

# Welcome to “Do the WRITE Thing!” 2019

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Every two years, the KES PTO offers the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders at KES a special opportunity to participate in a morning of writing workshops guided by professional writers from our own community. This is a great chance to learn about different kinds of writing. This year marks the tenth time “Do the WRITE Thing!” has been held at KES. Are you ready to do the WRITE thing?

## How Does “Do the *WRITE* Thing!” Work?

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**Workshop:** Each student will take **one** workshop selected from the list in this catalog. The workshop teacher will discuss the role of writing in his or her own professional life and then give you a chance to experiment yourself!

**Wrap-Up:** At the end of the morning, all workshop presenters, students and teachers will regroup in the gymnasium for the closing assembly. We’ll share what was learned in the workshops and ask our workshop presenters some questions.

**Follow-Through:** Students are encouraged to complete and polish their work. Some entries will be shared at the end of the event.

## Do the *WRITE* Thing! Details.

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**When:** Thursday, May 30, 2019

**Where:** Katonah Elementary School 9:45 am-1:05 pm

**What:** Hands on writing workshops led by professional writers from the community.

**Registration:** Open to all 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

**How to Register:** Classroom teachers will help students register for a workshop. Students will list 3 workshop choices that they would be interested in attending.

**Workshop Day:** Students will be given their workshop assignment on the morning of “Do the WRITE Thing!”

## **Do the WRITE Thing! 2019**

### **Registration Form**

#### **How to Register**

Students:

You will be attending one workshop. Please list 3 choices you find interesting on this form. You will be assigned to one of these choices.

Teachers:

Please return completed forms to Pauline Guariento and Suzanne Yeager via backpack mail c/o Graeme Williams 2B by **Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>.**

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Workshop Selections**

Please list three that you find interesting. You will be assigned to one class.

**1. Workshop #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Workshop Title:**

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**2. Workshop #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Workshop Title:**

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**3. Workshop #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Workshop Title:**

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## 2019 Workshop Choices

### **1. Inventing Stories**

But I don't know what to write about! Have you ever had this thought? This fiction-writing workshop will show you that great stories are everywhere! We will use writing prompts, like the trusty question "what if?" to help us invent exciting—and funny and fantastic and ridiculous—plots for stories. You will never be stumped again!

*Lauren Acampora's book of linked stories, The Wonder Garden, was published by Grove Atlantic in 2015, and was highlighted as one of the best books of the year by Amazon and NPR. Her new novel, The Paper Wasp, will be published this June. Her short stories (many based on the "what if?" question) have appeared in many literary journals, including The Paris Review. Her daughter, Amity Doyle, is a fourth grader at KES. <http://www.laurenacampora.com/about>*

### **2. Writing a Digital News Story**

We will work as a group to write a news story about your favorite adventure at Katonah Elementary School. We will come up with ideas and then discuss how to tackle it together: from interview questions and photo ideas to "reporting" and putting the story together, down to the headline and photo caption. We are all in this together. And then we'll discuss your impressions about how it went for all of you.

*Elizabeth Yuan is a publishing editor at The Wall Street Journal where she edits stories for news wires, WSJ.com and print. Prior, she worked as an online editor for WSJ.com and also at CNN.com in both Hong Kong and Atlanta.*

### **3. Creating Colorful Characters**

It's fun to read stories about unusual characters in awkward situations. But where do you get ideas for stories and characters? Let me show you! We will brainstorm ideas and write stories filled with colorful characters and unexpected situations. I'll even share my secret inspiration generators with you. Let's Write!

***Kim Kovach*** teaches creative writing classes for elementary and middle school students and fiction writing workshops for adults. She is the author of six fiction books including Welcome to Appletown!, Surviving Vertigo and the Kitchawan Kenny chapter books. Kim writes a weekly column, "Reading, Writing & Chocolate," for the Katonah-Lewisboro Times and articles for other publications. Kim enjoys helping students of all ages discover their "inner writer." Please visit her website at [www.kimkovachwrites.com](http://www.kimkovachwrites.com).

### **4. Getting Your Readers To Visualize Your Vision**

*I shifted in the plastic-backed wooden chair and looked around the kitchen as if taking it in for the first time, or, perhaps, the last. The mirrored ceiling fan above our heads spun in circles, calm and steady, just like it did for countless meals growing up.* Can you begin to picture the kitchen? Do you want to know more? One of the keys to getting your readers hooked on your story is how you describe the scenes. You want your readers to imagine the setting just as you envisioned it, whether it's a simple kitchen or a fictional world. In this workshop, you will learn the techniques to perfectly illustrate any scene, placing your readers right inside your story and leaving them wanting more!

***Gia Miller*** is a journalist, essayist and content writer who mainly covers parenting, health & wellness and general lifestyle topics. Her work has appeared in The Washington Post, SELF, Healthline, Headspace, Working Mother and many more. Most importantly, she is the mom of two KES students: fourth-grader Talia Doron and second-grader Eli Doron. <https://www.giamillerwrites.com>

## **5. More Than Just the Score**

Sports writing is much more than just telling the readers who won the game, who scored the most points, who hit the big home run or scored the winning touchdown. Of course, those are the basics of all good newspaper reporting – the who, the what, the when and the how – and need to be in every sports story. But looking for and finding more than just the score makes for a more compelling story for your reader. Using one or two real games we'll discuss what the story behind the score is and learn how to find that story through interview techniques before writing our own sport stories!

***Richard Finn has spent more than 30 years writing about sports. His stories have appeared in USA Today, New York Times, Associated Press, Tennis Magazine and Boston Globe among many others. He has reported on US Open tennis championships, NBA Finals, Stanley Cup playoffs, PGA golf tournaments and heavyweight boxing fights. Most recently he wrote at the BIG EAST basketball tournament at Madison Square Garden. He and his wife Andrea live in Goldens Bridge and their two grown daughters both went to John Jay High School and now work in the sports industry.***

## **6. Where to Begin? Not in the Beginning!**

That's just one surprising tip we'll explore in this hands-on workshop. Learn how to write a page-turner from page one by banishing the boring stuff. We'll brainstorm ideas and follow fun prompts to write engaging first lines, strong opening hooks, and intriguing premises that will have your readers eager to find out what happens next!

***New York Times and USA Today bestselling author Wendy Corsi Staub has published more than 90 novels over a 26-year career. Recent releases include "Cat Got Your Tongue," a short story in R.L. Stine's young adult collection, Scream and Scream Again (HarperCollins); and Dead of Winter (Crooked Lane),***

*the third title in her “Lily Dale” traditional mystery series set in the upstate NY town populated by psychic mediums. This year, she will publish Dead Silence (William Morrow) and "The Elephant in the Room," a short story in an upcoming anthology from the Creative Resistance. She's been honored five times with the Westchester Library Association Washington Irving Prize for Fiction; has won an RWA Rita Award, an RT Award for Career Achievement in Suspense, and the 2007 RWA-NYC Golden Apple Award for Lifetime Achievement; and is a three-time finalist for the Simon and Schuster Mary Higgins Clark Award. She lives in Katonah with her family and a trio (give or take) of rescue kitties. Please visit her website at [www.wendycorsistaub.com](http://www.wendycorsistaub.com)*

## **7. Journalism & The Practice Of Finding Great Stories**

A special mystery guest will be the focus of our writing together. First, we'll figure out this guest's story with a speed round of questions, then write a quick sketch based on those answers. Next, we'll develop and ask questions designed to draw out anecdotes and detail that will help us write a more colorful profile of our interview subject.

This workshop will explore the fun of finding story topics everywhere — from sports to science to right in your own backyard. A friend, neighbor, grandparent or teacher— they all have compelling stories to tell — if you ask the right questions. We'll help you identify article topics, practice interviewing, hone some research skills and finally write.

***Elizabeth Harris*** is a regular contributor to The New York Times and Forbes. A former staff writer at Worth and Smartmoney.com, she has a B.A. from Wellesley College and an M.S. from the Columbia University School of Journalism. Her daughter, Emily Bigman, is a third grader at KES.

## **8. Short Short Story (with a twist!)**

This is the marriage of creative writing and critical thinking. You and others will each be assigned a beginning and an end and write your very own short short story — you will be delighted by the challenges of incorporating the crucial elements along the way — characters, plots, resolutions, and unexpected twists, and be amazed at the compelling result!

*Léna Roy published her first novel, Edges (FSG) in late 2010. She is the Regional Manager for Writopia Lab in Westchester and Connecticut, and her writing was featured in the essay collection for middle school kids and their teachers:*

*Breakfast on Mars and 37 Other Essays to Devour: Your Favorite Authors Take on the Dreaded Essay Assignment. In 2018, she and her sister published a middle grade biography of their grandmother, Madeleine L'Engle, author of the classic A Wrinkle in Time.*

*Mentoring has long been the connective tissue in Léna's life, through her work with at-risk adolescents and through her own writing discipline, as fostered by her late grandmother. It was her grandmother who taught Léna to transform the solitary nature of writing into a sacred sense of community, where her art and the art of others can flourish. <http://www.lenaroy.com>*

## **9. ‘Man Bites Dog’ – Learn About Newspapers**

Who, what, when, where, and why.

Newspapers have tried to answer these five questions for centuries.

Learn what newspapers do, why they are important, and how they are made.

After learning the basics, we will work on writing stories and headlines together.

We may even write a story about Katonah Elementary School.

*Brian Marschhauser is the editor of The Katonah-Lewisboro Times, a weekly newspaper that is mailed to homes in Katonah and Lewisboro. He writes stories, takes photographs, and has many other duties. Since March 2013, he has worked*

*at Halston Media, which also publishes Mahopac News, North Salem News, The Somers Record, Yorktown News and Westchester Wellness. Brian is also the editor of Yorktown News. He has also worked or interned at Daily Voice, Patch, and ESPN Radio. Brian grew up in Yorktown and has lived in Westchester his entire life.*

## **10. DON'T THROW AWAY YOUR SHOT: WRITING BIOGRAPHICAL FICTION THAT LEAPS OFF THE PAGE**

Biographies don't have to be boring and everyone has a true story just waiting to be told. In this workshop, we'll talk about what elements can turn a true tale into a page-turning adventure using real-life examples like J.K. Rowling and "Hamilton". After brainstorming, each breakout group will be assigned a "fun fact" about a real person and come up with a creative way to share that fact in a story.

*Caroline Moss is the author of Hey Ladies! and the Work it, Girl! biography series as well as a producer for BuzzFeed. She has written for The New York Times, New York Magazine, Cosmopolitan Magazine, Jezebel and more. Her work has appeared in Vogue, The Skimm, The Today Show and Good Morning America. Her fun fact: She is a 2005 graduate of John Jay High School!*

## **11. The Guaranteed Story Engine**

Everyone knows a story when they see it (or hear it), and as a result they keep paying attention. Despite this universal ability to identify story, nearly all of us are blind to what makes a story a story. This is because our "Story Sense" is innate, similar to other human behaviors like walking, talking, and breathing, which we do quite well without understanding how we do it. While this blindness to process is of no consequence to an audience, it is often fatal to the careers of apprentice storytellers. We will pull back the veil on your "Story Sense," and identify the (very) limited number of ways you can compel audience attention. Using The

Guaranteed Story Engine Questionnaire as a template to build a new story (in any genre), by the end of the workshop (with any luck) you will have a short story draft that your friends will want to read.

*Chris Spain was a Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University's Creative Writing Program, has been awarded a Pushcart Prize for his fiction, and received the NYU Gallatin School Dean's Award for Excellence in Teaching, 2013-2014.*

## **12. How to Find Your VOICE**

We hear about story, characters, and writing style, but what is voice and why does it matter? The author's voice is the author's attitude, personality, and character. Every one of us has a unique point of view - so how does each of us, as a writer, find our voice and express it? We'll look at examples of voice and do fun exercises that will help us find our unique voices. I'll read a passage from my novel Catch Rider, and we'll discuss the voice of the main character. We'll talk about your favorite characters and why you like them. I can't wait to help you find your unique voice!

*Jennifer Lyne is the author of the novel Catch Rider, published by Clarion Books/Houghton Mifflin. Her son, William Watstein, a 3rd grader at KES.  
[www.jenniferhlyne.com](http://www.jenniferhlyne.com)*