

School Visit Presentations

I am fortunate that the books I have illustrated to date are about important social issues and can jump-start stimulating conversations. I offer 4 presentations. Each can be tailored to different ages and they can be combined:



1 - The making of a picture book –

I describe my childhood desire to be a children's book illustrator, which was postponed for many years, and how I made my dream come true.

I take the children through the process getting hired by a publisher and getting a manuscript to illustrate. I then show them the step by step process to take those few pages of type and make them come to life in a book: Thumbnail sketches, Dummies, Models, Finished paintings.

With the 1st and 2nd grades, I help the students to have a new understanding of the illustrator's job; with the older students I will provide a better concept of the process of conceiving an idea and translating it into print, as well as delving into the details of my art form.

2 – Teasing and Bullying – Children can make a difference.

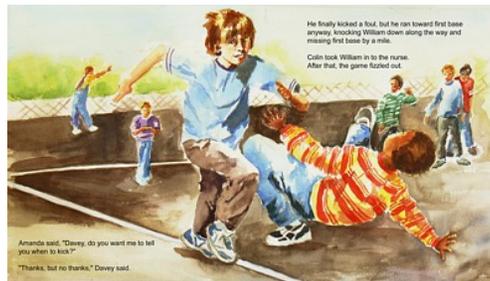


I start by telling a little about how “**Say Something**” by Peggy Moss, Tilbury House, came to be written. Then I read the book.

A discussion will follow with specific questions to get the kids to talk about their reactions to the book and their own experiences with teasing and bullying.

The discussion and activities will emphasize that words can and do sometimes hurt, and that one child can make a difference. I will have guided brainstorming to help the children come up with ideas for how they can make a difference at their school. It is amazing how many good ideas they will suggest.

The children are the experts, they are the ones who see the bullying happen, and they are in the best position to help students feel safe at school. This book shows how one child realized that just not participating in the teasing isn't enough. You must **Say Something**.



3 – Playing War –

In “**Playing War,**” by Kathy Beckwith, Tilbury House, one group of children decides that friendship and a person's feelings are more important than playing their game of war.

Today's children are surrounded by talk and pictures of violence and war. It is hard for adults to deal with it all - how much more so for children. Yet children through the ages “play war.” There are a number of theories about whether this is good or bad, but it is a fact. I don't promote an opinion on this, but offer an opportunity for children to discuss this book and from it their feelings about many things about the violence and war surrounding them.

4 –Diversity -Understanding and respecting differences in others

“**Keep Your Ear on the Ball**” by Genevieve Petrillo, Tilbury House, shows a group of kids using their own creativity and teamwork to help a new, visually impaired, classmate play kickball. They do this on their own, and they all learn the difference between independent and interdependent

I use this book as a discussion starter and include the wonderful story of the 3rd grade class, including several visually impaired students, who modeled for my illustrations.

“Operation Marriage,” by Cynthia Chin Lee, **Reach and Teach,**” shows the gay marriage debate through the eyes of the children affected. Taking place in San Francisco, during the window before Proposition 8 is passed, a brother and sister convince their two mothers to get married, and save a best friendship in the process.

“Lailah’s Lunchbox,” by Reem Faruqi, introduces Lailah, a Muslim girl living near Atlanta, who is excited about finally being old enough to fast for Ramadan until she realizes that the kids in her new American school won’t understand. She bravely resolves her issue and shares her culture and holiday with her classmates.

**For rates and scheduling, email
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