WRITERS’ INTENSIVE
MONDAY, AUGUST 12, 2019 | 9:00am – 5:00pm

This full-day event is broken up into two distinct sessions. The morning session, A Closer Look, is a small-group round table where you’ll receive feedback from an agent or editor on the first 500 words of your manuscript. The afternoon session is a deep-dive craft intensive of your choice. In order to participate in the Writers’ Intensive, you must sign up for both a morning and afternoon session.

Morning Session | 9:00am – 12:00pm | A Closer Look

Participants will meet with a publishing professional in groups of eleven. All attendees will have the opportunity to read the first 500 words (two pages) of their manuscript and receive approximately ten minutes of feedback from the agent or editor leading their group. Though feedback is given in a group setting, A Closer Look is not a peer critique. The session is designed so that all members can learn from listening to a publishing professional critique others’ work.

Please select one of the group leaders below when registering. Bios of the group leaders can be found [here](#). If your first choice is unavailable, you will have options to choose another appropriate group leader. If you’d like, bring eleven copies of your manuscript pages to share with your group.

- Simon Boughton
- Adriana Domínguez
- Carol Hinz
- Allyn Johnston
- Jennifer Laughran
- Arthur A. Levine
- Tiff Liao
- Melissa Manlove
- Hannah Mann
- Denene Millner
- Andrea Morrison
- Molly O’Neill
- Alexandra Penfold
- Lara Perkins
- Beth Phelan
- Matt Ringler
- Jennifer Rofé
- Abigail Samoun
- Sara Sargent
- Alexander Slater

Afternoon Sessions | 2:00pm – 5:00pm

Participants will choose one of the following deep-dive craft workshops. Read the descriptions carefully to familiarize yourself with the content and any prerequisites or assignments.

A. BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS, AND THE ANGUISH IN BETWEEN
MEM FOX
This workshop will focus firstly and briefly on the absolute basics of writing picture books. It will then move on to an exploration of the need for brutal rewriting as a book nears completion. What needs to be rewritten? Why? How? When is a book finished? How important is the illustrator’s contribution? And how will paying ruthless attention to the rhythm of prose pay dividends when the book is considered for publication? Participants should bring their own picture book text of 500 words or less. This text should be one of two genres: either a rhyming, rhythmic, repetitive text for the very young, as in *Where is the Green Sheep?*, *Hello Baby*, and *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes*; or a story for older young children with a beginning, middle, and end, written in prose, as in *Wilfrid Gordon MacDonald Partridge* and *Koala Lou*. Stories with a beginning, middle, and end for the older group of children should not, under any circumstances, be written in verse.

B. DEVELOPING COMPELLING SECONDARY CHARACTERS
RENÉE WATSON
The main character is the heart of the story, but the people in their life play an essential role. In this workshop, participants will discuss how understanding secondary characters deepens the development of the main character. Through short readings, free writes, and discussion, participants will create character descriptions and leave with writing prompts to use for their work.
C. WRITING ENGAGING PICTURE BOOKS
ALEXANDRA PENFOLD
Dive deep into the building blocks of picture book making from word count to pacing to pagination and, of course, a satisfying ending. See real-life edits and discuss how best to harness the picture book form to create stories that will engage and delight readers over and over and over again. Attendee homework: please prepare for the class by making a list of your five favorite picture books. At least three of the five must be from the past five years. Write out what you think the overarching theme is and what elements of the story—plot, characters, dialogue, humor, etc.—made it a favorite for you and why. We will share and discuss in context with the lecture.

D. JUST DO IT: WRITE HERE, RIGHT NOW
EMMA D. DRYDEN & LINDA SUE PARK
It can be very difficult to carve out writing time during a busy conference. Two of the field’s finest craft instructors and mentors, Emma D. Dryden and Linda Sue Park, have created this special session as a space for writers to work on their craft. Bring your manuscript and laptop for a motivating and companionable session of writing prompts, exercises, timed writing sprints, and more. This is NOT a critique workshop; rather, it’s a time for writers to do what they do best—WRITE.

E. SERIES & SEQUELS
LISA YEE
Don’t give it all away in the first book! Learn how to craft your characters so they stay compelling. Discover how well-defined plots bridge and layer to the next book and the next. Get serious about the mechanics of series and sequels. Please bring a one- to three-page synopsis of your WIP or idea.

F. POLISHING PAGE ONE AND BEYOND
SARA SARGENT
In this intensive, we will look at the process of line editing and how you can improve your sentence structure, flow, and paragraph pacing to make your book as strong as possible. Each participant will email their first page in advance and, in the session, it will be edited live by senior executive editor Sara Sargent. Receive immediate feedback on your writing and learn how an editor goes about the meticulous process of making a book the best it can be. Email your first pages to lauriemiller@scbwi.org.

G. SCISSORS, TAPE, AND PAPER: A HANDS-ON WORKSHOP TO TURN YOUR PICTURE BOOK MANUSCRIPT INTO AN IRRESISTIBLE PAGE-TURNING DUMMY
ELIZABETH PARTRIDGE
As picture book writers, it’s critical we prove to editors that we understand the rhythm of page turns and the importance of creating scenes for an illustrator to work with. We’ll make page-turning dummies from our own manuscripts. No drawing skills required! Participants must bring an 800-word (or less) manuscript, double spaced, with page margins set at one inch and six inches. We’ll provide scissors, tape, and paper. The workshop is full of fun and “aha” moments as we transform our two-dimensional manuscripts into three-dimensional books.

H. TEXTURE: THE WEAVE OF THE FICTIONAL DREAM
M.T. ANDERSON
What really do we mean when we talk about the “texture” of a piece of writing? In this session, we’ll explore all the various elements that go into establishing a texture that is your own and that is particular to the project you’re working on. We’ll see that texture is a concept that combines everything from the smallest word to the broadest designs of your plot. Please bring five pages or so that you might be willing to share with others.

I. DON’T MAKE ME MAPQUEST! CREATING A REAL SENSE OF PLACE IN PICTURE BOOKS
LESÉLÉA NEWMAN
Whether the setting of your book is as small as the cozy corner of a room or as large as an entire planet, it must be so real that your readers feel like they are actually there. After reading and discussing picture books that have an especially strong sense of place, participants will use observation, memory, and imagination to practice creating settings that ground the reader and are so vivid that they become characters in and of themselves. Please bring either your laptop or a pen and notebook, and prepare to take an exciting journey to places near and far!

J. NAVIGATING (AND UNDERSTANDING!) THE SUBMISSION PROCESS
MOLLY O’NEILL
Confidential? Pitch contests? Good old-fashioned email submissions? Tracking websites? Facebook groups? Writing synopses? Sample pages? Yeah, it’s a lot to decipher. But like most parts of publishing, the more you understand the why behind various steps of the submission process, the more in control you’ll feel about your career, and the more empowered you’ll feel about your next steps. This session will reveal practical tips and new perspectives about market realities, as well as useful insight into the dotted lines between the work that authors do as they query a project, the work agents do when they put a book on submission to publishers, and the work that editors and publishing teams do as they put your book out in the world for readers. Come with questions; leave with a concrete, actionable plan for your next submission.

K. REVISIONING FOR PLOT
ELANA K. ARNOLD & BRANDY COLBERT
Through discussion and analysis of their various works, Elana and Brandy will explore several techniques for successfully developing plot through revision. This intensive will help writers learn how to identify specific craft elements and translate them into tools that will improve their revision techniques and results.