



Alice Schertle

“Poetry speaks to the heart and to the mind. A cherished poem is a gift that we may carry with us all our lives.”

Getting to Know Alice Schertle

Alice Schertle used to be an elementary-school teacher. She lived in California most of her life, but a few years ago she moved to Massachusetts. She loves writing, and when she’s not writing, or spreading the word about the joys of writing and reading, she likes to tramp around the woods of New England. There, she says, “Poems whisper through the trees and flow in the streams.”

Ms. Schertle once kept all three of her children home from school so that she could read a book to them. “I read them a whole novel between breakfast and dinner,” she says, “with a break for lunch. My kids remember it as a great day.” It was reading to her own children that renewed her love of children’s books and made her want to write them.

Alice Schertle is the author of more than 40 books for children, including picture books and award-winning collections of poetry. She has won many awards for her work. Ms. Schertle says one of the few things as wonderful as reading a poem is writing one. “I find writing poetry absorbing, difficult, satisfying, frustrating, maddening, intriguing—I love it!”

To find out more about Alice Schertle, you can visit the website of her publisher and click on her name at www.harpercollinschildrens.com

Poet to Poet: Tips for Young Writers

Advice for Young Poets

Alice Schertle says,

“If you want to write poetry, read poetry.”

*So, poets, when you have free time, select a poem from our classroom library, or return to a favorite poem from *Climb Inside a Poem*, and read it yourself. Read it over and over again so it plays like a CD in your brain. In fact, Ms. Schertle says,*

“Notice the rhythm of the words and the patterns of the lines. And never read a poem only once. You’ll develop an ear for the sounds and rhythms of language almost like developing an ear for music.”

Finding Ideas for Writing

Alice Schertle says that ideas for her poems come from all sorts of places:

“Images, sounds, feelings—also dreams, stories, a newspaper headline, a traffic jam, a snatch of conversation, the taste of pizza, sand in my shoe—so many things can inspire a poem. The best inspiration of all, I think, is an SSN, a Sudden Strange Notion.”

Finding the Best Place to Work

Poets, when you’re ready to write, what’s your favorite place to work? At your desk? On the floor on a big pillow? Alice Schertle says,

“I write most often sitting at my desk. But any place that’s quiet and without distractions will do. I’d love to be able to write out under a tree in the woods behind my house, but I find everything outdoors extremely distracting. I’ll look at the leaves moving in the wind or an ant crawling up a weed or moss on a stone wall, and suddenly an hour has gone by and, though I’ve loved every minute, I haven’t written a thing.”

So, poets, the next time you are ready to write, think about Alice Schertle. Maybe, like her, you could try some place quiet, without distractions.

Poems in *Climb Inside a Poem*

“The Stray Dog”
“Just Like Grandpa”

Read More by Alice Schertle

Very Hairy Bear
Harcourt, 2007
The Adventures of Old Bo Bear
Chronicle, 2006
All You Need for a Snowman
Harcourt, 2002
Down the Road
Voyager reprint edition, 2000

¡Pió Peep!: Traditional Spanish Nursery Rhymes

Harper, 2003

All You Need for a Beach

Harcourt, 2004

1, 2, I Love You

Chronicle, 2004

How Now, Brown Cow?

Voyager reprint edition, 1998

Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear

HarperCollins, 2003