




Denise Vega

## Making Your Author Visit a Success

I love to visit readers and students and do my best to make the visit entertaining, interesting, inspiring, and educational. Here are some things you can do to ensure that my visit is the best it can possibly be.

- **Confirm the Schedule.** We will discuss the number and length of each presentation (I will do up to three in a day), grades I will speak to, any meals, receptions with faculty, students, parents, any special time with young writers, etc. I will provide an Author Visit Agreement detailing my understanding of what you expect in terms of presentations, fees, and any special A/V or other equipment.
- **Confirm Logistics.** Let me know if I will be making my own travel or hotel arrangements and you will reimburse me or if someone else will be making those. I'm happy to go either way so if one way is more convenient for you, let's do that.
- **Autographing/Meet the Author.** The Author Visit Agreement will also outline any special autographing or "meet the author" sessions to which we've agreed. These are great fun! And I *always* provide autographed bookmarks for those students who are unable to purchase a book of their own. I also provide an autographed hardcover copy of relevant books for your school library.
- **Read Ahead!** I ask that at least several students—preferably all students!—in each group have read at least one of my books. This creates more excitement around the visit and also enables us to have a more lively discussion after my presentation.
- **Get Students Involved.** If at all possible, have students make posters, create activities related to one or more of my books, perform scenes, or other activities to engage them in the literature before my arrival. You will find discussion questions, activities, and curriculum guides on the Educators page on my site.

- 🍷 **Prepare Questions in Advance.** Have students read relevant pages on my website: the Books pages, About, and more. These provide a lot of information about me and the books and can help spur other questions. Help students come up with questions and put them in a basket or box from which I can select or have a student select (as opposed to students have pre-prepared questions—If they do, they may be more worried about remembering their question than listening to the discussion 😊). Involving students ahead of time gives them ownership in the process and encourages participation and attention.
- 🍷 **Practice Active Listening Skills.** Throughout my school visits, I’ve found that young people often love to ask questions but aren’t always interested in the answer 😊. However, if they *are* listening, they may come up with a question related to my answer which will create a lively and engaging discussion. Talk to students about what it means to be an active listener; did the author’s answer make you think of something else? If so, what? That could be a good follow-up question and encourage a more interesting discussion.
- 🍷 **Make It a Community Event.** Consider partnering with a local library. The library might be able to host an evening reception or meet-and-greet for parents and students as well as assist in funding the visit.
- 🍷 **Set up and test equipment.** I always arrive early with all of my “show and tell” but it’s wonderful to have any required equipment available and working when I arrive.
- 🍷 **Food requirements.** That’s right, I don’t eat cheese! I’m not allergic to it, I just don’t like it! So I would be very grateful if any meals I have do not contain cheese of any kind. (However, I will never turn down chocolate 😊) 
- 🍷 **Have fun!** I plan to. 😊

Contact me via my [Visit Form](#) on the [Appearances](#) page if you have questions or to schedule a visit!