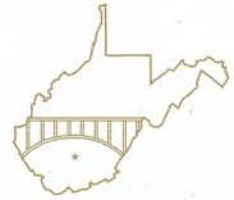


Fayette County Board of Education



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It is my pleasure and honor to recommend Will Hillenbrand as a guest author/illustrator. Will has presented at two schools where I've worked. His presentations are always engaging and illuminating. On these visits, he generously added a round table discussion with students. These discussions provide a personal connection and underscores Will's passion for his work and sharing it with others.

Will and I have a long history. He has always nudged me further in my thinking and work as a teacher. He is an innovative individual with a naturally creative vision that constantly evolves. It has been my good fortune to collaborate with Will on two in-depth projects with students.

Our first project involved Will and my first grade students. Over a six week period Will enthusiastically shared his time, skill, and knowledge. He guided each child through draft creation, revisions, and final illustrations. The end result was the students creating and publishing illustrations for a text Will had recently worked on professionally (*The House That Drac Built*). His approach to walking them through this work beautifully paralleled and enhanced my instruction regarding the writing process.

In the summer of 2001, Will and I embarked on another project to implement a unique program he designed called the "e-thology". This project is another example of Will's creativity and desire to constantly develop ways to support young writers and illustrators. Centered on a broad topic, students write an original narrative and illustrate it. All student work is transferred to a CD so the anthology of work becomes an "e"-thology. This project was designed to occur over a school year. We implemented it in a streamlined manner over a three week, all-day summer school program with 20 at-risk students ranging from Kindergarten to Fourth Grade. Will not only presented, but also worked daily with students, in small groups and one-on-one, to revise and finalize their illustrations. In all my years of teaching I've never witnessed a program with such positive impact on students' emotional and academic progress. By the end of the program they all viewed themselves as capable and accomplished learners. I attribute the lion's share of the projects' success to Will's on-going guidance and involvement.

It is without reservation that I recommend Will. His ability to connect with any age group and to clearly explain his craft always provides students with a worthwhile, memorable experience. If I can be of any further assistance, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Therese Ehrnschwender

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