

Hello, and thank you so much for your interest in Steve Layne serving as a visiting author in your school. Steve is always delighted by invitations to appear in schools! If you are from a school in Illinois, stop reading right now – this letter is designed for schools outside of Steve’s home state. Illinois people should simply contact Steve via the website for a letter tailored specifically to you. If you’re from outside Illinois – read on!

Due to the number of requests Steve receives, it has become necessary (in order to respond to interested people in a timely and efficient manner) to somewhat standardize responses to *initial* requests for information. This letter is VERY long which you may hate or you may love. Our goal was to provide answers to nearly every question people have about school visits! If you read the letter thoroughly and carefully, you may find every question answered and be able to go about making plans.

If, upon reviewing the information provided, you are interested in contracting Steve to visit your school or a group of schools, you can be assured of receiving more individualized attention.

As an experienced classroom teacher of students from the elementary grades on up through high school, Steve knows how to engage kids at all levels, and his limitless energy keeps them on the edge of their seats. Visiting schools and talking about his work as an author of award-winning books for children and young adults makes him feel “right at home.” The wealth of testimonials in his website **guestbook** (www.stevelayne.com) regarding his school appearances make it easy to interest other librarians and reading teachers in jumping on the bandwagon to help bring him to your area!

Presentations:

Presentations vary according to grade level but may include partial readings of work, audience participation, discussion of the writing process, dealing with rejection constructively, “where ideas come from,” and insights on the collaboration (or lack of) with illustrators. Sharing of backstory (the stories *behind* the books), advanced scoop on new writing projects, and question/answer time.

Grades K-2	35-40 minute sessions
Grades 3-5	45-50 minute sessions
Grades 6-12	60-75 minute sessions

Expenses, Travel, & Honorarium

The hosting party is responsible for the hotel bill; however, Steve will make the hotel choice—frequent travelers need good rest and good beds. Arrangements must be made to pay the hotel bill in advance or to direct bill it to a school. Steve will not pay the hotel bill and be subsequently reimbursed as this has caused problems again and again. A meal stipend of \$45.00 a day will be added to the honorarium amount. Hosting party(ies) pay for or split the airfare if a flight is involved. Generally, flights costs must be reimbursed within three weeks of Steve booking the flight. He would be flying coach on Northwest Airlines in most cases. **Transportation to and from the airport and all schools is the responsibility of the host schools.** If Steve drives to your area – transportation to/from hotel and all schools is still the responsibility of the host.

Please read all of the school visit packages that follow carefully to see which pricing plan might best work for you. If your school visit is connected to a conference Steve is speaking at or a seminar he is giving near your location (check his online calendar)—you may get a special price and/or received free airfare or hotel.

Package 1: Steve is flying in to visit your school and only your school for one day. Fee is \$3,000.00 plus expenses outlined above. **Note:** Four sessions will be provided.

Package 2: Steve is flying in to visit 2-3 schools each on a separate day. Fee is \$2,200.00 per school plus expenses as outlined above. **Note:** Three sessions will be provided at each school.

Package 3: Steve is flying in to visit 4 or more schools each on a separate day. Fee is \$2,000.00 per school plus expenses as outlined above. **Note:** Three session will be provided at each school.

Package 2A: Steve is flying in to visit 1-3 days of “split day” visits (one school in the morning / the other in the afternoon). Fee is \$1,700.00 per school plus expenses as outlined above. Schools must be in close enough proximity to make this viable. **Note:** Two sessions will be provided in each of the schools for a total of four sessions.

Package 3A: Steve is flying in to visit for 4 or more days with all/most of the days being “split day” visits (one school in the morning / the other in the afternoon). Fee is \$1,500.00 per school plus expenses as outlined above. **Note:** Two sessions will be provided in each school for a total of four sessions.

Package U: YOU tailor your own proposal of exactly what you would like with regard to author sessions in schools (how many sessions each day, how many schools each day, how many days total), teacher inservice, parent night, reading council event, library event, or any combination of these and submit it to Steve along with your total honorarium figure + all expenses. If you choose to design your own package, please be sure it is detailed enough when you submit it so that Steven can adequately evaluate it. For example, do not say “teacher inservice after school” rather say “teacher inservice after school on Tuesday from 3:00-4:15 P.M.

****Please note:** Steve requires payment at the time service is provided. If you are not aware of the policies for securing a check from your school district, please talk to someone responsible for

such things. Often, checks must be requested one to two months prior to the date needed as they require board of education approval. If you are working with P.T.A. funding, you may find the procurement of a check to be simpler process. There is a 20% surcharge if Steve is not paid at the times services are rendered.

Additional Presentations:

Frequently, Steve will be asked to provide one of the following extra programs:

A writing workshop with kids (available only for grades 5-12 and groups of 30)

An after school inservice for teachers

A workshop or keynote for a local reading council (or two who join together)

A parent education seminar on building lifetime readers at home

A public library program

Any of these additional programs is an additional \$800.00 honorarium in addition the school visit honorarium. This represents a considerable savings when compared with the fees for such events scheduled independently. It *is* possible in some situations to substitute one of the above in place of one of the three school visit sessions with children (depending upon whether doing so requires Steve to stay an additional night). If Steve is staying an additional night for an extra event – the honorarium is typically a good deal more than \$800.00. The fee may be negotiable based on the number of accompanying school visits.

Dates:

Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays are the most consistent days of the week that Steve has available for school visits; however, there are a few time each year when he can come on other days of the week or for an entire week of visits.

Venue and Equipment:

Steve will have his laptop and a power point presentation for your students, but you will need to provide the LCD projector and screen. Steve prefers a hand-held cordless microphone (and microphone stand) if available. Some type of microphone system is usually required. Also, if possible, please have a laptop with power point loaded (not a MAC computer) available in the event that Steve's computer becomes "sick." It shouldn't happen, to-date it has *never* happened – but you know the Boy Scout Motto: Be Prepared!

Many schools have no choice but to put authors in the gymnasium to speak, and Steve understands that is often the case; however, if there is any other alternative that *could* work—it is often the better choice, and it never hurts to ask!

Book Sales:

In order to book a school visit, schools must have Steve's books as part of the school library's collection and be willing to make Steve's books available for sale to students and teachers—often a pre-sale is effective if students and teachers are familiar with the books, and excitement about the visit has been generated. It is always true, though, that following Steve's sessions the day of the visit, many kids want to “buy a book tomorrow.” An additional book order may also be placed following Steve's visit at the same level of discount offered during a pre-sale. A fabulous order form with book covers, prices, descriptions, etc. is already made up and will be made available to you—saving you *a lot of work*.

Pelican Publishing Company will help coordinate books sales for school visits and offer Steve's books at a 40% discount. Contact Pelican's school sales manager at 1-800-843-1724 x 319 to discuss details. The books may be made sold in your school at full price or any percentage discount you choose. **This is a terrific way to secure funding to help pay for the school visit!**

Sleeping Bear Press is another of Steve's publishers. His books *T is for Teachers: A School Alphabet* and *P is for Princess: A Royal Alphabet* are available through this publisher. The discount to schools for these books are 30% and again you can sell the book at full price or any level of discount you choose. To order this title, contact the Sleeping Bear Press School Sales Manager at 1-800-487-2323 x8767.

***It is often true that some kids cannot afford to buy a book who may want to read one. Steve's contract will request that you have copies of his books in your school library prior to the visit, and he will make time to sign them while there.**

***Keep in mind that when order forms go home to parents – you never know WHAT books might interest people! They may buy Christmas gifts for nephews in middle school – even though your building is an elementary building, etc. Please don't assume people won't want a certain title. You never know.**

Other

When you visit Steve's website be sure to click on RESOURCES on the far left side of the home page. A menu will offer you several choices under this heading—if you select “handouts” you will quickly see a fabulous handout entitled “How to Host a Successful School Author Visit!” Steve created this handout after interviews with many other children's authors so that you would have advice from the experts!

Also under the RESOURCES section you can find Study Guides for many of Steve's books with terrific activities for the classroom! *Autographed bookmarks*, ready for you to photocopy on

cardstock and slice right up, are available in this section of the website as well; consider this for kids who cannot afford to buy a book! FYI, on the day of the visit, Steve will only autograph books – no slips of paper, shoes, body parts, backpacks, etc. – but these bookmarks do have an authentic signature! Feel free to use cover images of Steve’s books (your techno-people will know how to take them from his website or from Amazon.com) and write-ups about them in any way that you would like.

Remember to request Steve’s fabulous “School Visit Book Order Form.” It can save you HOURS of work! It is ready-made as a word document and requires only minor modifications on your part to customize it for your entire community and send it home to set up your book orders. Previous school visit coordinators call this document a “dream come true!” This form is available at Steve’s website under RESOURCES - HANDOUTS. If not, let us know you need it by contacting Caitlin Smith at csmith@pelicanpub.com or calling her at 1-800-843-1724 x 319.

Our goal is for this *lengthy* letter to answer the many questions interested parties have as they seek to plan for an author visit. If you are ready to contract Steve’s visit or have additional questions, please phone our home at 630/443-6363. PLEASE hit the REPLY button each time we converse so that conversations can be tracked from the earliest point in time. This is CRITICAL due to the overwhelming number of inquiries Steve receives each week.

Regards,

Debbie Layne

(Wife, Mother, Financial Analyst, Accountant, Laundress, Proofreader, Editor . . .)