

Jodi Carmichael - Author/Presenter

Award-winning Canadian author, Jodi Carmichael is a champion for the underdog and kids who think differently. Through her writing, Jodi hopes to help children and teens build self-confidence, self-acceptance, and empathy for others. Jodi has presented across Manitoba to groups of children, teens, and adults. Each presentation encourages interactive participation, and can include writing activities. Jodi adapts presentations to teacher and/or librarian requests, so they are meaningful for each classroom, school, and community she visits.



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Published Books



* **FAMILY OF SPIES: PARIS** (2018) Middle Grade Novel - Highly Recommended by CM Review of Materials

* **FOREVER JULIA** (2015) - Young Adult Novel - Winner of Manitoba Book Award; The McNally Robinson Books for Young People Awards - Older Category and Bronze Moonbeam Award



* **SPAGHETTI IS NOT A FINGER FOOD AND OTHER LIFE LESSONS** (2013) - Chapter Book - Gold Mom's Choice Award and Silver Moonbeam Award

Presentations



Reading, Writing and Editing - How to Become a Better Writer

This presentation includes a PowerPoint and helps students improve their writing skills. I teach them that a writer's job is to write so clearly that a reader or teacher can "see" what the writer sees in their mind. Using our senses adds detail that makes writing more vivid and contains a feeling of truth—that what they write feels as if it could have happened and explain how good writing skills are the same skills are beneficial for their school work. This presentation encourages students to explore creative writing and to demystify the often held belief that writers, poets, and song writers create something perfect with little effort. To become a better writer we discuss the importance of reading, writing, thinking like a writer, using our senses, reading our work out loud, studying other books, accepting feedback, editing and adding detail. The activity we work on is telling vs showing by exploring how to make a simple sentence dynamic.

Growing a Story - From the Seed of an Idea to a Published Book

Growing a Story encourages students to embrace their individual passions and to show that with hard work and Persistence, dreams can be achieved. Students see how I found a seed of an idea for a story and grew it into a published book. Using my middle grade book, *Family of Spies* I explain how I turned a framed newspaper article about my grandfather winning the Newfoundland Rhodes Scholarship Award in 1914, and transformed it into a middle grade spy mystery. I guide students along the writing journey step by step, sharing the research, editing, submission to publishing houses, rejection, perseverance, book contracts, more editing, cover design, illustrations, printing, and finally the book launch, only to begin all over again. This is my most popular presentation and students leave excited to write their own book. This presentation is facilitated through PowerPoint.



Developing Spy-Like Writing Skills

This presentation includes both hands on learning and a PowerPoint and develops students' writing skills, by helping them think like a writer and encouraging them to always ask questions, keep an open mind, become observant of the world around them and engaging all their senses when writing. These details that others may just walk by and ignore are what writers notice. These details make writing come alive and become believable.

I bring in items such as; containers of garlic, lemon, cotton balls, and mini-marshmallows to provide concrete examples to help them become more aware of sensory details for creative writing. Using a flip chart, I write down what students hear, see, touch, smell and finally taste. We conclude the workshop by exploring "Second Level Writing Skills" and discuss how we can include their own memories and feelings *or* a character's memories and feelings to what we have observed to really make their writing pop.

Fostering Creativity - Finding and Nurturing our Inner Creative Self

This PowerPoint presentation assists adults to get in touch with their creative selves, through hands-on writing activities. Current research on happiness, mindfulness, and mental health show creative thinking and engaging in creative pursuits are like yoga for our mind. Creative activities decreases stress, improves and renews brain function and improves mood. However, being creative isn't as easy as it sounds. As we grow older we often lose touch with our creative selves and may view creativity in a negative way for a variety of reasons. I work through these creative road blocks and help participants begin to see that engaging in creative thinking is as important to their mental health as exercise is to their physical health.

Audience: Educators/Clinical Teams/Parents *(This presentation was initially developed for the Pembina Trails School Division Clinical Team)*



Presentation Details

With every school visit, my goal is to inspire children to read and write and to foster their imaginations. I have presented to groups as small as ten and to entire school wide assemblies numbering over 500. No matter the size of the group, I encourage participants to embrace their individual passions, knowing that hard work and persistence makes all the difference. Through sharing the books I wrote when I was ten, to the stacks of revisions from my current novels, and finally to showing the metal book plates from the printing press, I help make the entire process of writing and publishing become real and possible.

All presentations are an hour in length and suitable for students in grades three to twelve, unless otherwise indicated. Shorter or longer presentations can be developed and fees will be adjusted. Longer presentations are often not suitable for younger children.

My fees are \$250 for one session, \$400 for two, \$550 for three, and \$700 for four in Winnipeg and surrounding areas. (Each session is one hour in length.) Travel outside of Winnipeg can be negotiated. Government Grants may be available to offset the cost.

Speaker References

Jane Friesen, Director of Clinical & Extended Services, Pembina Trails School Division
Colleen Nelson, Teacher-Librarian, Linden Meadows School
Claire Sutton, Teacher-Librarian, Stanley Knowles School
Karen Slippert, Occupational Therapist, Pembina Trails School Division
Trish Steadman, Teacher-Librarian, Ecole Crane School