

Connie Nordhielm Wooldridge
SPEAKER PROFILE

Name: Connie Nordhielm Wooldridge

Phonetic pronunciation: Kahn´ - ee Nord´ - hělm Wool-drĭj

Title: Children’s and young adult author

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Logos/Headshot:

A hi-res photo of Connie, her book cover images and logo are available upon request. Please contact Connie Wooldridge at conwool@aol.com

Bio:

Connie Nordhielm Wooldridge’s vivid imagination and spirited storytelling are fueled by her love of travel, adventure, and the unconventional way she embraces all life has to offer.

She’s lived in seven states, Washington, D.C., Athens, Greece and Seoul, South Korea; was a Latin major, a flight attendant for a major airline, raised four children who are five years apart in age, and worked at a job she’d dreamed of having as a little girl – a librarian in an elementary school.

From the time she learned to read, Connie loved to escape into her favorite stories – mysteries and fantasies. While other girls were devouring Laura Ingalls Wilder’s adventures on the American prairie, she lived in the fantasy worlds created by 19th Century Scottish writer George MacDonald or went sleuthing with Nancy Drew.

Connie attended Mount Holyoke College, where she majored in Latin and earned a teaching certificate. She attended the University of Chicago graduate school, where she received a double Masters degree in library science and education in 1977. During this time she was recommended by Zena Sutherland, children’s literature professor and editor of The Bulletin for the Center of Children’s Books, to serve on the American Library Association’s Newbery-Caldecott Committee and then on the Notable Books Committee, which compiles a list of the best children’s books published each year.

She took her first step toward her dream of writing for children by taking a correspondence course through The Institute of Children’s Literature. Her first acceptance, by Highlights for Children, was a Korean folktale adaptation. Soon she was a regular contributor to both Highlights for Children and Cricket Magazine.

Connie Nordhielm Wooldridge and her husband, Carl, live in Indianapolis, Indiana. They have four grown children and a growing number of grandchildren.

Connie is the author of five picture books and a young adult biography.

- *Just Fine They Way They Are* (Calkins Creek, March 1, 2011)
- *The Brave Escape of Edith Wharton* (Clarion Books, 2010)
- *Thank You Very Much, Captain Ericsson!* (Holiday House, 2005)
- *When Esther Morris Headed West* (Holiday House, 2001)
- *The Legend of Strap Buckner* (Holiday House, 2001)

- *Wicked Jack* (Holiday House, 1995)

Title/Description of Presentation:

“**What It Takes to Become a Published Writer**” – An imaginative Power Point presentation appropriate for large audiences of students from grades 2-8, this talk will describe the *writing* process and then the process of *marketing* a completed work for publication. Ms. Wooldridge will describe where she gets her ideas, how some ideas become stories and some don’t, and how, for her, a story takes shape, not from beginning to end but in more “onion-like” fashion, from the inside out. She will then turn her attention to marketing and publication, using her youngest son’s school photos as a “timeline” so that students can visualize how long the process from the first submission (usually a rejection!) to a completed book can take. Ms. Wooldridge will finish by showing a 1-minute trailer from her most recent book.

Top Five Things the Audience Will Learn:

- How to change from a sensitive, creative writer into a thick-skinned marketer.
- How picture book writers and illustrators work together, often with no direct communication.
- When to talk about your story ideas and when to keep them secret.
- How a story is written, not from the first word to the last, but from the inside out.
- How long the publication process can take.

Final Wrap-Up Information (*great information for your audience to know*):

Connie’s more recent book, *Just Fine The Way They Are*, also has lesson plans developed by two elementary school teachers. The plans are in three subject areas – Comprehension, Writing and Social Studies – and are available free to download from her [website](http://conniewooldridge.com) – conniewooldridge.com.

Equipment needed:

Microphone, lectern and screen. Connie can bring her own projector or use one you provide.

Speaker Testimonials:

“I loved Connie's energy and her ability to capture the younger students' attention while inspiring the older students to write and create their own stories. Her multimedia presentation was very impressive!”

- Alyssa Bach-Enz, Northwest Elementary Librarian, McDermott, OH

“As an English teacher I appreciated the wonderful celebration of individual stories and having characters come to life! Connie expressed passion through her books and her presentation - reading, laughing and helping us to know and learn. I truly enjoyed meeting Connie and have bought her books to share with my students!”

- Dr. Rae L. White, Dept. of Education, Muskingum University, New Concord, Ohio

“Enchanting speaker! What a wonderful opportunity to learn about the writer’s craft.”

“Wooldridge was a terrific speaker. Very entertaining and interesting.”

“Wooldridge presentation was fun, entertaining and informative.”

- Attendees at the 2011 “Appalachia from an Assets Perspective” Conference, Shawnee State University, Portsmouth, Ohio

“Having Connie Wooldridge as a guest at St. Paul School was truly a pleasurable learning experience for our students. She captivated our kindergarten, first and second grade students

with her book about Captain Jack. Likewise, our middle grade students were spellbound with her folktale and the book she's written on the development of roads in Indiana.

- Karen Pflum, Elementary school educator

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