

## **Presentations & Workshops for the 2021-22 School Year**

**\*\* Note: All of my programs except Food Around The Globe can be done in a virtual format. Please feel free to reach out with any questions.**

### **Amazing Animals (all ages)**

Color-changing chameleons. Poisonous pufferfish. Frogs that seem to come back from the dead. The animal kingdom is amazing! Alicia loves to share the wonders of wildlife with young readers in fun and surprising ways. Dozens of her 150+ books focus exclusively on animals, such as *Chameleons*, *How Animals Smell*, *Orcas on the Hunt*, and *Sled Racing Dogs*. Using captivating photos and actual props, Alicia will draw on the content of her various animal-focused titles and discuss the research and writing process from the idea phase all the way to the finished book. She will share some of the amazing true tales featured in her animal books, from African beetles that shoot toxic liquid at prey to worms that live within the ice of the Arctic.

This presentation can be done in a small classroom setting or in an auditorium setting with a large group. Over the course of this presentation, Alicia will cover the following topics (among others): finding reputable sources of information for animal research, discovering the cool gems of information that make a book more exciting to readers, and the importance of fact checking to ensure accuracy in your writing.

### **Making Nonfiction Fun (all ages)**

From circus science to candy around the globe to animals that seem to come back from the dead, Alicia writes nonfiction books on all kinds of topics. In this presentation, she will share some amazing-but-true stories from her 140+ nonfiction books. Kids love to hear about unbelievable medical practices from thousands of years ago or what it's like to be a scientist in Antarctica. Using captivating photos and actual props, Alicia will draw on the content of her various nonfiction titles and discuss the research and writing process from the idea phase all the way to the finished book.

This presentation can be done in a small classroom setting or in an auditorium setting with a larger group. Over the course of this presentation, Alicia will cover the following topics (among others): finding the cool gems of information that make a book more exciting to readers, fact checking, and constructing a bibliography.

### **Having Fun With Science Writing (Grades 2-8)**

Humanoid robots. Keeping people alive in space. Finding out how smartphones work. Science writing is both exciting and challenging. But what it's like to research

and explain complicated scientific topics for young readers? Alicia has written numerous science books for readers in Grades 2-8. Her subjects have included survival in space, the future of transportation, toxic animals, why rainbows form, the engineering behind building the Golden Gate Bridge, and volcanic eruptions.

In this presentation, Alicia will share her research process and examples of how to make scientific writing more than a dull list of facts. She will help students understand what resources are reliable and how to construct a bibliography. She will also talk about the importance of finding the cool gems of information that make a topic both exciting and accessible to all readers. In a classroom setting, she can do some short scientific writing activities on topics ranging from establishing a moon colony to circus science.

### **Creating A Good Story – Fiction Writing (Grades 2-8)**

Fiction writing is often one of kids' favorite things to do in the classroom. After all, using one's imagination is fun. But what is it like to write fictional stories in magazines or fiction books? In this presentation, Alicia will talk about the process of creating believable characters. She will also discuss the importance of creating "feel like you're there" settings. Other topics covered in this presentation are plot, the concept of show-don't-tell, and using sensory details in writing. While kids sometimes don't realize that authors have to research to write fiction, Alicia will share what the research process has been like for her various fiction books. These include her picture book *Francisco's Kites*, her three World Adventure titles, and her middle-grade historical novel *A Time For Change*.

Depending on the group size and time allotted, Alicia can also have this presentation be more of a workshop model which includes short writing exercises and sharing within a classroom.

### **Food Around The Globe**

Everyone around the world eats. But the food that people put on their plates or grab from a street vendor can be wildly different depending on where they live. Alicia has written many food-related magazine articles and books, which will be featured during this presentation. An especially important focus will be Alicia's book *The World's Strangest Foods*. She will also share food-related experiences from her international travels.

This workshop has two parts: 1) an introduction to researching and writing about food and 2) a demonstration and international food tasting event where the students

can try about 20 different food items and beverages from all over the world. Alicia will bring all of the supplies to the school or library.

### **Think Like A Fiction & Nonfiction Author (Grades 4-8)**

Venice, Italy is a city that captures the imagination of readers around the globe. Its scenery and culture are unique. Alicia has written a travel article in a kids' magazine about Venice. But she's also included this city in her fictional chapter book *From Pizza to Pisa* and her nonfiction book *Italy*. How does the research and writing process vary between fiction and nonfiction?

In this presentation, Alicia will talk about the process of engaging with setting and the importance of using sensory details in writing. She will share some of her favorite resources for writing about the world cultures, whether in Aswan, Egypt, El Salvador, or Singapore. While kids sometimes don't realize that authors have to research to write fiction, Alicia will share what the research process has been like for her various fiction books. This presentation is designed to be more of a workshop model which includes short writing exercises and sharing within a classroom.

### **Writing Biographies (Grades 3-8)**

Kids of all ages read biographies. But what is the process of researching and telling someone's life story really like? Alicia has written numerous biographies, from picture book biographies to middle-grade ones. Her subjects have ranged from ancient world subject Pythagoras, Renaissance figure Leonardo da Vinci, American folk hero Nathan Hale, to modern-day musician J. Cole, scientist Jane Goodall, visionary Walt Disney, and several women astronauts including Mae Jemison.

In this presentation, Alicia will share her research process and the best practices for conducting biographical research. She will also talk about how that process can vary depending on whether the subject lived long ago or is still alive today. She will help students understand what primary sources are, how to construct a bibliography, and how to distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources (among other research-related topics). In a classroom setting, she can also help students working on their own biographies with their own research and writing.

### **Let's Go There! Regional/Country Workshops (all ages)**

Are your students studying a particular country or continent? Are you looking for a fun, multimedia presentation? Alicia has lived in Australia, France, South Africa, and the UK and has spent time in nations in six continents. She has written books on roughly 40 countries, as well as on the Arctic and Antarctic. In addition, she has

written articles in cities and countries around the world for magazines including *National Geographic Kids*, *Kiki*, *FACES*, *AppleSeeds*, and more.

Before becoming a writer, Alicia taught middle school World Geography for many years. She would love to put together a unit on a destination of your choice. Alicia will create a tailor-made, multimedia presentation for your students.

### **Under Additional Presentation Topics –**

#### **Teacher/Librarian Presentations:**

**In addition to working with students, Alicia also does presentations related to her books for teachers and librarians. Please contact Alicia for more details.**

**Previous presentations geared at adults have included the following:**

- Around The World In 150 Books
- Having Fun With STEM & STEAM
- Having Fun With Primary Sources