

Interview Questions - ASK THE AUTHOR

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

Talking Tiger is Tough

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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 "Talking Tiger is Tough," I am working another children's book. I haven't come up with a title yet. But, I think it will be about shadows in the night and how to turn that into something positive. I have sketched some characters, Pete, Phillip and Penelope.

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 wrote the original story two years ago. Abigail was 4-years old and fascinated by tigers. Actually, she loves all types of cats, big and small. Roaring was the first animal noise she could make. That's why she got to be a lion for her 2nd Halloween. I am not sure why she decided to embody the traits of a tiger. Kids usually go for the dog first when they decided to lap water from a bowl and pretend their cereal is kibble. Regardless, she committed herself to roaring responses. It was funny and cute at first, but I didn't always understand what she meant. The story followed. We started with her tiger portrait and talked, in human, about her favorite games and food. Now, it took some time to finish my first two books. I based the first book on Abigail, and the second on a composition of Abigail and her younger sister Eleanor. When it came to this story Abigail insisted that it be a story about a pair of sisters. So I rewrote it with a set of sisters that represent my 6 and 2-year old girls.