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*Creating Programs That Kids, Teachers & Librarians Love*

## **Author Visits - Benefits & Obstacles**

Based on a nation-wide survey of over 600 teachers, librarians, administrators and parents who had hosted author visits, the following information about author visits was gleaned. (Note that "Author" includes children's authors, author/illustrators or illustrators)

### **Top benefits of an author visit:**

1. Motivates students to read more (91%)
2. Inspires creativity and expression (75%)
3. Motivates students to write more (70%)

### **Top obstacles to hosting an author visit:**

1. Money (88%)
2. Time to organize a visit (45%)
3. Time taken away from classroom instruction (26%)

### **Roles of those who have hosted author visits:**

1. Librarian - school (49%)
2. Teacher (27%)
3. Librarian – public (7%)
4. Parent – program planner (6%)
5. Administrator (3%)
6. Other (16%)

Over 200 respondents also commented on the specific impact author visits have had on their school, library, or individual students.

### **1) Students and faculty have many types of strong, positive social/emotional reactions to the author visit.**

- Inspiration
- Empowerment
- Students and faculty create long-lasting memories of the author visit
- Feeling of meeting a celebrity; feeling special

- Connecting with students and teachers on a personal level (one student invited the author to her birthday party)
- Connection with students who are different:
  - Reluctant readers
  - Students with special needs
  - Ethnic and Language minorities
- Students learn about persistence

**2) Teachers have been able to find direct connections between the visit and the school curriculum.**

**3) Author visits encourage reading among students in several ways:**

- Librarians see increased circulation of books, especially by author who visited
- Reluctant readers read more
- Students read outside of their comfort zone – (i.e., reading more challenging books)

**4) Author visits encourage writing at school in several ways:**

- More writing in the classroom: students as authors
- Students understand the need for revision
- Students learn that even published authors have to revise and struggle with writing
- Students learn about persistence in writing
- Students understand what a book is and the process of writing a book

**5) Initial author visits have led to other larger literacy events (i.e. book fairs, projects, and students publishing books) many of which engaged the wider community outside of the school in literature-related activities.**

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