

Robin Pawlak, Children's Author

Robin was a teacher for 31 years in Red Deer, Alberta. He worked with students from K-12 in just about every subject area, but the one constant was Language Arts in grades 4-7. Upon his retirement in 2016, his primary focus became writing. His first novel, *Space Cadets*, was published in January of 2018 as the first book in an upcoming trilogy. He enjoys the calm, quiet life of a writer, but also loves to sneak out of his office as often as possible to venture back into the world of education, presenting at numerous teachers' conventions across the province, as well as venturing into schools to get some inspiration from some of his favourite people—his young readers.



Interactive Workshops for Teachers

How to Get Your Students Writing

Audience: grades 2-12 **Length:** 60-75 minutes

Once upon a time, there was a teacher named Jamie who would begin each day saying, “Hip, hip hooray! I get to go mold young minds today!” But then came LA class, and Jamie’s heart would sink. “Woe is me!” Jamie would lament. “So many of my students hate writing. I can’t even get them started; they just sit and stare at their paper. If only there was a former teacher who is now an author who could help me.”

Good news, Jamie: There is. In this session, he will share all kinds of ideas—from his previous life as an LA teacher—that got his students going and helped them develop their understanding of how stories are built.

What Could Go Wrong? The Simple Question Your Students Can Build a Story Around

Audience: grades 2-12 **Length:** 60-75 minutes

“I don’t know what to write.”

Have you ever heard that in your classroom? When it comes to writing, so many students (and adults!) get stuck right at the beginning. This session will show you how to use the simple four-word question that defeats writers’ block every time. You’ll leave with an outline of a simple approach that will not only get your students unstuck when it comes to writing, but also teach them plot structure at the same time. The benefits will extend beyond writing to reading comprehension, making this an excellent all-around literacy booster for your classroom.

Created to augment the workshop listed above, this session takes one idea from the previous presentation and expands upon it in detail, so that teachers will come away equipped to walk students through the process of writing a story from beginning to end.

The two sessions are presented in such a way that participants may attend both, or either one individually.

Participants' Comments

I can finally envision myself teaching a full creative writing program in my class in a way that encompasses sound strategies and addresses my class's ESL challenges.

There were so many takeaways! Very well organized and easy to download resources.

We were given some great ideas to use that are "outside the box" thinking. I like how creativity such as this inspires teachers to make connections to subjects outside of language arts, and outside of the "boring" side of writing!

Loved the realistic application. Could start using this Monday.

Great website with awesome free resources for teachers.

References

Arin Peoples-Jasman, 2019 Secretary and Program Committee Chair, North East Teachers' Convention Association: arin.pj@gmail.com

Christine Perreux, 2019 Conference Program Chair, South Western Alberta Teachers' Convention Association: christine.perreux@swatca.ca

Andrea Larsen, Teacher Librarian, Keheewin School, Edmonton, Alberta: andrea.larsen@epsb.ca

Jolene Bales, Teacher Librarian, Cordova Bay Elementary, Victoria, B.C.: jbales@saanichschools.ca

Fees

Teacher Workshops: \$200 per session* plus travel (flight, rental car, meals)

** for workshops listed above; custom workshops may be arranged (fees negotiated)*

Video Author Visits: free*

** for basic 30-40 minute author visit via Skype, Google Hangouts, etc.; custom sessions may be arranged (fees negotiated)*

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