while putting published picture books to the test. Then, we'll put your manuscript to the test. Remember to bring your best one!

Assignment: Bring your latest version of a picture book manuscript.

H. MEG ROSOFF - THOROUGHNESS

We will dig into the deepest, darkest, messiest places of your unconscious mind, and drag your subject matter kicking and screaming into the light. No prerequisites required, except a willingness to expose yourself in public. Not literally. This class will not tolerate nudity of any sort.

I. KELLY SONNACK - FINESSING YOUR FIRST PAGES

Whether they're being read by an agent, editor, teen or middle-grader, your first pages must pack the perfect punch so that the reader becomes invested in your story. With so many things to get right (pacing, character connection, and world building, to name a few), it's not surprising when authors struggle trying to decide just where and how their story should start. In this in-depth, hands-on session, Kelly will analyze examples of successful first pages, provide detailed tips on what key ingredients first pages must include.

ASSIGNMENT: Participants must bring your own first pages which will be workshopped according to the guidelines covered in the instruction.

J. LAURA RENNERT - UNDERNEATH THE HOOD: CRAFTING AWARD-WINNING AND BEST-SELLING YA

With a metaphor inspired by my client Maggie Stiefvater's well-documented obsession with fast cars (especially Camaros), I'd like to lift the hood on the best YA, and examine what it takes to write compelling YA at the sweet spot of literary and commercial. What are the key elements that make for standout YA and for YA authors who are both critically acclaimed and commercially

MONDAY - AUGUST 4, 2014 - CRAFT INTENSIVES

successful? Prerequisites for this class are a YA work-in-progress.

Assignment: Please bring your pitch, the first ten pages of your novel, and please write two paragraphs on a significant shortcoming you see in the work-in-progress or on a significant problem you are having as you write. If possible, try to bring a small section of the MS (ten page max) that exemplifies this problem.

K. ANDREA WELCH - TEN ESSENTIAL PICTURE BOOK ELEMENTS—HOW DOES YOUR MANUSCRIPT MEASURE UP?

One of our industry's most proficient picture book editors reviews the essential qualities of the best picture books. This highly-interactive intensive explores ten key elements editors are looking for in books for young children, including voice, pacing, narrative tension, and emotional content—with lots of real-life examples of each. Participants will come away with a clear sense of what makes a project irresistible to an editor.

Assignment: Bring a picture book manuscript you are working on.

L. ALEXANDRA PENFOLD/ERIN MURPHY - SPEED PITCHING

Is your work saleable? Do you have a sufficient hook? Can you describe it succinctly and entertainingly enough to interest a publisher, an editor, or even a reader? In this small group, practical workshop, you'll have the opportunity to pitch your work to two accomplished agents working in our field. They'll give you an on the spot reaction with tips to improve your pitch and by extension, the interest in your work. Don't miss this opportunity to get a direct response and evaluation on your elevator pitch.

Assignment: Attendees should come prepared to pitch a current piece of work that they are hoping to sell or bring to market. Pitches should last between three and five minutes maximum.

M. LINDA PRATT/SARAH DAVIES - SPEED PITCHING

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12:15PM - 1:45PM **LUNCH** - On your own

2:00pm - 5:15pm **AFTERNOON**

A. BRUCE COVILLE - THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

The session will begin with an "annotated storytelling" of the first two chapters of *The Monster's Ring*, examining in detail the tricks and techniques being used. Then we'll examine ten specific tips for writing compelling fantasies.

Assignment: Please come prepared with two pages to be read aloud (they do not have to be first pages) and two questions pertaining to your own work.

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C. SARAH DAVIES - WHAT IT TAKES

The publishing industry can seem impenetrable. This is an inside, interactive look at how to write great, standout fiction and break into the marketplace. What it takes in concept, craft and industry knowledge, plus insights into agents' decision-making and processes, client relationships, query-writing, how deals are done, and tips on surviving the publishing rollercoaster and building a career.

D. EMMA DRYDEN - ROBUST REVISION

In this session, we will explore a variety of revision techniques and tools to help authors see their work with fresh eyes and new perspectives. The intensive will be supplemented by several writing exercises and useful handouts.

Assignment: This intensive is for authors who have completed at least one entire draft of at least one manuscript. Authors should have their complete manuscript accessible during the session on a laptop or device (or hard copy, if necessary). While much of the focus will be on revision of longer manuscripts, picture book authors will benefit from a lot of the techniques and tools being discussed, so *this session is open to all authors of picture books, MG, and YA.*

E. ALLYN JOHNSTON/MARLA FRAZEE - IT'S ALL ABOUT THE DUMMY, DUMMIES!

Beach Lane Books publisher Allyn Johnston and two-time Caldecott Honor medalist Marla Frazee will co-teach this hands-on workshop for writers on picture book pacing.

Assignment: Bring your favorite published picture book, a picture book manuscript, at least eight sheets of blank 8 ½ x 11 paper, scissors, and a glue stick.

F. WENDY LOGGIA - CONSTRUCTING THE YA NOVEL

Voice, character, pacing, and dialogue—a great novel needs it all. This intensive will walk you through these elements with the goal of strengthening your prose and turning writers into authors.

Assignment: Participants must have completed and bring with them a MG or YA manuscript. Also, prior to the conference, participants will write flap copy for their book, and e-mail the copy along with the first thirty pages to wloggia@randomhouse.com by July 15 so we can hit the ground running.

G. KRISTA MARINO - YA INTENSIVE: SHOW IT, DON'T TELL IT—MAKING YOUR VOICE STRONGER

Learn what it means when a critique partner, editor, or agent tells you to "show it, don't tell it," and how to write yourself out of this common blunder. Come prepared to revise a section of your work. Attendees must have at least a partial manuscript written and have it with them in class.

Assignment: Read three (to be assigned) novels before class time.

H. JEN ROFÉ - THE "SO WHAT?" FACTOR

When reading manuscripts, Jen Rofé asks herself, "So What? Why should I care about these characters and their journeys?" In this session, we will discuss the components of the "So What?" factor, and we will examine the plots of successful books to uncover how the authors made us care. Finally, we will explore whether or not your manuscript has a good "So What?" factor.

Assignment: Bring a summary of your MG or YA.

I. JILL SANTOPOLO - FROM BEGINNING TO END: TIPS ON PLOTTING YOUR PLOT

There are tons of ways to look at plot and tons of ways to plot a story. We'll look at as many as possible so you can add an arsenal of plotting tools to your writer's toolbox.

Assignment: A one-page synopsis of the story you're currently working on or are about to start working on.

MONDAY - AUGUST 4, 2014 - CRAFT INTENSIVES

J. SARA SARGENT - THE TENSION HEADACHE: RAISING THE STAKES IN YOUR MANUSCRIPT

The key to writing that “unputdownable” book is giving readers a reason to care and keep turning the pages. This workshop will address the importance of drama, plot, and pacing within the framework of tension, and we’ll discuss how to up the stakes in your novel through several exercises that we’ll do and go over together.

Assignment: Bring one copy (for yourself; we will not be sharing with others) of: the first three chapters of your novel and whatever scene you believe to be the climax of the novel. Bring paper/pen and laptops.

K. JULIE STRAUSS-GABEL - AT THE CROSS-ROADS: CHOOSING YOUR NEXT PROJECT

Published or not, what should you write next? An editor-led discussion of which idea is more viable, emotionally, market-wise and practically.

Assignment: Bring in a paragraph (or flap copy) about two projects to be shared.

L. MAGGIE STIEFVATER - SPECIFICS VERSUS DETAILS: CREATING PEOPLE, NOT CHARACTERS

What makes a story memorable? The action? The plot twist? No—it’s the people who live in it. Placing a compelling, memorable character at the heart of your novel will ensure your novels have lasting appeal that transcends genre or trend. Participants should come armed with a character they’re looking to deepen, and expect to talk about the differences between cluttering a character with details versus enriching them with specifics.

Assignments: Bring a specific character or two (from the same manuscript) in mind, two sample pages (in order) that introduce the character, two sample pages which define the character, a brief description of how these characters arc and a one-page, query type description of your manuscript.

M. ANDREA WELCH - TEN ESSENTIAL PICTURE BOOK ELEMENTS—HOW DOES YOUR MANUSCRIPT MEASURE UP?

One of our industry’s most proficient picture book editors reviews the essential qualities of the best picture books. This highly interactive intensive explores ten key elements editors are looking for in books for young children, including voice, pacing, narrative tension, and emotional content—with lots of real-life examples of each. Participants will come away with a clear sense of what makes a project irresistible to an editor.

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