



THE TELLING ROOM – Greater Portland's Community Writing Center

## SCHOOL VISITS

### **General Information:**

While we especially love it when kids can come to our Writing Center (there's just something magical here, and the allure of the Old Port is tough to resist), we know this isn't always possible; instead we can come to the kids.

School visits can be as simple as visiting with one classroom for a single morning; or as complicated as seeing six classrooms simultaneously; or seeing a whole grade one time, and then following it up with an intensive workshop back at The Telling Room for the (24 max) students who have worked hardest to do more with the tools we left with them; or doing a poetry slam with an entire grade.

To make a School Visit **reservation**, select one of the models from below (inspired by our visits with schools throughout Greater Portland) or develop your own plan with us, by emailing our program director, John Holdridge at: [john@tellingroom.org](mailto:john@tellingroom.org)

### **The "Mahoney"**

The Telling Room sends staff and volunteers en masse, taking over a whole grade at once, working in up to six classrooms simultaneously. Our time in the classroom is flexible, but we prefer to be there for 1 ½-2 hours. While we're there, we can help your students generate new material for stories, come up with powerful characters, take a journey through sensory writing, write in never imagined poetic forms, or bring readers along on their stories' "emotional rollercoaster." This one is great for all ages. Sliding scale rate (based on number of classrooms and time involved): \$500-750.

### **The "Longfellow"**

It's a poetry slam! Picture this: In three interactive sessions, Telling Room writers provide examples of poems and pieces on the spectrum between more traditional poetry, hip-hop, stand-up comedy, the three forms that helped form the basis for poetry slams in the 1980s. Working in groups and individually, students try different ways of writing poems to perform. Then they form teams, practice performance techniques, choose their favorites, and get ready to compete in a real-live poetry slam in the second-half of the third session. "Celebrity" judges choose the winning team, but everyone gets a chance to showcase their newfound performance skills. This model works best with grades 5 and up.

### **The “Scarborough”**

This model kicks off with a School Visit to a single classroom, or a whole grade, or something in between, in which kids work on writing and photography with us. Our time in the classroom is flexible, but we prefer to be there for 1 ½-2 hours. We leave them as artists in process—giving them and their teachers ways to develop their writing and thread together words and images. After a week of work on their projects, they submit their work-in-progress to their teacher (or to us, if you want us to judge—we love that!), and from this work the teacher (or us) can select up to 24 students to come to our Writing Center in Portland, to finish their pieces and talk about publication options. Sliding scale rate (based on number of classrooms we visit initially): \$500-\$1000.

[new text for the About Us page, to add to the bottom]

### **Our Method**

At The Telling Room, the students we work with are our fellow writers and artists. We know that everyone has a story to tell, and through our programs for young storytellers our cadre of adult writers and artists come together with young writers and artists to tell these stories and share them with each other, and ideally also with a greater community audience as well. This is our vision, and our baseline; we love to invent new ways of finding and finessing and then unleashing our words into the world. Often we marry words to other art forms—to photography, or song, or video. We are open to your ideas, too, and linger over those methods we turn to often like well loved books that keep us surprised and inspired, no matter how many times we turn the pages.