



Author/Editor Series:

Conversation events are a great way to turn a lesser-known author into a big audience draw. It's especially attractive in communities with a lot of writers, as a look inside the writing and publishing process. Authors are often your best link to those with special insights who might make great interviewers; ask writers who want to read at your store if there's someone they would like to have "host" them.

Variations:

Author/Critic Conversation: ask a local book reviewer if they'd like to interview the author in the store.

Mentor/Protege Conversation: have an author interviewed by their favorite writing teacher, professor, or writing mentor.

Author/Reader Conversation: have a local book group leader or other noted reader interview the author from a reader's perspective -- kind of like a more structured Q&A session.

Author / Agent Conversation: The Writing Process: Get a published author to lecture on how to get noticed, how to get an agent, what happens during the publication process, and what happens after your published. Market this event heavily to writers groups.

Who to invite:

In our region, there are many major houses, as well as independent presses outside the NYC publishing hub. Begin with an author in your area, and ask them to invite their editor. Extend an open invitation to a local publisher.

Location:

- in-store
- local university in conjunction with writing classes
- high school writing courses
- local library

Marketing

- regular store marketing pieces
- library postings
- writers groups
- high school and college English teachers
- local literary magazines

Display ideas:

- Literary Market Place
- Resources for writers (anything from books to magazines)
- Annual writers marketplaces books
- Local literary magazines

- Old typewriter
- Featured Author's titles
- Featured Publishers titles
- Titles related to the author's subject
- End cap focusing on local authors – can include vanity press, self published – with the criteria that the author is from your area.
- End cap of first fiction: New trade paperback originals; Short stories collections (by single or multiple authors); Young literary lions (hip, urban press titles)

Tips:

It is a good idea to be prepared with questions for the author. Below are questions that *Shelf Awareness* poses to authors interviewed in their online publication:

On your nightstand now:

Favorite book when you were a child:

Top five authors:

Book you've "faked" reading:

Books you are an "evangelist" for:

Book you've bought for the cover:

Book that changed your life:

Favorite line from a book:

Book you most want to read again for the first time:

Books you admire that not enough people know about:

Book you fell in love to:

Joe Drabyak of Chester County Book & Music Co. always asks his authors "What is the most unusual thing you've expensed on your taxes as a legitimate business expense for writing research?" It gets the most unusual answers and some insight into the writer's life and work.