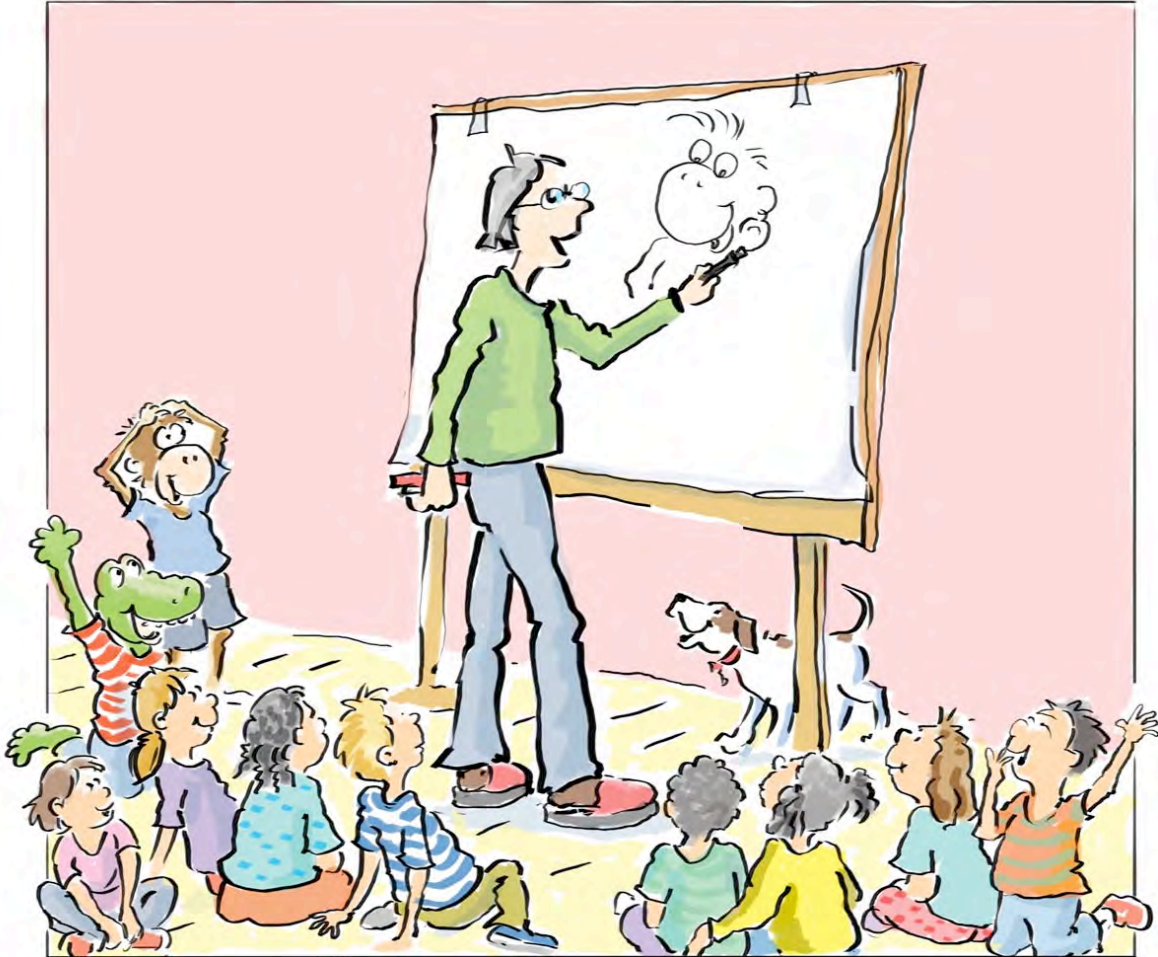


## Author Visits with Eileen Christelow



*Visiting Schools is a good way for me to meet my readers! And it is a good way for my readers to find out how I 'make' the books they are reading. My aim is to encourage kids to write, illustrate . . . and read.*

*My schedule fills up quickly; if you are interested in a visit, please book at least 6 months in advance.*

### **My program:**

I do an interactive program, talking about publishing, writing and illustrating. My program is best suited to K-4, although I often present a more in-depth program to grades 5-6.

**Slides—** I use Apple Keynote (similar to Powerpoint) to tell the story about how I wrote and illustrated my first stories, where I got my ideas and how I eventually found a pub-

lisher. The slides include pictures of my family, my animals, my editor and of me as a young reader.

With older students, I talk a little more about the writing and illustration process and what publishers do.

(I will bring my own Apple powerbook and can also bring my projector, if necessary.)

**Drawing a story**— With students making suggestions, I draw the first couple of pages of a story. How does the story end? That's up to the students to figure out back in their classrooms. I will leave my drawings with the school.

NOTE—This exercise is most valuable if teachers make some time after the presentation to work on the story!

**Questions and Answers**— I welcome any questions. Students who are well acquainted with my books often have many.

## Arrangements:

### How to set up a visit:

You can contact me through my website [e-mail](#) or contact Debbie Turvey at [VisitingAuthors.com](#) . Visiting Authors handles all arrangements for my school visits and speaking engagements and will answer questions about fees, availability, travel, lodging, contracts and anything else you might need to know.

## Preparing your students:

Be sure you have enough time to prepare!

In many schools, librarians read my books to the students. It is also helpful if the teachers, whose students are attending my program, are familiar with my books. **I would recommend that each teacher be given:**

- A copy of my school program description
- My web site address, [www.christelow.com](http://www.christelow.com)
- A list of my books

## Reading

All students should be familiar with my books!

I've found the more prepared the students are, the more they get out of my program. So, READ! READ! READ! Read AS MANY DIFFERENT titles as possible. I know I'm famous for the monkey books, but I've written many other popular titles!

Start reading my books at least six weeks before my visit.



## Discussion

Discuss what an author/illustrator does. Read my books, *What Do Authors Do?* and *What Do Illustrators Do?* Discuss what questions students might want to ask. (With the youngest students, talk about what a question is.)

## Projects

Teachers and students have created plays, bulletin boards with graphs, charts, illustrations and stories, word games, puppets, quilts. . .all pertaining to my stories. These projects seem to generate a lot of excitement and enthusiasm about the author's visit.

Need project ideas? Look at the "[Classroom Connections](#)" page on my website.



*Thanks to schools in Ohio and Iowa! They sure were excited about the pig books!*

## Autographing and Book Sales:

### Signing Books:

I am happy to autograph books with a signature and drawing. Each book should have a slip of paper with the FIRST name of the person to whom it is to be autographed. I prefer not to autograph books while students are waiting in line. (It takes much longer and in my experience, all that waiting is hard on students and stressful for everyone.)

I will also provide a template for a signed and illustrated bookmark which you can run off on a copier. This will give everyone an autograph.



### Book Sales:

The best reason to have an author/illustrator visit is to make books come alive and to motivate kids to read. For this reason, most of the schools I visit feel that it is important for the students to have a chance to own a book, Houghton Mifflin makes my books available for author visits at a substantial discount. Most schools pass on part of the discount to their students and use the remainder to raise funds for the next author visit. Many find this a very successful and relatively painless fund-raiser. In some schools the PTO/PTA handles this part of the author visit.

**Don't be afraid to order extra books!** It's amazing how many people suddenly want books the day I visit. Unsold books can be returned to the publisher. The invoice is paid after the author event. **You pay only for the books you sell plus shipping.**

You can also order books through [VisitingAuthors.com](http://VisitingAuthors.com). The discount is not as big, but the advantage is that they deal with the publisher and can help you decide how many books to order, etc.

# Checklist for Author Visit

## A month or two before the visit: Start reading my books!

Do you have at least **eight or nine different titles** available in the school library? Are the students and teachers reading them?

## The teachers should have:

1. My school program description
2. My web site address: [www.christelow.com](http://www.christelow.com)
3. A list of my books and access to as many titles as possible.

## Book Orders:

1. Place your book order 4-5 weeks ahead with Visiting Authors, Houghton Mifflin or your local bookstore.
2. Make an order form to send home with students.

## Equipment—a week or two before the visit, check to see if you have:

1. A **microphone**? Does it work? (needed if the groups are large) We can discuss whether I need to bring my **projector**.
2. A **large roll of white art paper**? If I'm going to speak to large groups, they must be able to see what I am drawing! We will need to cut at least 3 sheets, 4-5 ft long for each group. Do you have **scissors** to cut the paper? **Drafting/Masking tape** to put it up?
3. A surface big enough to mount the paper on - a **moveable black board, a large table on end or a smooth wall**?
4. A few large black **markers**?
5. A **schedule**? I'd like to know what the schedule will be. I'd like to know what grade levels and how many children will be in each session. If I am driving, I'll need to be sure that I can arrive at your school in time. I'll need directions on how to get there.

If you have any questions, please [e-mail me](#) through my website.