

JACKIE URBANOVIC

New York Times Bestselling author and illustrator

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My Presentations:

I enjoy hamming it up for my audiences, asking and answering questions and talking about my work. I illustrate my talk with a powerpoint slideshow. My presentations take about an hour including a question and answer session and drawing for the students. If I'm talking to pre-K or Kindergarten classes, I can shorten the time to 45 minutes approximately.

I most commonly speak to elementary age children, but I also feel comfortable speaking to young adults about being a professional illustrator and author, and I have spoken at conferences to adult audiences as well.

Duck Books:

Appropriate for K through 4th grade.

I begin with a few props related to the most recent book. With Duck Soup, I brought a soup pot, some vegetables and a toy duck. I ask the audience to help me choose what correctly goes in the soup. Tomato? Dog bone? DUCK?? Then, beginning my slide show, I do a creative and dramatic reading of the book. Using everything in my power to make them laugh.

My slide show continues by showing how the book series began:

- The people and animals who inspired the books.
- My personal life and my family and how both impact the stories I write.
- My artistic beginnings and my childhood art.
- Photos of my studio, my materials and myself at work.
- Other books I've worked on and sneak previews of upcoming books.

During the course of the talk I involve the audience by asking them questions. What are their favorite books? What do they like to draw? What is this a drawing of? I end by drawing some of the characters for them on an oversized tablet, asking them guess what I'm drawing and to help me draw.

Being a Professional artist:

The topics in this presentation overlap with the Duck books talk but is meant for an older audience from 5th grade up to high school.

I begin my slide show again by reading my most recent book so that they can see the art I'll be talking about.

I ask what do they think art is? Why is it important? What jobs are there in the art field? And then we talk about the fact that art and careers in art are all around us: movies, packages, billboards, skateboards, music, architecture, etc. and how artists affect our perception of the world.

I show the slides of my childhood art and talk about how it changed over the years I grew up as well as with practice. And how practice is connected to a love of doing.

- The process of making a book from idea to thumbnail sketches to rough sketches to the final art.
- The importance of revisions and mistakes. And why we need to make them.
- Creating and drawing characters. Using models, photographs, Youtube, and exaggeration/imagination.
- Photos of my studio, materials and myself at work.
- A wish for all of the aspiring artists in the audience.

I can also draw some of my characters on an oversized tablet as I answer questions about my books, drawing, writing, etc.

Creating a Story:

This is more of an interactive workshop for 3rd grade or older. Students will be asked to participate in creating a story as well as drawing the character. This workshop takes 2 hours. This works best with 30 or fewer students because I can give much more individual attention but it is possible to do it with a greater number.

We begin by using a well known folk tale as the basis for our story. I talk about the structure of telling a story:

- Beginning, middle and end
- The importance of conflict/problem

The students are asked to rewrite the story in their own way.

I talk to them about creating the characters for their story:

- I give them tips on drawing the characters in the folktale
- I talk about using shapes to create a character that can be redrawn in different poses.
- drawing a skeleton/stick figure lightly, then building on top of it.
- using active poses including movement and interaction

The students take time to draw their characters.

Lastly, I ask them to take their characters and combine them with their story on a page layout similar to a picture book or illustrated novel.