

Interview Questions - ASK THE AUTHOR

Below are interview question from author/illustrator Konnilaree Sanders; February 2017

Naughty Ned and Wild Hair Sue

Author and Illustrator Konnilaree Sanders

Stories By Mom

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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. I love when I see my daughter proud of what her mom does. She often boasts to complete strangers.

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 "Naughty Ned and Wild Hair Sue," I am working a children's book, "Talking Tiger is Tough." Cate and Lily love playing tough tigers. When their tummies began to roar, they tried to tell mom. But, mom couldn't understand their growls. They found out how tough it is to be a tiger.

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?

"Naughty Ned and Wild Hair Sue" was inspired by my two girls, Abigail and Eleanor. They have beautiful long hair. But, anyone with long hair knows, it is hard work to maintain. One day, I was brushing Abigail's hair. She was none too pleased. In an effort to lighten the situation I commented that her hair knot was so stubborn that I think he lived there. She giggled, and I named him Ned. She grew so attached to it, the idea, not the knot fortunately, that we created adventures for Ned. I crafted the story line and shared it with my nieces and nephews. They loved him too! They began calling their hair knots Ned. That is when I knew I had to make this book number two. Despite it being Abigail's hair knot, the character Sue is mainly inspired by Eleanor, her middle name is Sue and her hair is wild. She often sported the small side ponytail featured in this book. That was because we couldn't catch her long enough to properly style her hair. Without a pony tail she would let her long bangs cover her face. She didn't care that prevented her from seeing where she was going. She was too busy to notice. I am thankful that my girls have learned to keep Naughty Ned away.