

BOOK REVIEWS

The visit today with author Leah Holder Wiggins was wonderful! The students really enjoyed the activities and listening to the story as it was read by the author. There was a question and answer period also, where students were given the opportunity to express their interest in writing books of their own.

We are looking forward to another visit as new works are produced.

Xanthia S. Crook
W. J. Christian Alternative School
Birmingham, AL

Just wanted to write and let you know that we really enjoyed Chandra's (Sparks Taylor) visit to Hillcrest. We had about 100 students attend and they responded very well to her. I think their favorite part was the reading of the passages from her book. We raffled 25 of the books to the students who attended and they got to have them personally autographed to them by Chandra. I know that meant a lot to them and we also allowed time for students to come up and speak with her individually. She is so personable and I know she will be a great success. Thanks again for contacting us.

Stephanie G. Hickman
Hillcrest High School
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

We were honored to have you visit our first and second grade students. We love the book you have written, *My Neighbor is Gone*. Our students and teachers enjoyed the interactive participation, the PowerPoint presentation, and the writing sessions you presented. You helped our students understand the importance of a neighborhood. We feel blessed to have your book in our library media collection.

Tywanna Burton
Vestavia Hills Elementary-West
Vestavia Hills, Alabama

Wright Elementary's 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students enjoyed a visit from local author Leah Holder Wiggins. She read her book *My Neighbor is Gone* to the students. After reading the students had an opportunity to write a paragraph about moving. Several students read what they had written. Mrs. Wiggins encouraged the students to keep journals to express their thoughts and ideas. She also spoke about being a positive influence in all that they do. The students seemed to enjoy the visit and the writing activity. I recommend Mrs. Wiggins to any group wanting to introduce students to the world of writing and illustrating books.

Delora Lightsey
Wright Elementary
Birmingham, AL

REVIEWS (cont.)

"My Neighbor is Gone is a necessary book. It tells the all-too-common story of a tight-knit, traditional community displaced by modern "progress." As a grandmother leads her grand-daughter on a last, nostalgic walk through her neighborhood -- which is being bulldozed to make way for a new airport -- we fully experience this place, its past, and what it has meant to its residents. Through lyrical language and evocative art-work, the book laments what has been lost, but also invites us to consider the underlying values that make a home a home. Though new generations may be dislocated from their traditional "place," the book holds out hope that ideals of community, friendship, and neighborliness will follow and sustain us into new and unfamiliar worlds. "

Tony Crunk, Assistant Professor, UAB
Poet and Children's Book Author

To: Leah Wiggins
Fr: Ms. Kindell and Ms. Smiley

Re: Author visit and book signing at Robinson Elementary

Thank you so much for coming to our school. It was great exposure for the students and staff to see a live author. The presentation was very informative, especially to those who grew up in the area. The illustrations were kid friendly and colorful. The writing activity was also great. Each of our teachers will continue to use their books in their classrooms. We will spread the news!

Mrs. Wiggins' sharing of her book, "My Neighbor Is Gone," was excellent!
The students and faculty really enjoyed her presentation.
The video presentation really added to the program.

Veronica Gossom
Media Specialist
South Hampton Elementary
Birmingham, AL

Listed as an "Author Friend" in the Library Media Center Newsletter of the Birmingham City Schools, Media Resources Department, January 2007 Issue.

Additional presentations:

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Birmingham District
Alabama Library and Media Specialists
Arthur Elementary
Barrett Elementary School
Birmingham City Schools, Media Specialists
Curry Elementary School
E.P.I.C. Elementary School
Integrity Christian Academy
Jefferson County Schools Media Specialists
Midfield Library

Mount Pilgrim Christian Academy
North Birmingham Elementary
McElwain Elementary
Putnam Middle School
Robert E. Lee Elementary School
Sardis Baptist Church, youth group
Born 2 Read, Inc.
Calvary Resurrection Christian Church
Center Point Elementary