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# Presentations

Rebecca Laffar-Smith

## Writing, Publishing, And Author Life

### **Y.A. Sci-Fi/Fantasy Author Talk (Adults)**

Rebecca talks about her experiences writing and publishing Y.A. Science Fiction and Fantasy novels. She shares the highs and lows of developing compelling stories, the genesis of her ideas, how her debut developed over eight years and several rewrites, how National Novel Writing Month finally gave her the impetus to finish, and how she brought that book and then several others into the world. Hear the fascinating story of the realisation of her life-long dream.

### **Plot Storming: Character Development and Story Structure (Adults or Teens)**

Discover how to define your story concept so that you'll love your book from beginning to end. Develop multi-dimensional characters and discover the powerful story structure that is evident in the majority of resonant story telling across the ages. With examples from blockbuster movies, Rebecca highlights key elements of story you'll see reflected in the books and movies you love. Armed with this insight you'll be able to develop compelling plots and captivating characters that bring your own stories to life. Perfect for novelists and screenwriters.

### **Navigating the Indie Publishing waters (Adults)**

Are you considering taking control of your writing career by self-publishing your work? Indie publishing is a booming business with more independent authors that ever making a living from their books. The phrase authorpreneur, coined to represent the innovative and business mindset of active and engaged indie authors, wonderfully highlights the go-getter attitude and passion needed to successfully self-publish. Learn the indie publishing process from story idea through production, publishing, marketing, and distribution as well as some of the riptides and sharks to watch out for when you're Navigating the Indie Publishing waters.

### **The Ins and Outs of Editing (Adults or Teens)**

Join us for a Proofreading Party where Rebecca shows you the five stages of the editing process, talks about editing mark up, and offers hands on practice to help you put your new editing skills to work. Learn about working with professional editors and how much you should pay if you're hiring a freelance editor yourself. And then, spend some time editing your own project with opportunities to ask Rebecca about specific editing queries related to your own work. (Be sure to bring along a printed copy of something you're working on!)

### **Scrivener: Novel Writing Software (An Introduction) (Adults or Teens)**

Scrivener is powerful novel writing software ideal for any long-work literature (novels, essays, thesis, blogs, memoirs, non-fiction, screenplays, anything!) It's a great tool during the writing process, but also allows you to plan and outline your story, keep your research notes and web sources, develop character guilds, track your progress, and compile your document into various formats so you can get your work out into the world. This workshop gives you a brief overview and introduction to the software so you can begin confidently and see how simple and intuitive the software is once you understand the various parts of its versatile structure.

### **Social Media for Authors (Adults)**

Writing a book is just the first step to a creative author career in today's media abundant world. Both traditionally- and indie-published authors rely more and more on their online platform and social media to connect with their audience and promote their books. Rebecca introduces authors, at any stage of their creative journey, to several options for engaging with their readers. She also shares tips to make the whole process fast, efficient, and fun.

### **Finding Your Author Voice (Adults or Teens)**

Every writer has a distinct and unique voice. Regardless of genre, your voice is what keeps your readers coming back for more and more of your books. It's something that is uniquely you. Your voice is a combination of themes and heart topics that resonate within you and become the magic on the page that only you can deliver. Those recurring themes motivate and drive the stories you write. Discovering your author voice is the key to consistently creating stories your readers love and that motivate and inspire you to continue writing.

## Picture Books, Poetry, and Publishing For Children

### **Kids Can Make Picture Books (ages 6-12 or Teens)**

See how a picture book can be made as Rebecca shows children the process from idea to print. She uses examples from the books she co-wrote with her own children, the P.I. Penguin series. Then Rebecca helps the children brainstorm their own main character and a short, six-scene story outline. Children learn the crucial parts of a story and get to explore character development and narrative structure. In smaller groups, each child has the opportunity to take home the outline of their own story so they can continue to develop it into a book of their very own.

### **Let's Play with Words Series / Tools of Poetry (ages 6-12, Teens, or Adults)**

Stand-alone 'a la carte' workshops or a long series, the Let's Play with Words workshops introduce children, teens, or adults to aspects of language and poetry in fun and engaging way. Includes activities, experimentation, and a lot of interaction and fantastic fun with words.

Poetry – Rhyme – Alliteration – Onomatopoeia – Imagery – Simile

Personification – Metaphor – Meter – Hyperbole – Rhyme Schemes

### **You Can Make Picture Books (Adults or Teens)**

Built on the foundation of her popular Kids Can Make Picture Books workshop, Rebecca also presents workshops for adults and teenagers. Again, the workshop outlines the process from idea to print with examples from her own books and series. Rebecca goes into more detail about the logistics of self-publishing in the children's genre and picture books in particular, including handling working with freelancers, coordinating printing, the potential pitfalls, and the pros and cons in this market.

### **You Can Write Children's Books (Adults or Teens)**

For those keen to understand the intricacies of children's books beyond picture books, Rebecca also expands the You Can Make Picture Books concept to other types of children's books, including chapter books, middle grade novels, and young adult books.

## Dyslexia and Literacy Disability Awareness

### **Supporting Dyslexic Students in Schools (Adults)**

Research indicates that one in ten children are diagnosed with dyslexia. Dyslexia is a neurological divergence that makes reading and writing particularly challenging. However, there are many cases that go undiagnosed and in the dyslexic community we believe the actual number is probably closer to one in five. These students need specific accommodations and adapted teaching styles to flourish in classrooms at every stage of their learning journey. In this talk or workshop, Rebecca educates teachers and parents. She explains what dyslexia is, including its accompanying strengths, and shares strategies for reducing barriers to learning and improving outcomes for these children in the classroom and at home.

### **Fostering a Love of Reading in Resistant Readers (Adults)**

Rebecca is an advocate for children with language or literacy difficulties such as those associated with dyslexia, specific language impairment, and autism. In this talk Rebecca discusses the signs of language and literacy difficulties in young children and shares tips for inspiring even the most resistant readers to experiment with written words and ultimately to develop a passion for reading, writing, exploring creativity, and living a literate life.

### **From Failing Ninth Grade English to Full-Time Professional Author (Teens)**

Rebecca's own dyslexia journey is an inspiring story, particularly for high school students. In this talk, Rebecca shares her struggles and the challenges she faced as a student, but also ultimate hopefulness. Despite those challenges she went on to further learning at university and build a much-loved career with words and books. And she believes everyone can achieve their dreams and deserve to follow their passion.

## Disability, Mental Diversity, and Education

### **Series of Inspiration: Shining Light in the Dark (Adults or Children)**

Related to her TEDx Talk, Rebecca has a range of talks she gives about mental health and resilience. She loves to create new and unique talks in this field.

### **Disabilities, Special Needs, and the Bullying Connection (Adults or Children)**

Bullying and cyberbullying have become pervasive challenges for school-aged children and teenagers. It can be particularly challenging for children who have a disability or special needs. Peer-on-peer abuse contributes to emotional and mental health instability that sets victims apart and breaks the bond of belonging, which is often a precursor to instances of teen rebellion, high risk activities, poor academic performance, cycles of anger and depression, and in the most tragic cases even teen suicide.

Rebecca shares some of the warning signs parents and teachers should watch for, as well as strategies to build emotional resilience. She discusses successful conflict resolution, intervention, and methods to best bring schools, teachers, and parents together. More importantly, Rebecca creates an environment where people can talk about their concerns or experiences. Parents, teachers, and students will feel connected, respected, and rediscover hope that there are solutions.

### **The Unschooling Movement: Learning from Life (Adults)**

As an advocate for the unschooling movement, Rebecca talks about how parents can begin a homeschool/unschool journey that truly honours and respects their child's unique, individual needs, while still meeting the requirements of the Education Department. Rebecca shares tips and techniques for creating a life rich with learning, how to make your homeschool moderator love you, and how to unschool/homeschool on a very low budget. She also talks about the emotional and creative benefits of unschooling, including specific benefits for children with special needs.

Rebecca shares the true joy and bonds that can be created in a family that lives and schools together. She talks about the value of these quality hours as children are growing up and the way the family unit can be strengthened and nurtured. That directly relates to greater harmony in the home. Discover how a home rich with the respect, understanding, and patience that homeschooling/unschooling can create is also a home with fewer battles of will, less sibling rivalry, greater responsibility and independence, and less defiance or misbehaviour.



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## Rebecca Laffar-Smith

### Presentation Rates

Rebecca is a firm believer that artists and experts deserve to earn fair income for their work and as such abides by the minimum rates set by the Australian Society of Authors. All prices quotes are inclusive of GST and open to negotiation for non-profit or hardship organisations.

All of Rebecca's presentations can be adapted for different time frames depending on individual needs. Obviously, the depth of content that can be covered will vary on length. Rebecca is also open to topic requests. With over twenty years experience in writing, editing, mental diversity, disability, and education, Rebecca has a wealth of knowledge to draw from and can custom build talks and workshops on an even broader range of topics than those currently listed in this document.

**1hr Talk = \$350**

**2hr Workshop = \$550**

**4hr Workshop = \$700**

**Full Day Workshop = \$1,250**

**1 x 45-minute School Session = \$350**

**3 x 45-minute School Sessions (Full-Day) = \$700**

**4 x 45-minute School Sessions (Full-Day Extended) = \$1000**

**Panel Member = \$200**

**Panel Chair = \$250**

**Keynote Address = \$1000**

**Extended Travel:** \$60 per driving hour in excess of 1hr from Perth metro. area.

**Away From Home:** Full travel costs and accommodation to be provided. In addition, a minimum per diem of \$80 per day should be paid to cover food and incidentals.

<http://asauthors.org/finanswer/rates-of-pay>