

## Morning AND Afternoon Workshops For ALL 3rd, 4th and 5th Graders

### 1) Writing Picture Books for Kids

In this workshop, you will learn the dos and don'ts of writing picture books for kids. We will look at some bestselling picture books and discuss how the publishing process works. You will learn how words and illustrations work together to form a finished book. We will discuss what publishers look for in picture book texts. We will talk about writing text to go with illustrations, and ways to create your own illustrations (even if you're not an artist!). Then, you'll brainstorm opening lines, characters, and conflicts and begin working on your very own picture book. This is your chance to get an insider's look into children's publishing and write your first picture book!

**Suzanne Nelson** is the author of *Serendipity's Footsteps*, a Sydney Taylor Honor Book, as well as *Cake Pop Crush*, *Macarons at Midnight*, *Hot Cocoa Hearts*, and many other middle grade and young adult novels. She is a contributor to The Washington Post "On Parenting" blog and a former children's book editor. She lives and writes in Ridgefield, Connecticut. She is a lover of words and has always been amazed at the power they have to change people's lives. As a child, she discovered that reading was a magical escape, and now she writes to give other children a little of that magic of their own.

### 2) How to Put On Shorts

Forget Hollywood - you can make a short film with your friends in your own backyard! Learn how to think up a good story, write out the parts and then shoot it. And then you'll do it - you'll get to make a short-short film right in this workshop! This is a great opportunity to be the first in your class to shoot a short!

**Dave Goldenberg** is a writer, filmmaker and musician. "La Toiletta," his short film for Nickelodeon, won awards and played at film festivals around the world. He also owns The Dave and Eddy Show, an advertising and production company.

### 3) Sports Writing – Bringing the Game to Life

What makes a good sports story? OK - the great story is in front of you, now how do you write about it? In this workshop, George Albano, sportswriter and multi-talented author, will share a few of his assignments through the years. Students will use their reporting skills and imaginations to write crisp, colorful sports stories. They will learn how to write a sports column, employing the elements of persuasion that sports columnists use while expressing their opinions in print. Tell us why A-Rod belongs (or doesn't belong) in the Hall of Fame. Who's was better, Michael Jordan or LeBron James? Why is the UConn women's basketball team so good year after year? Or you can write a fiction short story where you create the characters. You can even make yourself part of the story.

**George Albano** is a Hall of Fame sports writer and columnist who has written about teams, athletes, coaches and sports people in general in Fairfield County for over four decades. A lifetime Norwalker who developed a passion for sports at the age of 10, he is now in his 44th year with his hometown newspaper The Norwalk Hour. He has also written articles for several other publications, including The Ridgefield Press. He is a past president of the Connecticut Sports Writers Alliance and has been honored with several awards for his work, including three Hall of Fame inductions.

### 4) Songwriting with Noah

Our lives have a soundtrack. Wherever we are, whether at home, at the supermarket, watching TV or on

the computer, we are surrounded by songs. There are millions of them floating around. But where do they come from? In this workshop, we will identify the songwriter's building blocks such as melody, harmony, lyrics, rhythm and form; we will play some fun rhyming and free-association games to get the creative juices flowing. Then we will write a new song as a group and record it.

**Noah Manheimer** holds an MA in Music Composition and has been writing and producing music for kids and adults for many years, including three albums of his own songs. He teaches guitar and songwriting and operates the recording studio at Enchanted Garden in Ridgefield. Mr. Manheimer is constantly surprised and inspired by the original ideas of his young songwriting students. He has learned that given the right framework, children are able to create brilliant songs and have lots of fun in the process!

## 5) Improv Class

Technique and performance Improv games are presented for student participation. This sparks creativity and storytelling through brainstorming, exercising mindfulness, being in the moment and being able to focus outside of oneself. With teamwork at its heart, Improv storytelling teaches agreement and results in more confidence in you and with others. AND it's a blast!!!

**Cheryl Ann Boyd**, "CAB" studied theatre, communications and business in college, and holds an MBA from Webster University. In college, she was in a for children's improv troupe, "The Pooh Players." Formerly the Executive Producer on Ridgefield Theater Barn's Board of Directors, CAB liaised to RTB's Writer's Collective, was an original player of RTB's improv troupe for 10 years, and for 7 years created/developed An Evening of One-Acts, bringing creativity from new, original plays, directors, artists and actors. She has studied improv at The PIT in NYC and The Curious Comedy Theater in Portland, OR. A local singer, CAB performs around Ridgefield with her band, Candlewood, at such places as 850 Wood Fired Restaurant, Piccolo's, for the ROAR With Laughter Gala, the Great Pumpkin Weigh Off and Sarah's Wine Bar. She lives in Ridgefield. [Cheryl.Boyd@raveis.com](mailto:Cheryl.Boyd@raveis.com) Joining Cheryl's Team this year are **Susan Constantino**, a Ridgefield resident and former Improv player with The Second City out of Chicago (from where SNL sprang!), and South Salem resident, **Elisabeth Rich Duckett**, who for several years performed the art of Improv at the Upright Citizen's Brigade in NYC.

## 6) "It Was A Dark and Stormy Night" - The Art of Mystery Writing

Students will become young authors as we examine how mystery stories are created and written. We use traditional elements: learning about plot twists, colorful characters, dramatic settings, and how to create suspense. In small groups, we will then invent and discuss our own short mysteries and start down the road of writing them!

**Jason Kaufman** is an executive editor at Random House, where he edits authors such as Dan Brown, Lincoln Child, Jeff Lindsay, and Christopher Reich. Working in book publishing for over twenty years, he has published a variety of bestselling thrillers, suspense novels, sports books and histories. "Editing books is about working with authors to help make their manuscripts as strong as possible," Mr. Kaufman says. "In brainstorm questions like: Does the opening page plant an exciting hook that your readers won't lose interest in? Are the twists well concealed and surprising? Is there an element of danger or excitement?"

## 7) The Write Stuff: How to Write Great Stories

A great story is a magical combination of character, plot, and setting. In this workshop, we'll talk about what makes a story work and then invent some of our own stories. Participants will get to share their work at the end.

**Chris Belden** is the author of two novels, *Shriver* (2015) and *Carry-on* (2012), as well as the story collection *The Floating Lady of Lake Tawaba* (2014). He has an MFA in creative writing from Fairfield University, and has taught writing at Fairfield U., the Westport Writers Workshop, and such nontraditional venues as senior centers, soup kitchens, and a maximum security prison.

### **8) Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No. It's a... HERO!**

We all know of heroes in comic books, movies and books. I am sure at one point, you may have heard the names "Batman" or "Wonder Woman." They are definitely super heroes! They have a healthy mix of courage and special powers... but a bigger question is: do all heroes need capes? How about the founder of Ryan's Well, inspired in kindergarten? Or how about Sacramento Valley High School's baseball team? Have you ever heard of De'Monte Love? Heroes can be found in our communities, and no they do not need a cape. Some of them walk on four legs and have fur...! Come join this session to learn about heroes who inspire us all to help one another.

**Jeanette Moore** is an author for Carson Dellosa and Nomad Press, with several titles coming out in 2017. She also makes educational games for Nasco to help students learn math. Jeanette is a certified teacher in multiple states, and runs a tutoring practice in Katonah. Currently, she is enrolled in a doctoral program studying Growth Mindset among college students, and she teaches writing to future elementary teachers at Western Connecticut State University. She is a Veteran's Park mama and proud community member.

### **9) Writing and Producing TV News**

Do you want to learn what it's like to work in TV news? Go behind the scenes of the exciting world of TV news production with Tom Rotunno. He'll take you through the daily routine in a TV newsroom: How stories are selected and written and how your storytelling style changes depending on the type of newscast or stories you're putting together (breaking news, local/national newscast, sports news or documentaries). He'll also give you tips on how to do a great interview to get your viewers/readers the best information. At the end of the session you'll be asked to put together stories for a sample newscast of your own!

**Tom Rotunno** is an Emmy-award winning member of the senior leadership team at CNBC television, the worldwide leader in business news. He's also a longtime contributor and writer for CNBC.com with an emphasis on the beverage business. Over the course of 15+ years he's produced live newscasts, documentaries and coverage of special events including Summer and Winter Olympics, Super Bowl, World Series, NBA Finals and The Masters golf tournament. He's also produced interviews with top-level CEOs and superstar athletes, including Tom Brady, Michael Jordan and Michael Phelps.

## 10) Taste & Tell - The hottest new restaurant in town - or is it?

Have you seen all the new restaurants opening up? Join us for a behind the scenes visit to review the newest Italian restaurant in town. Restaurant reviews are crucial to a new restaurant's success whether they're in the local newspaper, on a blog, or posted on social media. We'll prepare and devour some tastings from the kitchen and then turn a critical eye to make a recommendation. Will this be the next hot dining sensation?

**Lara Gorton** has been a life-long foodie and restaurant connoisseur. She worked in restaurants throughout college and after a break from her Wall Street career, she recently attended the International Culinary Center's Italian Culinary Experience with professional food service training in New York and Parma, Italy. The program was a comprehensive study of the food, wine and culture of each region in Italy culminating in an internship at a Michelin recognized restaurant. Lara worked as the primi chef at La Falconiere restaurant in Cortona, Tuscany preparing all the homemade pastas at the restaurant. As a result, Lara has developed a passion for all aspects of Italian food and an enduring appreciation for la dolce vita .

## 11) Art Journaling for Students

If your child would benefit from a creative, playful and self-expressive outlet after school, then Art Journaling is for them! Art Journaling is a SPONTANEOUS and IMAGINATIVE way to express oneself through words, visuals and textures. Journals are made from a variety of materials such as composition books, watercolor paper and recycled household items. It is a form of FREE PLAY with art supplies. A lot of children go to their screens to decompress after a long day at school. With Art Journaling, they will be given another tool for RELAXATION and additionally stimulate the imagination. Techniques will be introduced throughout the workshops which will act as springboards for each student's creativity. THERE ARE NO RULES in Art Journaling. The only requirement is the willingness to play and experiment!

**Kathy Coe** studied at DuCret School of Art in New Jersey, Pratt Institute and The National Academy of Fine Art and Design in New York. She has won numerous awards for her work. As a teaching artist, many years of instructing students of all ages and abilities has taught her how to create a relaxed and supportive learning environment that is both fun and focused. Teaching affiliations include the The National Academy of Fine Art, NYC, The Naturalist's Notebook, Seal Harbor ME, and The Gilbert and Bennett Cultural Center, Georgetown CT. Her philosophy as a teaching artist is to spark curiosity, encourage exploration, observe with a perceptive eye, and guide with a steady voice.

**Diane Fried** has been teaching art journaling for the past five years and has enjoyed sharing the creative freedom that art journaling can provide. Journaling solely with words has always been an outlet for her and it was ten years ago when she first tried adding art to her journaling. She is an example that anyone can art journal. No previous art experience is needed. If you love words and if you love art supplies, you'll love art journaling! Diane comes from a performing arts background. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Dance from Point Park University in Pittsburgh, PA and has been choreographing and teaching for dance studios and theatre productions for the past thirty years.

**12) Writing the Facts for all to Understand-** how to write clearly, concisely, actively, and technically. Additionally, how to write a paper that is NOT a conversation.

**Nicole Xanders**, PMP Lived in Korea for 2.5 years. Lived all over the U.S.(Colorado, Texas, Virginia, NC, ME) Versatile senior technical writer and business analyst experienced in creating and maintaining a variety of documentation, crafting training materials and delivering training. Coordination with Stakeholders to identify the current as-is and the desired to-be states. Generate and gather requirements to create process maps for databases, high level processes, illustrate as-is and to-be processes for Business Process Reengineering, financial processes, and several different very detailed process maps in Visio. Built SharePoint sites tailored to each section that required one. Able to locate the information required to create exactly what the client wanted. The update of the SharePoint site occurred regularly with the addition of Web Parts, the alteration of Titles and the addition or deletion of information as required. Expertise using PowerPoint. Created slide decks for training, informational, persuasion and as a learning tool that had links embedded to jump directly to the files. Expert level for MS Office products (Excel, Access, Word, PowerPoint, Visio). Expertise using Adobe DC Pro regularly to edit, export and modify PDF documents. Taking Udemy courses to increase SQL, Coding, Access and Excel knowledge to enable additional coding or queries when required.

### **13) All About Animals**

Do you love animals? Come learn how to use your imagination and sense of humor, along with your observation and research skills, in order to write about animals—from fact to fiction. We'll check in on the amazing animals of the Galapagos Islands and laugh as we consider what our own pets would say if they could talk. We are all writers with stories to tell, so let's learn how to be on the lookout for that spark of inspiration from the animal world. From non-fiction alphabet books to funny pictures with captions to stories and poems about our pets, we'll explore different ways to generate ideas and share our love of animals on a page.

**Lisabeth Reddington** is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher and life-long animal lover and writer. She is currently submitting a couple of manuscripts to publishers, including A-B-See: Animals of Galapagos, and has a middle grade novel in the works. A veteran teacher with 25 years of experience, she thinks kids are awesome and strives to help her students discover their unique potential. She enjoys writing every day and is often inspired by her precious rescue dog, Reilly, who is known for giving "high fives" to everyone she meets.

## Afternoon Workshop For 3rd Grade Only

### 14) What's Your Point? Of view, that is...

Perhaps you're looking at feet on the sidewalk from the inside of a basement apartment or you're a dog waiting for your master to come home. It's so much fun thinking about the point of view you're writing your story from! In this workshop, we'll brainstorm ideas for how you can write a short fiction or non-fiction piece from a fantastic point of view.

Come prepared to use your point-of-view imagination!

Anita Bushell grew up in Manhattan but moved to Brooklyn when she discovered trees grow there. She also bought a row house and then found out what homeownership was *really* about (she should have stayed in an apartment). In spare time she did not have she managed to get an M.A. in English Literature from City College and an M.S. in Early Childhood Education from Brooklyn College. She is a freelance writer and early childhood educator who has been on the faculty at Plymouth Church School since 2005. <http://www.anitabushell.com/about/>

**15) Writing in rhyme** might seem simple and easy, but it takes a lot of work to craft a rhyming story that others can easily read! In this session we will look at several good examples of rhyming stories to explore the basics of writing in rhyme, write a story together as a class, and begin writing your own stories as well. This session will be a fun-filled, interactive look at the joy of writing in rhyme, so come ready to learn, laugh, and write!

If you are looking for an example of a blissful existence amidst a frenetic environment, look no further than the author, Dr. Kevin Fleming. The proud father of three incredible children, husband to an amazing wife, and owner of a loving puppy, Kevin lives in a world where giggles, shrieks, barks, laughter, and vigorous play are all in the course of a day. Because a seven year-old and twin five year-olds are not exhausting enough, Kevin works full time, has recently completed his doctorate in higher education administration in May of 2017, and writes children's books that he hopes will inspire laughter and happiness in readers of all ages.

**Kevin Fleming** released his first book, *Reach for the Stars*, on April 5, 2016 – with many more in the works! He has a knack for using humor and rhyme to tell stories, and writes for both children and the adults who read to them. He hopes that readers of all ages will laugh, use their imagination, and find inspiration through his writing. Kevin believes that people have incredible power to influence their environment far beyond what they may realize, and the themes in his writing reflect his hope that people understand the ways in which they uniquely contribute to the world around them. He believes that people are good, valuable, and exceptional, and he hopes his books will help spread a sense of wonder and optimism amongst those who read them.

## Morning Workshops For 4th and 5th Graders Only

### 16) Flying Solo

A monologue is a speech presented by a single character speaking directly to another character or the audience. The story they tell allows a character to express inner thoughts aloud in a way that helps to show what that character is really feeling inside.

In our workshop, writers will investigate point-of-view and character voice as they write and perform their own 1-2 minute dramatic or comedic monologues. Writers may choose to adopt the voice of a character they create, or tell a dramatic story from their own lives. Either way, expect to take your work from the page...to the stage!

**Michael Alltop** has nearly two decades of experience in professional theater, most recently as the Producing Artistic Director of an award-winning company in Philadelphia. In New York City, he spent over six years as the Associate Director at Theatreworks/USA, the nation's largest producer of original work for young audiences. In addition to working on adaptations for the stage, Alltop's original theatrical works have been produced in New York, Philadelphia, and Syracuse. Other favorite projects include two years of directing the 4th and 5th grade musical for Veterans Park Elementary School, writing and directing Christmas pageants, and teaching middle school English in Danbury. He holds an M.F.A. in directing from Syracuse University and is a Drama League Directing Fellow and member of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab.

### 17) The Wonderful World of Magazines

Learn how to create the magic of a magazine: combining words, photos, and graphics to create a very special experience

**Geoffrey Morris** is editor of Ridgefield Magazine and five other magazines. He was executive editor at National Review, a senior editor at Reader's Digest and an editor at MBA Jungle. He has written and edited hundreds of articles, book reviews and editorials and has been nominated for two National Magazine Awards. He holds a BA (philosophy) from Hobart College and an MBA from NYU. He lives in Ridgefield with his wife, Martha, and daughters Abby and Eliza.

### 18) Write in your Wheelhouse

From mass-audience magazines to unique niche publications to professional journals, the opportunities for magazine article writing are endless! With their precise word counts and strict deadlines, magazine articles are exciting, fast-paced projects ideal for writers who prefer variety and shorter assignments. In this workshop,

**Christy Stevenson**, fitness guru and regular contributor to IDEA Fitness Journal and American Fitness, shows young writers how to follow their passions by writing WHAT THEY KNOW and WHAT THEY LOVE, how to find publications that suit them, how to query, how to write for the intended audience, how to write precisely and concisely, and what to expect regarding pay, contracts, and the editing process.