

Interview Questions - ASK THE AUTHOR

Below are interview question from author/illustrator Konnilaree Sanders; September 2016

I Miss You All Day All Week

Author and Illustrator Konnilaree Sanders

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How do you deal with writer's block?

I get out of the house and have an adventure with my kids. It helps get my mind off of the story. Then, I find something funny they say or do. I also ask my oldest daughter for her opinion. She usually has an answer for what comes next.

What's the best thing about being a writer?

The best thing about being a writer is sharing the stories. I love to watch the kids laugh at the silly parts or tell me they identify with the stories. My daughter still gets emotional when I read her, "I Miss You All Day All Week."

What's your advice for aspiring writers?

Read as much as you write. I have learned so much from reading other author's books and reading their advice/blogs. There are so many great books on writing that have helped me become a better writer. It is definitely a learned skill that doesn't happen overnight. You may have the innate gift of storytelling, but writing it is a whole other thing. I am constantly learning that.

What are you currently working on?

After "I Miss You All Day All Week," I am working on a story with the tentative title, "Naughty Ned and Wild Hair Sue." It's about a little girl with hair so wild that it evolves into a friendship with her hair knot. Of course, things get out of control and she has to learn to tame her curls. It was inspired by the constant struggles of maintaining long hair. I shared this story with my nieces and nephews and they loved it so much, I made it a priority to make it my next children's book.

How do you get inspired to write?

I am usually inspired by my children. I hear one phrase, or see one action, and it sparks a story. Then I follow that story to find my character. Then I ask, "What is the problem that this idea could solve?" That helps me create the plot. The character builds the plot and the plot makes the character grow into something better.

Where did you get the idea for your most recent book?

"I Miss You All Day All Week" was inspired by my oldest daughter Abigail, who was 4 at the time, and my husband, a teacher. After long school breaks, Abigail's dad would have to return to school full-time. Abigail couldn't sleep on these nights as she feared she wouldn't be able to say goodbye, or that she would miss him too much. She was always worried that it was, "almost early," or morning time. Her dad often comforted and reassured her that it would be the weekend soon enough. Abigail always talked about things she would like to do with him. She wanted to do all the things she loved, like shopping and painting, but she wanted to include things for him too, like bug watching and block building. They both loved the idea of cuddling, and more importantly, searching for Big Foot. Each sweet exchange ended in, "I love you all day, all week." A phrase coined by Abigail in an attempt to quantify her love. The writing and drawings followed this touching exchange. Abigail was very proud to help me write this book and even posed for all the pictures and offered her own "professional" opinion.