

2016 Encore!

Workshop Descriptions

The Emotional Heart of Picture Books

Does your picture book have strong characters and a fun premise, but it's still not quite working? Maybe it needs a heart transplant. In this hands-on workshop, **Anna Staniszewski** will break down how giving stories an emotional heart can pull readers in and keep them engaged through the last page turn. We'll look at examples of picture books that do it well and identify ways to pump up your own story's emotional heart in order to bring it to the next level.

Reinventing your Query Letter (not really)...

When it comes to Querying, you can't reinvent things too much. There are certain standards that apply universally. However, it is possible to make your query letter stand out from the rest of the slush pile and tailor it to target the agent of your dreams. Get the inside scoop about querying from author **Kristine Carlson Asselin**, using real examples shared from her agent Kathleen Rushall's (Andrea Brown Agency) list.

Kris will show queries that work (and why!) and will share the easy-to-use "Hook, Book, & Cook" method. Discover what works, what doesn't work, and when it is okay to "think outside the box."

Antagonists: The Hero of Another Story

Hitler got rejected from art school. **Annie Gaughen** had this written on her wall for a long time to remind her that the most horrible villains are complicated; they have frustrated hopes and dreams. More than that, they ALWAYS believe what they are doing is right, because like it or not, they have to be the hero of their own story. So how do we go about making our antagonists and villains just as complicated as our heroes? This workshop will look at the real thing making your main character shine – your antagonist!

The Art of Giving – and Receiving – Critique

Part of being a good writer is being a good reader/editor – knowing how to give feedback on a critique partner's manuscript, and how to listen to and evaluate criticism given to your work. In this session, **Erin Dionne** will help identify specific story elements to look for in your critique partner's (and your own) manuscripts and learn how to comment on them effectively. We will also discuss receiving comments and feedback from others: are you ready for criticism? How do you deal with a "harsh" critique? What are the strategies for using the feedback you receive? Attendees will leave with specific elements to look for in others' work, tools for editing their own work, and an understanding as to how to accept and use feedback from others.

Bleeding Onto the Pages: Crafting Emotionally-Driven Fiction

A good story takes the reader on an emotional journey. We are drawn to books that force characters to confront their darkest fears, reveal a hidden secret, or challenge their moral code. Yet as writers, we are often so afraid of creating melodrama that we pull back on our characters' emotions, rendering them flat and their reactions feeling forced. In this workshop, **Trisha Leaver** will help you go beyond the show-not-tell, scene-by-scene analysis and teach you how to look at your entire manuscript as an emotional canvas, singling out plot points, character behaviors, and setting details that will enhance the emotional resonance of your manuscript.