

Help! We can't afford an author visit!

An author visit adds so much value to your school, and has such a positive impact on your students. My author talk is £295 (plus travel) and can have an audience size of up to 300 students (approximately), so can cost as little as £1 per student. However, I appreciate that school budgets are extremely tight! So, below are some cost-cutting ideas so your students don't miss out.

➡ Contact the schools nearby to see if one will book me for later that day and split the travel costs. I can offer a 10% discount for both schools if they book me on the same day and are within 5 miles (approximately) of each other.

➡ Partner with a nearby school and split the cost, with your school hosting the event. Each of your schools can then invite 150 students to the talk, and only pay half of the price. You can even do this with three or four local schools depending on the size of the year group(s).

➡ I offer a 10% discount to schools within 20 miles of LE16.

➡ Speak to the different departments within your school to see if you can use part of their budget to book a visit. My books cover a range of themes that are relevant to the curriculum, such as social media (ICT), mental health, anxiety and selective mutism (SEN/wellbeing/PSHE), bullying and cyberbullying (PSHE/ethics/ICT), body image (PSHE), etc. An author visit promotes literacy and reading (English), as well as helping to raise aspirations, so your school may have some budget in those areas. In my opinion, a school library with a tiny budget shouldn't be expected to pay the entire cost of an author visit!

➡ Contact local businesses to see if they will sponsor an author visit for your school. I know of many businesses that contribute book boxes and other resources to their local schools, so you may have a kind-hearted business close by! You can always offer to contact the local newspaper with the story, and even invite the sponsors along to the visit. Your school's PTA may also be able to help raise money or sponsor the visit.

➡ Get your students involved! Hold bake sales, run a non-uniform day, or a second-hand book sale. It saddens me that such measures are needed to provide students with exciting educational experiences, but young people can be incredibly resourceful. They may even enjoy the idea of funding their own author visit. The students could also choose/vote for the author they'd most like to meet!

➡ If none of the above suggestions will work for your school, I offer a free 20 mins Skype chat with your class or reading/library club. Just email me to book.

I do hope you find the above suggestions useful and that you can get an awesome author visit despite your budget limitations!

Tamsin Winter