

# Behind the Book

## Teacher Guidelines



We are committed to helping you provide your students with an exciting reading and writing experience that they'll remember for the rest of their lives. Behind the Book's mission is to inspire New York City public school students to love reading by bringing accomplished authors and their books into classrooms and creating rich, innovative literacy programs.

Behind the Book works in NYC public schools where at least 75% of the students are eligible for free lunch. We charge your school \$1,000 per Behind the Book program, a small portion of the cost of the actual program.

### How it Works

The teacher and Behind the Book program coordinator work together to create a custom program. We work with you to develop a program that meets your instructional priorities and to choose an author and book that fit your curriculum needs, reflect your students' interests and match your students' capabilities. Each program serves one classroom and includes at least four Behind the Book workshops. Our programs occur during school hours and each workshop lasts 90 minutes.

### Program Components

After agreeing on an author and confirming his/her availability, we will set up a schedule for all planned workshops. You will get an introduction workshop from the program coordinator to kick off the program and introduce the book to the students, two author workshops and one culminating workshop to celebrate student writing. The teacher and program coordinator can add additional workshops to support student learning.

Some possible workshops include:

- Visual Art with a professional teaching artist related to the area of study
- Research Assistants to help students research topics for writing in small groups
- Field Trips that expand student understanding of the topic
- Professional visitors whose experience reflects a person or topic of the book
- Writing Coaches to help students edit their work in small groups

Every Behind the Book program will also include the following:

- A copy of the anchor text for every participating student and teacher.
- A Program Plan which summarizes the results of our collaborative planning. It includes the number and type of workshops, schedule details, literacy activities including writing prompts, discussion questions and activities as well as Common Core Learning Standards which the program will address.
- Bulletin board materials, including information about the author and interactive speech bubbles for students to record questions and thoughts which can be posted throughout the program.
- Classroom resource books; if your BtB program includes research or requires teaching additional content, resource books will be provided for your classroom. Other titles by the program author are given to the classroom and school libraries to aid the students in doing author studies.

## Teacher Commitment

Collaboration is the key to the success of our programs. The schools we work with are our partners. The teachers take on extra responsibility as do the students. You can expect the same high level of commitment from us.

In order to ensure a creative, engaging and purposeful experience for your students, we require the following:

### Clear, Timely Communication

**We have found the faster the teacher responds to our emails or phone calls, the better the programs are.** Teachers will meet in person with the program coordinator at the outset of the program and participate in a conference call with the author before the first workshop. Most communication thereafter can occur by phone or email, but it is critically important that you respond to your program coordinator in a timely fashion to resolve any challenges and iron out program details.

### Signed Teacher Agreement and Student Releases

Before the first Behind the Book visit, please return a signed teacher agreement to your program coordinator. Each teacher will also receive a class set of student release forms that each student's guardian **must** complete and return to you **before** the introductory workshop when the Behind the Book Program Coordinator will collect them.

### Teacher Participation

During each Behind the Book workshop, the classroom teacher remains the primary instructor and supervisor of student behavior, and is required to be present and engaged at all times.

### Evaluation of student work

All student work done through the Behind the Book program, including the reading of the book, classroom participation, writing, and art should be evaluated by the teacher like any other class assignment.

### Student attendance

Students should be present for all sessions and should be required to complete the assigned work. We discourage taking students out of class during Behind the Book workshops if at all possible and will assist you in creating a productive environment for each student.

### Surveys

At the end of the program, we ask that students complete a survey. We will also have a pre- and post-survey for each participating teacher to complete. We are happy to share the results of the evaluation with you.

### We're Building Behind the Book Schools!

We want to be your literacy partner. If you think of ways Behind the Book can support your students or school, talk to your program coordinator.

