

# Norma L. Gentner

## Author and Songwriter

Many visiting authors simply share their writing process with students during their visit. Your school will have the unique opportunity to “create” an author’s visit where learning continues throughout the day, inviting students to apply, analyze and synthesize information, reflecting a true day of learning!

## Large Group Assemblies

### • *How Were These Songbooks Created?*



Some schools begin with two assemblies that take students through the writing process I went through in order to get my songbooks published. Areas featured are: prewriting, drafting, copyright, publisher, revising, illustration choices and visualizing. (45-60 min.)

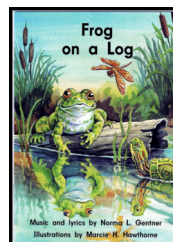
### • *Where There's A Will... There's A Way*



In this assembly, I do a read-aloud of my fairytale focusing on a more positive way of dealing with bullying. As a follow-up, students are introduced to storybird.com where authors are inspired by, and begin their writing process with art. Areas covered are prewriting, revising and storyboards. (45-60 min.)

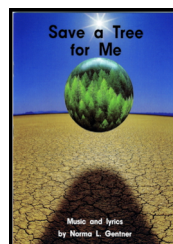
### • *The Seed Idea for Frog on a Log*

This is a K-2 assembly that shares the seed idea for this songbook on the life cycle of the frog. Students join in at the end with a sing-along with a frog puppet and me. (30 min.)



### • *The Seed Idea for Save a Tree for Me*

This is another K-2 assembly that looks at the seed idea for one of my songbooks. I begin with the holiday story, The Fir Tree. My previous kindergarten students were saddened by the ending of that story and discovered what they could do to save trees. (30 min.)



## Writing Workshops

### • *Becoming Lyricists with Bear Facts*

This workshop designed for 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grades begins with my songbook, Bear Facts. Students follow its cause-effect structure in becoming lyricists. A web and song sheets used focus on: adaptations, nouns and syllables/beat. This is a great activity for beginning researchers (45-60 min.)



### • *Becoming Illustrators with Changes*

Students in 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grades become illustrators of figurative language (similes, personification) in this songbook that integrates ELA and the Science Standards with a focus on Earth's Forces. (45-60 min.)



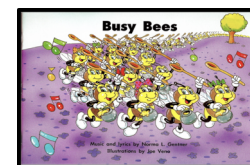
### • *Becoming Lyricists with Endangered!*

After I share my songbook Endangered with students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, they become lyricists in a follow-up writer's workshop. Participants read about other animals experiencing problems in their habitats, and come up with lyrical solutions. It's a great workshop for April and Earth month! (60 min.)

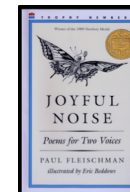


### • *What Do Busy Bees, Colonists and King George Have in Common?*

This 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade writer's workshop begins with the sharing of my songbook Busy Bees, which examines the roles in a bee colony- the queen, the drone and the workers.



Next, I have students do a choral reading of Paul Fleischman's poem for two voices, Honeybees, which also gives voice to members of a bee colony.



Students read an article on the relationship between King George III of England and the American colonists. They record details and character traits about each group on a T-chart with a partner, and synthesize their notes into a *new poem for their two voices*.

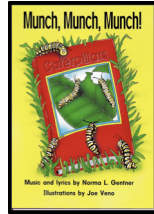
The workshop concludes with students performing their newly created poems wearing a three cornered hat and king's crown. It's a perfect integration activity for classes studying the American Revolution! (90 min.)



# Integrating Curriculum

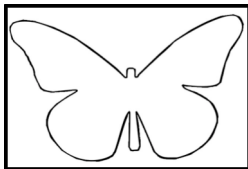
## • **Playing with Munch, Munch, Munch**

I developed this workshop for The Strong Museum of Play (Rochester, NY) for 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> graders. It begins with sharing my book, Munch, Munch, Munch.



This is followed by sharing preserved butterfly cases. Children make observations and comment on how a butterfly's underwing helps with camouflage and survival.

Children are then given a paper outline of a butterfly, and decorate the wing with crayons so their butterfly blends in with its classroom surroundings. (45-60 min.)



## • **Migrating With Monarchs**

These 3<sup>rd</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> grade level workshops begin with sharing the migration story of the Monarch butterfly. It takes students on a journey to the Trans volcanic belt in Mexico where the Monarchs winter. I will share my magical firsthand experience through a slideshow.



**One follow-up activity-** offers a news article on how ecotourism has affected the way indigenous people have lost their way of making a living of logging the Monarchs' forest homes. As they hear both sides of the issue, participants do an opinion piece of writing based on the facts in the article.

Name _____	Date _____
Opinion _____	
Evidence _____ (Use 3-5 facts from the article to support your opinion.)	
Restate your Opinion _____ (Try to say it another way if possible.)	
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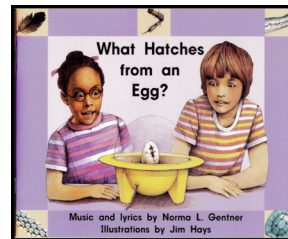
**The second follow-up activity-** invites students to reflect on the saying, "Give a man a fish, and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he will eat for a lifetime."

Different economic situations are posed, students choose, and then share the way in which they think countries are behaving.

These workshops integrate ELA and Social Studies Standards and last between 45-60 min. each.

## • **What Hatches From an Egg?...And More!**

**The first workshop-** is appropriate for K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade. It has three components beginning with a firsthand account, or story, titled *If You Care, You'll Leave Them There*. As a previous Wildlife Rehabilitator, I will guide students towards more appropriate choices during the spring arrival of baby wildlife.



Next, the students join in on a sing-along with my songbook, What Hatches from an Egg? Opportunities to make predictions using picture and textual clues make this title very age appropriate.

The final activity is a hands-on activity requiring students to use their sense of touch to predict which oviparous being is hiding inside different cloth egg pouches. (45-60 min.)



**The second workshop-** was developed for The Strong Museum of Play (Rochester, NY) and helps to develop *Higher Order Thinking Skills* for K & 1<sup>st</sup> based on their Standards. (30 min. per activity)

Activity 1 uses an *Example/Non Example* "Concept Attainment" strategy, and examines if it's better for a bird to be Precocial or Not Precocial. The children sort photo

Precocial	Not Precocial
* Possible responses: - can't stand, walk or swim - can't find themselves - kept with few feathers - parents bring them food - messy face - eyes are open at birth - follow their mother	* Possible responses: - can't stand, walk or swim - can't find themselves - kept with few feathers - parents bring them food - messy face - eyes are closed at birth - follow their mother

cards of birds, developing an understanding and their own definition.

Activity 2 uses photo images and videos of a mother Killdeer, and Alligator, to gain an understanding of patterns of behavior between parents and offspring that help the young to survive.

## • **More Is Less...Or Is It?**

Meet Tommy Small, the young hero of my first chapter book for 3<sup>rd</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup> graders, who uses MATH to solve a real-life problem. Here are a few of the many workshops and activities (with EVEN MORE activities and Standards connections at my web site!) Each session lasts 45 min.



- "What Was the Seed Idea & Read-Aloud"- I share a Power Point on where my idea came from.
- "Dramatizing a Scene"- Students compare the formats of a *text* vs. *script*, and then dramatize the scene that illustrates bullying.
- "Reading & Discovering the Theme"- As I do a read-aloud, students will begin to discover the Theme as they note: characters, setting, problem, summary and lesson learned
- "Reading, Math & Tommy's Plan"- Tommy learns about UPC codes, fractions and devises a Plan!

## **Fees:**

\$450 per school day  
\$150 evening program (PARP or Literacy Night)

Additional expenses will incur if the visit is more than 25 miles from Williamsville:

- Gas
- Food and lodging if an overnight is required
- Air travel if necessary

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