

## Essentials For a Successful Author Visit

**Available materials** (which can all be found at our website: [www.theprophecykeepers.com](http://www.theprophecykeepers.com)):

- Pre-visit anticipation guide and discussion questions
- Post-visit follow-up guide
- Forms and sample schedules for visits
- Sample post-visit letters written by children
- Pictures and descriptions of previous visits
- An early draft of the excerpt Melaine will be reading during the presentation
- Book discussion questions
- Sample lesson plan for book
- Quiz similar to AR tests
- Links to literature that inspired *The Prophecy Keepers*
- The languages of *The Prophecy Keepers*
- Material to help promote the event

### Pre-visit

Get the students excited about the visit. They can read an excerpt from the book and find out more about the world of Earde on the website. Have those who are interested read the complementary copy sent to the library.

Go over the anticipation guide and discussion questions, which are relevant to explanations about the writing process and the use of symbolism and metaphor, among other things.

Ask students to formulate questions they might like to ask Melaine.

Let students know that they will be able to pre-order the book(s) from us and have them signed personally on the day of the visit.

### Visit Day Schedule

Melaine will spend the day, speaking to however many classes you would like during each period. She can also be available during the morning break to answer questions, meet with students, and sign autographs. She will need a break at lunch, or, if desired, she can have lunch with a small group of students (eg, those especially interested in writing or fantasy literature, who would like to talk more about it). And she will need water!

Other formats are available.

### We have found that the following set-up and materials work best:

- A podium or table in front of chairs arranged in rows (or similar set-up, depending on space, though it is important that there are no children in back or directly to the sides of where she speaks)
- A microphone system

- A computer (she can use hers, if possible) with internet hookup (she uses the website during the talk) which can be projected onto a screen. Melaine will show (depending on questions) the following materials:
  - Examples of her early work—including the first story she ever wrote at age 5
  - The query letter she sent out when seeking publication
  - Two rejection letters from publishers
  - An example of the “Old Language” (Old English) found in the book
  - The literature which she drew from
  - Full-color maps

It is important that teachers and librarians have questions ready to ask if the students are quiet. It is easier for Melaine to answer questions than simply give a lecture. Some of the school-relevant things she generally talks about are:

- The writing process: the fact that most of the time writing is spent revising and editing; the roles of friends and her editor, which are similar to peer review and a teacher’s suggestions for revision.
- The amount and type of research that go into her writing process.
- Where her inspiration comes from—her use of symbolism based on works of old literature.
- Her own dislike of school writing in middle school and high school.
- Advice for those who want to be writers.

At the end of the presentation, it is a good idea to leave time for students to buy books (if applicable), have their copies signed, and for those who are not going to buy the book to have other things signed: paper, notebooks, hands, shoes, etc. Melaine will also be bringing bookmarks.

### **Post-visit**

If desired, go over post-visit follow up questions. A teaching guide and other materials are also available on the website.

We also ask, if you wouldn’t mind, that you do the following:

Write a “review” of the books: a few words about what you thought, whether you would recommend them, how the kids and teachers responded, etc.

If your school participates in the AR program, submit a request that a test be made for *The Prophecy Keepers* and *The Charm of Urizen* (you’ll find a link on the website). Renaissance has the two books, but needs a certain number of requests for tests to create them. In the meantime, there are similar tests on the website that some schools are using so kids can get points for reading the books. We will email you the answer keys if you would like.

Remind the students that if they did not purchase the book but would like to read it to look for it at their local public library, and if they don’t have it on the shelves or in the system, request it from the librarian.

Encourage them to participate on Melaine's blogs or the books' facebook page (all accessible through the website), or email Melaine with any questions or comments they might like to share with her, and to enter the art contest.

If you feel the visit was successful, recommend the book to the public librarians in your area and other school librarians.

Thanks!