

How I Got an Author To Come to My School...



My name is Elise. In 2011 I had read “Yes, I Know the Monkey Man” while participating in the Battle of the Books program at my school. I enjoyed this book so much that I instantly had to read “Do You Know the Monkey Man?”, and insisted that my mom read them both as well. When we saw on a friend’s facebook page that the author, Dori Hillestad Butler had visited her school, my mom gave me the idea to contact the author as well. In July 2011 I emailed my favorite author, Dori Butler. I invited her to come to my school.

I was excited when she responded to my email! She told me invitations to visit schools had to come from an adult. I didn’t give up. I spoke to my school’s Parent-Teacher Organization to present the idea of an author visit, and they agreed to pay for half the cost. That left me with the challenge to raise \$750. OYE! With my mom handling the ‘adult’ stuff, I used my charm to raise the funds. I spoke to my local Sunrise Kiwanis Club, and to the Noon Kiwanis Club. I DID IT! I raised the money!

On April 24th Dori Hillestad Butler visited my school. She spoke to all of the sixth graders in the morning, and did another large group presentation to all of the fifth graders in the afternoon. I also was able to participate in the writer’s workshop that she led for a select group of 30 of my fellow students. And I was able to enjoy going out to lunch with Dori, two of my friends, one of my teachers, and my mom. It was amazing! I liked it when Dori talked about the inspiration for her stories. I could relate to most of it. I wanted to meet Dori because I could relate to her writing, and I thought it would be interesting to have my questions answered.



My mom also attended Dori Butler’s presentation. She enjoyed Dori’s way of explaining the process of how a story or manuscript gets published and into the hands of the readers. She used volunteers from the student body to play the role of each part in the publishing process. Dori also did a wonderful job of teaching the students that following your dreams and becoming successful at whatever you choose doesn’t happen right away. It takes practice, rejection, learning, and patience all along the journey.

