

Cynthia Lord Author Visit Information

Cynthia Lord is a former elementary and middle school teacher whose debut novel, *Rules*, won a Newbery Honor Award and a Schneider Family Book Award. In addition, students in six states awarded *Rules* their state's student-choice award (Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, Ohio and Vermont).



In addition to *Rules*, Cindy's other middle-grade novels are *Touch Blue*, *Half a Chance*, *A Handful of Stars*, *Because of the Rabbit*, and *Home away from Home*. She has an early chapter-book series, *Book Buddies*, as well as early readers and picture books starring Hot Rod Hamster.

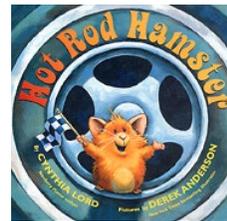
All of Cindy's titles are shown on her website, www.cynthialord.com.

In May 2022, Cindy received the Katahdin Award for Lifetime Achievement in Children's Literature from the Maine Librarians Association.

Cindy's Presentations at Author Visits

Cindy begins her school presentation by showing a story she wrote at the age of six. "No one would read this and say, 'Now *there's* a future Newbery Honor author,' would they?" she asks students. "That's because writers are made, not born."

She goes on to explain the four things that helped her become a writer, and she takes students through the writing process—from idea to published book—using *Rules* as an example:



- Her own rules for a first draft
- How to use "write what you know" (even when you *don't* know!)
- The importance of revision (including showing a few draft pages from *Rules* with her editor's comments on them). "When you take a book off the shelf, you are only seeing the *end* of a long process," she explains.
- How to add sensory detail and the importance of stepping beyond your imagination

Cindy also tells funny and surprising "behind the scenes" stories from *Rules* and shows photographs of some of the places and inspiration behind her book.

Comments from Educators

“Being a teacher herself, she shared the importance of reading and provided insightful information about her writing processes. Mrs. Lord was a perfect combination of instruction and entertainment. Her friendly, calm disposition makes her very approachable. All staff agreed she was one of our ‘best ever.’”

Karen Duffy, Carmel, Indiana

“Both teachers and students really appreciated hearing Cynthia Lord share her insights into how the book came to be. The small groups liked seeing the book published in multiple languages and in Braille. Mrs. Lord’s visit was a great success.”

Margy Soule, Brunswick, Maine

“Every single person with whom I came in contact, both children and adults, just loved your presentation, and I am so happy that my instincts were right about you (it is not always possible to tell from reading a person's works whether or not he/she will be a good oral communicator). Thank you for being so entertaining as well as informative about the writing process. I feel that our teachers, as well as the students, learned a lot from your presentation.”

Beth Jackson, Athens, Tennessee



School Visits

Cindy enjoys meeting young readers at school and library visits. Suggested audiences:

- Grades 3-8 and adults for *Rules* and the other middle-grade novels.
- Grades 1-3 for Cindy’s chapter books.
- PK-2 for Hot Rod Hamster picture books, early readers, and *Borrowing Bunnies*.

Her maximum number of presentations per day is three.

Please note that Cindy does not do Skype, video or conference call visits.

Equipment: Cindy can bring her own laptop and projector, or use school equipment.

Schools need to provide the following: a screen, microphone with sound amplification as needed for the room and audience size, a table or utility cart to hold the laptop and projector, and extension cords to reach electrical outlets.



Contact: [**events@cynthialord.com**](mailto:events@cynthialord.com)

Frequently Asked Questions

Scheduling and arrangements are coordinated by Cindy's husband, John Bald. John prepared this collection of FAQs.

How much does a school visit cost? The cost includes three parts:

- Cindy's honorarium, \$1900.
- Travel: the flight cost, or if your school is in New England then Cindy will drive and your cost will be mileage. As of 2025, the IRS standard rate for mileage is 70 cents per mile.
- Hotel: usually one night's stay at a local hotel. If your school is less than 90 minutes' drive from Cindy's home, a hotel will not be needed.

There are no further costs. Cindy pays for her own meals and incidental expenses.

Can we ask you to hold a date for our visit? Yes, we will be glad to hold an open date for your school. No deposit is required. You can leave the date on hold until your school is ready to confirm the date. Around 2-3 months before the date, if we haven't heard from you, we will ask whether or not your school wants to confirm the visit.

When we confirm, do we have to make a deposit? No, a deposit is not required.

When do we have to make payment? Most schools pay Cindy on the day of the visit. If your school prefers to mail a check in advance, that's fine. If your school wants to mail a check a day or two after the visit, that's fine too.

When do we receive an invoice showing the total amount due? Normally an invoice showing the total amount due (honorarium, flight or mileage, and hotel) will be sent around 3 weeks before the visit date. If your school requests the invoice earlier, then the invoice will be sent earlier.

Who makes the flight and hotel reservations? Cindy takes care of her own flight and hotel reservations. As a former teacher, Cindy is aware of the tight budgets schools have and she works to find the lowest cost flight that works with her schedule. For a hotel, she usually reserves a room at a chain hotel (Comfort Inn, etc.) using her AAA discount to keep costs at a minimum. Sometimes a school will suggest a specific hotel.

Does Cindy rent a car? No. The responsibility of local transportation, from airport to hotel, from hotel to school, a ride back to the airport—all local transportation needs to be provided by the school. A librarian, teacher or school-approved volunteer can do the driving. Some schools hire a car service.

Can a school have a half-day visit? No, a school visit must be for the full day.

What if a nearby school also wants to have an author visit? If more than one school in an area wants Cindy to visit, that's fine. All schools will need to schedule their dates consecutively, and each school has to have a full-day visit. Note: when Cindy visits more than one school on a trip, the schools share the travel cost equally. For example, if Cindy's flight costs \$330 and the trip includes 3 schools, each school pays \$110.

What about COVID safety policies? Cindy has been fully vaccinated (including all boosters). She will follow your school’s safety policies.

Does Cindy sign books during the visit? Yes, so long as there is time during the school day between presentations, lunch, etc. An alternative is for your school to get the books ready and bring them to Cindy’s hotel the night before. She is always glad to sign books at her hotel, which can avoid a situation where there isn’t enough time to sign all the books on the day of the visit.

What about lunchtime? Cindy is glad to have lunch with students and/or staff.

What if we have snacks or want to provide lunch—does Cindy have any food allergies? Yes, almonds. No food containing almonds, please. Other than an almond allergy, Cindy does not have food restrictions.

How long are Cindy’s presentations?

Grades 3 and up	Presentations are typically 45 minutes, or an hour if the students in the audience have read one of the novels.
Grades 1 to 3	45 minutes
Grades Pre-k & K	30 minutes
Note: as a former teacher Cindy understands that schools sometimes need to ask for shorter presentations to accommodate scheduling requirements	

Any suggestions for making our school visit a success? Cindy has found that the more the students are familiar with at least one of her books, the more engaged they are during her presentations.

What if we have more questions during the time leading up to the visit date? You are always welcome to contact us (events@cynthialord.com) with any questions you have.