

Author Expert Projects

Mrs. Bolte

I Start to read books written by the author you have chosen. Remember, I'd like you to read at least 5 picture books or 3 chapter books. As you read, think about what you notice about the author's style. You may want to jot down some notes about what you notice about his/her writing style as you are reading.

II Written Criteria that is to be including in your project. (As always, you are free to present this information in whatever form you wish. However, as a mom who worked on this project with my own son, I found it easiest to present this information on a tri-fold board.)

1. Author's full name
2. Birthdate and life span. If your author is still alive, how old is he/she today?
3. Tell us something about where your author was born or where they live now.
4. Tell us a little about your author. Does he/she have pets? What have you learned about his/her family? Does your author have children? Where did he/she go to school? Did your author have other jobs? What kinds of hobbies does your author have? Does your author like to play sports? In summary, we want to get to know this person. Please introduce us to him/her. ☺
5. Tell us about the types of genres your author writes. Does he/she write poetry, fiction, nonfiction, songs?
6. Tell us a "story behind" one of your author's stories. (Did you know that one author hides his children's names throughout his stories to see if they were paying attention when they read his stories?)
7. Please include a list of some of the books your author has written. It would be nice if you could bring at least one of the books in to share with us.
8. Here is a list of some of the other things the children though would be interesting to include in their projects. Please don't feel like you must include all of these. However, since the children brought up the ideas, I'd like to include them here as food for thought.
 - How does the author get ideas for his/her books?
 - How did the author learn to draw?
 - How did the author get his/her first book published?
 - Where does the author write? (at home, in the kitchen, at the library, etc.)
 - Does the author do his/her own illustrations?
 - How does the author get ideas for his/her stories?

I was really impressed with the thinking the children were doing as we discussed our projects.. They were thinking hard and coming up with really interesting questions!
9. Resources section, citing at least two different places the child acquired information (examples: an internet source, a biography, an "About the Author" excerpt from a book jacket)

III Identify at least three things you notice about the author's style as you study them from book to book. Make a chart that lists and describes these noticings. (Feel free to attach this chart to your display board.)

IV Create you own original book, imitating the style of your author. If your author is known for circle stories, try to write a circle story. If your author writes pattern books, try a pattern book. If your author always includes animals in stories, make sure your story is full of animals. If your author uses lots of speech bubbles, think about showing dialog in speech bubbles. If your author tries to teach a lesson in his/her books, make sure you include a lesson in your book. If your author uses rhyme or descriptive language, try to do the same. ☺ Try to write like your author writes.

V The presentation: Please keep the following things in mind as your present.

- speak loudly & clearly so we can hear all the amazing things you have learned about your author
- design your display large enough that it will be easily and clearly seen by your audience
- write neatly on your display board and in your handmade book (Parents- please encourage your children to do their own writing and spelling. When the children do their own writing, they are generally able to read it back to us. If you tell your child how to spell a word, he/she may not recognize the word while presenting and won't know what to say. These are first grade projects and should look like first grade projects. ☺)

IN SUMMARY..... Your project will consist of

- a display of some type (display board, etc.) on which you include the information discussed in part II
- a chart that lists and describes your noticings of your author's style (may be attached to the display)
- a book you have written yourself with words and pictures that imitate the style of your author

Relax, enjoy reading the works of wonderful authors, take your time, have fun experimenting with writing, let your imagination carry you as you design your presentation board... and don't hesitate to call, e-mail, or visit me if you have any questions or concerns. **I want this to be a valuable and memorable experience.** I still remember working with Reese as we poured over Leo Lionni books. It was wonderful. To this day, Reese says that Leo is his favorite author. These are truly projects that stay with the kids forever.