

# GRANT WOOD AEA YOUNG WRITERS' CONFERENCE

To: Elementary Teachers, Librarians & Principals  
From: Susie Green, Student Programs Specialist

Grant Wood AEA is pleased to announce that on **Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.**, the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Young Writers' Conference will be held virtually for area 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. This event will be a special day for anyone who enjoys sharing and celebrating the creative writing of students.

We are very excited to announce that this year's guest author will be **Kenneth Oppel, a 2021 Iowa Children's Choice Award Nominee** for his book, *Inkling!* Kenneth will be joining us via Zoom for a one hour presentation, including time for Q&A!

We look forward to your participation!

## General Information

Purpose: To celebrate and share student writing  
Date: Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup>  
Location: Virtual  
Audience: 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students (see *Selection Recommendations* below)  
Time: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
Cost: \$15/student (includes a student souvenir notebook)  
\$10 – optional *Inkling* book purchase with Kenneth Oppel autograph  
Guest Presenter: Kenneth Oppel  
What to prepare: Each student should prepare a story/writing sample to share

## Selection Recommendations

The Young Writers' Conference is designed to honor student authors, illustrators, poets, and storytellers. These are students who have written, edited, illustrated and "published" (or are in the process of) a piece of creative writing within your classroom or school. When selecting students for this event, schools are urged to give consideration to students from all ability levels (and to consider avid readers, too).

## Virtual Format

Below is our anticipated schedule for the day. Zoom links will be provided for each listed activity. Rotations are 40-minutes each. Students will attend 2 workshops and 1 sharing session during the three rotations.

Time	Activity
8:50-9:00	Quick Morning Check-In & Announcements
9:00-10:00	Kenneth Oppel Presentation
10:15-10:55	Rotation 1
	Restroom Break (15 minutes)
11:10-11:50	Rotation 2
	Lunch Break (30 minutes)
12:20-1:00	Rotation 3
1:00-1:10	JamBoard Feedback (as time permits)

## **Registration Instructions 2021**

Please review and follow the instructions below. Registrations are accepted on a first come, first served basis until **April 15**, space permitting. If you have questions, contact Susie Green (319)399-6775, [sgreen@gwaea.org](mailto:sgreen@gwaea.org).

### **Directions**

1. Identify students and teacher(s) to participate in the virtual conference. See *Selection Recommendations* on the previous page. A maximum of 10 students per school may register (though we may be able to make exceptions this year).
2. Distribute *Student Registration Forms* to identified students (or email to parents).
  - ✓ Forms should be completed and returned to school with payment attached.
  - ✓ Limited financial assistance is available. Email Susie Green to request funds.
  - ✓ An optional book order of *Inkling* has been included as part of the *Student Registration Form*.
3. Collect registration forms and payments.
4. Complete the *School Registration Form*.
5. Submit the following to Grant Wood AEA via email or van mail by April 15<sup>th</sup>:
  - School Registration Form*
  - Individual Student Registration Forms*
  - Payment may be sent later (see step 6)
6. Submit individual payments to your school secretary and request a Purchase Order or one check from your school payable to Grant Wood AEA to cover the registration fees.

## **Additional Details & Information**

### **Preparing Students for the Sharing Session – IMPORTANT!**

In order that students may be prepared and gain the most from the sharing session time, teachers are asked to work with each student in the weeks leading up to the conference to:

1. prepare an original piece of writing (story, poem, etc.), and
2. practice reading his/her writing aloud (3 minutes max)

Students have the option to:

1. bring/share a completed piece of original writing for comments, *or*
2. bring/share an unfinished piece for input and future development (Students who elect to share an unfinished piece should also prepare 2 or 3 questions to ask their sharing group for gathering input on the development of their story - setting, descriptions, character development, etc.)

### **Sharing Session Format**

Due to our virtual format, we have likewise made adjustments to our sharing session format. This year, each school will be assigned a partner school for a “Sharing Pairing” rotation. Zoom links will be provided. During this time, the “chaperoning” teachers/librarians from the paired schools will be asked to lead the sharing time, giving each student to opportunity to share their story/writing sample with the other students. General guidelines will be provided.

### **Preparing Students for our Author**

Prior to the conference, we ask teachers and students to learn a little bit about our guest author, Kenneth Oppel. In addition to *Inkling*, you can find a full list of Kenneth's other books at <https://www.kennethoppel.ca/>

Please encourage your students to pre-submit questions for the Q&A portion of Kenneth's presentation. Questions may be emailed to [sgreen@gwaea.org](mailto:sgreen@gwaea.org). We may also have the opportunity to accept a few "in the moment" questions via the Zoom chat box.

### **Workshops**

Workshops will be led by Coe College education students and Grant Wood AEA curriculum consultants. Due to our virtual format, students will not be individually assigned to workshops this year. Instead, workshops will be assigned to an entire group from one school to cut down on technical challenges. Workshops will have connections to various 2021 Iowa Children's Choice nominated books. And all students/groups will attend two workshop sessions.

### **Platform & Links**

Zoom links for each session will be sent to chaperoning teachers the week before the conference. You can anticipate receiving a schedule of links, which you/your students will be clicking into throughout the day.

### **Devices**

Individual devices (computer/tablet) with audio and video are recommended for each participating student, particularly during the two assigned workshop sessions. The guest author session could be viewed on a shared device (projected) if you are able to safely gather your students together for this event. For the sharing session, your choice of individual versus a shared group device might depend on your specific setting and your audio/video capabilities.

### **Home vs. School**

It is understood that some students who register for the 2021 Young Writers' Conference may be participating from home. In those situations, communication about the event will be shared with both the parent and the cooperating classroom teacher. If you have any questions contact Susie Green, [sgreen@gwaea.org](mailto:sgreen@gwaea.org).

### **Requirements To Participate & Expectations**

The following is a summary checklist of requirements, needs and expectations for all participants:

- Computer or tablet with camera, microphone and internet connection to view linked sessions.
- Some "desk/surface space" for writing.
- The ability to access Zoom.
- Our presenters will have video on. We ask participants to leave their video on, too.
- Our presenters will have audio on. We ask that all participants begin each session in "mute", but there will likely be opportunities to interact through both the chat feature and the microphone feature when invited.

In addition, participating teachers are asked to:

- Coordinate student access to sessions/links and assist with technology.
- Engage with students, and assist/intervene as needed.
- Lead/Co-Lead your assigned "Sharing Pairing" (student sharing session).
- Participate in the guest author session.
- Participate in the closing JamBoard (as time allows).
- Ensure appropriate behavior of students during the event.

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