

Allan Wolf Offerings

IMMERSED IN VERSE: DIVING INTO POETRY

(K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12, Family, General, or Adult)

Immersed in Verse: Diving Into Poetry is the general name of Allan's spoken word, poetry performance presentation. With hundreds of poems committed to memory, he adapts this presentation's content based on each audience and occasion.

Allan performs poetry from memory mixing traditions of theatre, slam style spoken word, and Appalachian storytelling. His set is minimal, usually just a simple table and chair. Occasionally he may include a power point presentation with projector and screen. He typically opens with a high energy introductory poem, followed by a montage of shorter pieces in a wide variety of styles and subjects. Then he'll speak to the audience informally between clusters of poems connected by theme. One moment he will whisper a heart felt story in verse. The next moment he will transform himself into a hungry Tyrannosaur driving a Volkswagen. He will rattle off a hiphop piece and segue into a quiet sonnet. Then he'll pick up his guitar to add background to his spoken words, or sing a song about Emily Dickinson or Edgar Allan Poe. And from beginning to end, Wolf gradually reveals the mission he is on, urging audience members to be aware of the poems lurking at their elbows. Family shows usually contain more participation and call & response. Wolf is aware that most audiences contain future (or practicing) poets, so he makes a point of speaking about the joys of writing and living the poet's life.

VOICES FROM THE TITANIC: EXPLORING HISTORY THROUGH A POET'S EYES

(3-5, 6-12, family, adult)

More than a century after the doomed luxury ocean liner sank to the bottom of the north Atlantic, the iconic story of the RMS Titanic continues to capture imaginations young and old. Now author and poet, Allan Wolf, feeds that insatiable interest with an engaging presentation based on his award winning book, *The Watch That Ends the Night: Voices from the Titanic*.

Wolf immerses his audience in the world of 1912 through historical photographs, documents, costumes, and props. He engages his audience through storytelling, music and poetry. And he involves his audience through participation and readers' theatre, transforming his listeners into Titanic passengers and crew of every rank and class. Even a ship rat and the iceberg itself come to life.

Using a five foot long Titanic model "puppet" Wolf demonstrates how the ship was constructed, struck ice, broke in half, and then sank. Wolf addresses Titanic myths (was Captain Smith drinking?), facts (why were there four smoke stacks?), and trivia

(how many dogs were aboard?”. But Wolf spends equal time addressing the ship’s “human cargo.” John Astor, the “richest” man in the world. Margaret “The Unsinkable Molly” Brown. Frankie Goldsmith, a nine year old boy. Fredrick Fleet, the ship’s lookout. Oscar Woody, the sea postman. A group of 1st Class promenaders and their 3rd Class counterparts.

Wolf approaches the iconic story of the Titanic as a poet and author, explaining how he came to be a writer and a lover of history and the process he uses to transform historical fact into his own unique brand of historical fiction. More than just an “author talk” or a “history lesson,” Wolf’s meaningful and memorable presentation will show his listeners how they can make history themselves through the power of words.

AUTHOR VISITS

(K-2, 3-5, 6-12, adult)

Wolf loves to visit with schools, classes, book clubs, and other groups who have read his books. A day of Author Visits tends to be informal although it may include more formalized presentations as well. Wolf will share the story of how he came to write one or more of his books. He’ll describe his writing process, answer questions, and sign books. *New Found Land*, *The Blood Hungry Spleen*, and *The Watch That Ends the Night*, all have accompanying Curriculum Guides with study questions, suggested activities, plus information and secrets behind the making of the books.

BOOK TALKS

(3-5, 6-8, 9-12, adult)

Allan offers specialized in-depth presentations, usually with visual slides, that focus on the content and creation these individual books:

- * *The Watch That Ends the Night: Voices from the Titanic*
- * *Immersed in Verse: An Informative, Slightly Irreverent & Totally Tremendous Guide to Living the Poet’s Life*
- * *New Found Land: Lewis and Clark’s Voyage of Discovery*
- * *Zane’s Trace*
- * *The Blood Hungry Spleen: And Other Poems About Our Parts*

KEYNOTE TALKS

Allan is available to speak to a variety of gatherings. Allan’s “lectures” include lots of poetry recitation and performance. His general themes are the transforming power of language, how we transform history and everyday life into poetry, and how poetry can be found literally everywhere.

YOUNG AUTHOR CELEBRATIONS

(All ages)

Allan loves presenting and signing for young author celebrations. Aside from reading and presenting from his own books, he usually shares the story of how he came to realize the power of writing in his life.

WRITING WORKSHOPS

(3-5, 6-8, 9-12, adult)

Allan facilitates poetry writing workshops with young people and adults. Possible activities involve: Closed Form; Open Form (Free Verse); Prompts & Jumpstarts; Form (shaping); Revision; Presenting Poems; and How to Live the Poet's Life. Please see "Allan Wolf's Poetry Writing Workshop Menu of Seven Basic Options" for a more detailed description of each menu item.

POETRY PERFORMANCE CLINICS

(K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12, adult)

Active Voice: Experiencing Poetry through Presentation and Drama. Participants learn what performance poetry is and a few theatre/presentation techniques to help them better understand and appreciate the poems they read. Wolf demonstrates how students can conduct themselves in front of a group of people and find their own personal power and charisma. Participants learn how to transform a poem into a script and how to put on a complete poetry extravaganza of dramatic and "stand-up" verse. Allan can also conduct this session for teachers, including classroom ideas.

TEACHER IN-SERVICES AND WORKSHOPS

Allan is available for Teacher Workshops and extended in-services that explore "best practices" in the teaching of poetry. Focus varies and may include performance, writing, reader response, content literacy, using poetry across the curriculum, and community building. Wolf has conducted workshops from 45 minute break-out sessions to weeklong in-services.

ARTIST RESIDENCIES

Allan is available for a limited number of "residencies." These longer visits allow him to conduct a variety of classes, performances, and activities for individual schools, districts, writers' groups, or educational institutions.