



About the Artist:

Marilyn Johnston is a Salem writer. She received the Donna Stone National Literary Award, a Robert Penn Warren Award from the New England Writers, and an Oregon Literary Arts Fellowship. Her poetry has been published in dozens of literary journals and poetry anthologies. She has facilitated writing workshops for youth and adults in the U.S. and Spain. Her collection of poems, *Red Dust Rising*, about her family's journey to heal from War, was nominated for a national Pushcart Prize. Marilyn holds a Doctor of Education degree from Oregon State University.

Objectives: 1/ To guide students from any grade level through the writing process (adaptable to multiple genres—prose, poetry, short stories, songwriting, etc.). 2/ To use a variety of techniques and prompts to facilitate students' expression and creativity. 3/ To give each student the encouragement to express themselves, regardless of their background and abilities. 4/ To further the love of writing, encouraging and giving students techniques to making this a part of their daily lives.

Activities: I have a wide variety of techniques to engage the students in creative writing, geared to their interests and skill levels. Students will learn the mechanics of creative writing and have the opportunity to complete multiple writings each session. I plan to work one-on-one with students in editing their pieces, assembling selected pieces from each of the students to leave at the conclusion of the project. If there is an opportunity to read their work aloud at a school or public event at the conclusion of the project, I will work with students to prepare. Mostly, I hope to have every child succeed in crafting one or more finished piece of writings, depending on the scope of the project.

Workshop Size Limit: I have experience working both with small groups of 5-10 or a classroom full of students. My techniques can be adapted to all settings, given the project and school needs.

Special Equipment or Materials: Some kind of writing notebook, if possible (or multiple sheets of paper in a folder) and a pen or pencil.

Space Needed: Any space that would allow for each participant to have a writing surface and a chair.

Home Stay required? None needed.

Relationship to classroom curriculum: My work with students will hopefully help to further school district expectations of infusing students' writing skills into each grade level. I have worked on Artist in the Schools projects that focused on a variety of themes—from environmental issues to working with students whose parents are incarcerated and with incarcerated youth, as well as with students whose primary language is other than English. I come bearing a toolkit for instilling a love of writing that can accommodate the full spectrum of both student learning styles and abilities. As the writing facilitator, I will work with the school and the teachers in assuring that the writing samples produced by the students are in keeping with the themes and desired outcomes. The techniques I will bring to accomplish this are adaptable to this collaborative approach—with the needs and interests of the students as the central ingredient!