**Tips for Public Speaking/School Visits:**

General Tips for Speaking:

- If you’re able, practice doing a school visit or two with your local school or your own kid’s teacher. Teacher love it when they have guest speakers (especially at the end of the school year after state testing is done). These visits would be pro bono—but you’re being paid with gaining experience.

- Practice your presentation so that you aren’t relying on the slides. As cliché as it sounds, practice in a mirror. You have to KNOW your presentation backwards and forwards.

- Don’t start off by apologizing and admitting you don’t know what you’re doing. It translates into having no confidence. DON’T tell them you’re nervous or that this is your first school visit (they can smell fear. Okay, just kidding, but seriously . . . don’t.)

- Use inflection.

- Arrive 15-20 minutes early to make should all technology is functioning

- Use a microphone for large rooms

- It will save your voice

- As dorky as it sounds, there is something empowering about a microphone

- Know your *audience* and know your *point*. (Remember: KISS and don’t ramble)

\* The media specialist will be the one recommending or sadly, NOT recommending you to other schools.

- Know your time constraints and honor them. Again, if you practice ahead of time, this shouldn’t be an issue.

- Bring water!

1. If You’re Using Power Point:
   1. Know how to use **Presenter View.** It will be your best friend!
   2. Use slides as a jumping off point (not to read from)
   3. Include lots of visuals—not just words. Words are boring.
   4. Being able to tell a story is far intriguing than rattling off a bunch of bullet points.
   5. Colors: you may love the colors purple and yellow, but something s are incredibly hard to read when you use dark or very bright colors.
   6. Tell stories—make it personal
   7. Throw in a video if possible. It mixes things up a bit!
   8. Don’t turn your back on your audience (especially to read a slide). You might think this is a given, but it happens ALL THE TIME!
   9. \*\*Don’t rely on technology\*\* It breaks—usually at the worst time—and the show must go on even if the light bulb on the projector is burned out and they can’t find a new one.
2. School Visit Tips:
   1. Send out a poster and/or book order forms 2-3 weeks ahead of your visit (tip: if you laminate the poster, you can use it multiple times)
   2. Get your audience involved (particularly if they are in the primary grades. They wiggle a lot and if you can allow them the chance to talk and move while you’re presenting, you’ll keep their attention longer).
      1. “tell your shoulder partner the name of your favorite book or character”
      2. “raise your hand/stand up/put your hand on your head if . . .”
      3. “Let’s take a vote. Who likes . . . “
      4. If you ask for volunteers, reward them for their participation (*Smarties* are always a sure bet but so is anything from the dollar store). Once you’ve given away a prize your audience will stay plastered on you because they want to know when the next giveaway is.
   3. Kids LOVE photos, especially if it’s you with awkward hair and weird clothes from 20 years ago. They also love seeing photos of animals, so if you have any pets, add them into your presentation.
   4. Read parts from your book or the whole story if possible.
   5. Teachers want to encourage reading, writing, and editing. Anything educational you can put into your presentation that promotes those things is a huge bonus for the teachers.
   6. Save a few minutes at the end for questions from the kids/teachers. (Hint: be prepared for someone to ask if you’re rich!)