

Teacher Tool 361: Think Like a Children's Author

Program Guide

Study Guide for Point to Point 6: Think Like A Children's Author

Program Description and Availability	Page 2-3
Cost, Connection, and Enrollment Information	Page 3
Pre-Program Activity Suggestions	Page 3-4
Post-Program Activity Suggestions	Page 4
Vocabulary and Featured National Standards	Page 4-6



Think Like a Children's Author
Expert: Carolyn Mueller, Children's Author

Targeted Grade Levels: The program can be targeted to grades 3-12.

Availability: Program requests must be made at least two weeks prior to your desired date. This program may be scheduled between 8 am and 6 pm Central Time on Thursdays and Fridays. When enrolling, please let us know three possible dates and times you'd like to schedule your interaction.

Program Description:

Carolyn will provide tips for writing engaging children's books, how to find inspiration, and encourage students to practice their craft. She'll speak about the importance of mentors and support to young authors. Students will learn about the necessity of capturing readers with the first sentence and paragraph. Suggestions on writing dialogue that is true to how people talk will be offered. The importance of the editing process will be discussed. If there is time at the end, students can participate in a short writing prompt and a few can share their work.

The author is also interested in receiving advance questions from your students for her to address during the program. Your advance questions are due to us no less than three days prior to your scheduled interaction.

Meet Carolyn in the Program Promo Video and View Additional Program Materials at:
<https://educate.today/videos/7283>

Program Objectives:

Participants will:

1. come to a clearer understanding of the step by step process of creative writing
2. develop appreciation for language and imagery
3. create an atmosphere of writing appreciation
4. be motivated to try different writing techniques to fit their own styles and stories

Program Format:

Introduction: Carolyn will give a short background of her writing career including when she began and who were her inspirations and support.

Heart of the Program:

Topics will include:

- a. Carolyn will use her books to provide writing tips such as: focusing on each individual word, being silly, rhyming, and incorporating exciting verbs.
- b. She will also give some background on children's literature/writing to provide context and an understanding of the genre.
- c. Carolyn will provide a list of words and ask students to write a few beginning sentences for a story using the words. Students will read their sentences and get feedback from her and the class. She will modeling the role of mentor and positive feedback to show the importance of support for a write and will discuss the importance of mentors and editors in the writing process.
- d. She will show how to write dialogue that flows naturally by using examples from her books

- and early drafts.
- e. Carolyn will provide short writing prompts so that students can practice and share the process. These prompts could be used in conjunction with Post-Program Activity Suggestion 2 mentioned later in this document.
 - f. If time allows, Carolyn will read one of her books to the group.

Conclusion: Carolyn will conclude with a quick run down of her main points and take final questions.

Cost and Payment: \$80—Payment may be made via credit card or school district purchase order. Payment arrangements must be finalized prior to the scheduled program date.

How To Connect for the Program:

1. Via h.323 Videoconference
2. Via Skype, Zoom, or other similar desktop videoconference software

When you enroll for the program, please let us know your preferred method of connection.

To Enroll: Enrollment can occur in any of the following ways:

1. Go to our web page for the promo video for this program on our Educate.Today website at <https://educate.today/videos/7283> and click on the Sign Up button to send us your enrollment information.
2. E-mail us at info@educate.today and put “Enrolling for Reporter Point to Point Program” in the title of the e-mail. Please include your contact information in the e-mail and at least three proposed dates and times for your interaction.

We will respond to either method of enrollment to finalize a scheduled date for your interaction, make sure you have all program preparatory materials, and handle technical details for your method of connection including test calls.

Cancellation Policy: Once a date and time has been scheduled for your interaction, you can cancel or reschedule without penalty within 24 hours. After 24 hours and up to 7 days before your scheduled program, we’ll refund 50% of your original fee. Within 7 days of the scheduled date, we do not offer a refund. Should an uncontrollable emergency occur (i.e.: snow day, etc.), we will work with you to reschedule the program for a new date and time but should that prove impossible, we will refund 50% of your original fee. Should our program expert or other circumstance force a cancellation on our end from your original date, we will work with you to reschedule the program for a new date and time that works for you, or we will refund your purchase in full.

Pre-Program Activities:

1. Read Children’s Books/Think About Children’s Books—Have students read a couple of children’s books in advance of the program and respond to them by thinking about the following questions: What do they like about each book? What kind of plot devices do they see? What kind of characters do they find? What is the nature of the descriptive text? What is the nature of the dialogue? What qualities in the book do they think would attract a reader? Have them use this activity to help them develop questions they’d like the author to answer during the program.

2. Send Us Your Advance Questions for Your Interaction:

Work with students in advance of their interaction to determine up to the ten (10) most important questions you'd like to ask Ms. Mueller during your program. Send these questions to us by completing the Children's Author Point to Point Worksheet document sent to you with preparatory materials for this program and also available on our Educate.Today website at <https://educate.today/videos/5966>. E-mail it to us at info@educate.today no less than three days prior to your scheduled interaction. Additional spontaneous questions will be encouraged during the program, but these questions will be used to organize the conversation.

Post-Program Activity Suggestions:

1. Send a Thank You or Insight—Have students write a letter to Ms. Mueller detailing insight the student gained from hearing her story, an appreciation for her participation, and/or another focus area of their choice. E-mail the letter to us at info@educate.today or mail the letter to us at Educate.Today@HEC-TV 3221 McKelvey Rd #106, Bridgeton, MO 63044.

2. Write a Short Story for Children—Have your students write a short book or story. As part of our mission, Educate.Today is dedicated to publishing student work for other students to learn from. If you'd like to submit a student created book or story based on this activity for possible publication, e-mail us at info@educate.today and put "Publish Student Work" in the title line. We'll respond with next steps for possible publication.

Vocabulary:

Genre – a category of literature, characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter

Mentor – someone who teaches or gives help and advice to a less experienced and often younger person

Editor – someone who prepares written material for publication or presentation, as by correcting, revising, or adapting

Illustrator – a person who draws or creates pictures for magazines, books, advertising, etc.

Fiction – literature in the form of prose, especially short stories and novels, that describes imaginary events and people

Non-fiction – prose writing that is based on facts, real events, and real people, such as biography or history

Magical realism – a literary genre or style that incorporates fantastic or mythical elements into otherwise realistic fiction

Historical fiction – a literary genre comprising narratives that take place in the past and are characterized chiefly by an imaginative reconstruction of historical events and personages

Featured National Standards:

Common Core Standards English Language Arts

Text Types and Purposes:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3](#)

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3.a](#)

Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3.b](#)

Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3.c](#)

Use a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3.d](#)

Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.3.e](#)

Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3](#)

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.a](#)

Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.b](#)

Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.c](#)

Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.d](#)

Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.e](#)

Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

Production and Distribution of Writing:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.4](#)

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.5](#)

With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 5 [here](#).)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.6](#)

With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single sitting.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4](#)

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.5](#)

With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 6 [here](#).)

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6](#)

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

Range of Writing:

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.10](#)

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.10](#)

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

American School Counselor Association National Standards for Students

American School Counselor Association (2004). ASCA National Standards for Students. A Alexandria, VA: Author.

In the area of Career Development:

Standard A: Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions.

Standard B: Students will employ strategies to achieve future career goals with success and satisfaction.