

Comments from teachers and librarians:

“Thank you for visiting George Washington Academy and presenting at both assemblies! Your energy, enthusiasm, and talent really impressed both students and teachers. Your writing and illustrating workshops were very creative and inspiring. I received many positive comments from parents, teachers and students like " I really liked Ms. Moss, she mad me feel special", " Now, I am sure authors are real, I want to be an author myself", " Ms. Moss writing presentation helped me think about characters and writing from a different angle, I definitely enjoyed the workshop".

And here is what teachers say "I was impressed with how smoothly everything went, and how she could capture and keep the attention of a variety of grade levels! (You made a good choice) My second graders thank you for bringing her so that they could have a chance to be really silly with banana and tomato characters!", "What a wonderful initiative, Asmaa, and well received and executed. This author sparked my young writers' creative juices. Its impact is already evident in their play writing character and plot development".

Your workshops were really tied to what students are learning in class, teachers were thankful because they were able to reinforce and build upon what you focused on during the workshops.

Again, thank you for such great presentations and for inspiring our kids! I wouldn't hesitate to recommend your workshops to any other schools.”

Asmaa Rias El Idrissi, librarian George Washington Academy, Casablanca

“What a great day last week with the Twinbrook Elementary fourth and fifth graders! I loved hearing your abundant, positive messages to the young writers. Your self-proclaimed "determination" and "stubbornness" with your early writing efforts, coupled with your thoughtful insights on revisions (complete with the Frankenstein version of an *Amelia* page!), will surely fuel their grit as young creative writers. Because you encouraged the students to mine their own lives and experiences, changing little bits, you've ensured that these 150 students will never want for inspiration. The writer controls the story," and "ENDINGS MATTER," you told them, and then demonstrated your point by soliciting the three alternate endings of their creative panels. The space unicorn and ice cream cone-ensconced kitty both enjoyed satisfying conclusions, but not before you pushed the students to question their interpretations of the stories. What ending works, and why? I could see that it was a challenge for some students to unleash their creativity, but, as you showed them, when you love a character, the ideas flow forth! "Writing is hard work," you said, "but it's the good kind of hard." What a wonderful lesson for these students to take to heart.”

--Kit Ballenger, An Open Book Foundation, Washington DC

“We were all so excited that the assembly went so well yesterday. How great it was to see all those hands raised with questions-- especially when it was clear that kids had written down their questions ahead of time! They really learned a lot from this experience, and we were impressed at how interested and excited they were. What a terrific learning experience and inspiration! I really floated through the rest of the afternoon....”

Judy Zollman, Oakland, CA

“What an extraordinary day the kids had! Everyone appreciated your insights, creativity, and good humor. You were so attentive and gracious with everyone -- we so appreciate your time and talent. A number of teachers and kids came up to me and (unsolicited) told me how much they enjoyed your presentations (the 2nd grade teacher said the kids were riveted, and trust me, the 2nd grade kids are a spirited bunch; and Lea, of course, enjoyed your teacher's workshop.) My daughter loved hearing your lessons about writing -- she loves to write and enjoys hearing about how to write. “

Terry Tao, Benicia, CA

“The Readers and Writers Book Club at West Hills High School would like to thank you for visiting our school. Our club members and Mrs. Preble’s Creative Writing Class enjoyed your out-going personality and the exciting stories that you told us about the writing process you use. We hope it is possible to see you again this year and look forward to having you visit next year. Thank you for coming to West Hills High School and sharing your experiences. All of your information was insightful and valued.”

Whispers Barnes, West Hills, CA

“I wanted to thank you for the wonderful sessions today. I was sitting in the back and could feel the kids amazement! The students have been inspired to read, draw, and write more over the summer.

Thank you!”

Liz Yanoff, Albany, NY

“Thank you so much for being a part of the Nueva School community yesterday. I thought your sessions added tremendous value to the students, as evidenced by the level of engagement from the audience. Really, a home run!”

Lisa Solomon, Los Altos CA

“What a special session we had yesterday with you. The comments from participants have been so positive. People felt inspired with regard to writing/drawing and reading. This is just what we hoped. The body of your work is amazing and your descriptions of the process was an eye opener. Thank you so much for sharing your insights and experience with us.”

Mary Ann Sinkkonen, Marin CA

“Marissa's presentation grabbed the students from the onset. She has clearly thought through what young students need and what will engage them. The kids' active participation, and her guiding them in co-authorship, were key ingredients. I don't know if Marissa has taken a course in pedagogics, but she clearly has picked up a few of the best of the strategies out there.”

Holly Clay, Sully Elementary, Sterling VA

“Thanks so much for visiting the San Anselmo Library today. We all really enjoyed your workshop. You offered some excellent tips for writing well and you've motivated the kids to start writing their own stories. I have already gotten two emails from parents about your program today:

'Ella loved the book club today! She bought a notebook, gathered ideas, and is now a busy writer with plans of being published. Not bad for a one hour gathering.'

'The author event today was excellent. Claire was so inspired by Ms. Moss. She is now writing a story about a dog who gets lost after running away from a vacuum cleaner!'"

April Hayley, Children’s Librarian, San Anselmo CA

“Your stories about Sarah Edmonds and women who served in Civil War battles are captivating! Thank you for bringing a great passion for historical fiction to WBAIS and sharing your experiences with our

students. They will definitely look at research from a new perspective now. This week was admirable!”
Marina Brodsky, librarian, Walworth Barbour American International School

“I truly appreciate your work and efforts to accommodate each different course. Your sessions were great. I enjoyed how you talked with the students, not *at* them or over them. I hope our paths cross again soon.”

Erik Johnson, teacher Taiwan American School

“I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to work closely with you this week. You bring knowledge and experience to every session – it's inspiring. How lucky our students are, to be able to learn from the best.”

Carol Youssif, Middle-School Librarian, Taiwan American School

“The grade 8 teachers were very grateful that Marissa was able to adapt to our need to cover poetic techniques (rather than narrative). The use of picture books added an extra visual layer to be considered in conjunction with poetry that enriched the genre.

Not only was the material she covered interesting and relevant for the age of the students, she was engaging in her manner of presentation where she worked hard to involve every student, encouraging maximum participation. Furthermore, her sessions were well-paced to ensure the time was filled with meaningful activity (no "fluff"),and she used great examples that allowed for a range of responses.”

Taiwan American School