



PHOTO: MICHAEL KELLER

Writing Workshops with Colleen Anderson

Creative self-expression is a basic human need, like the need to be nourished with food. Encouraged, it can flourish to enrich individuals and societies; thwarted, it diminishes both. In every workshop, I try to share the joy, solace, and fun I have found in poems, stories, and songs.

Every workshop is unique. I design it for you, to meet the needs of your particular audience. I have tailored successful workshops for all ages, from pre-kindergarten through adults. (In fact, some of my favorite songs, which I frequently perform, were written by four-year-old children!) Workshops may concentrate on poetry, fiction, songs, short essays, journaling, playwriting, or a combination of more than one form.

Workshops may range from a single, one-hour classroom visit to residencies of one to two weeks. A singing performance or reading may be added to any workshop.

All of my workshops are designed to validate the personal experience of participants and to introduce skills that will help them to express themselves with freedom and confidence.

Workshop fee range: \$300 to \$500 per day, plus expenses. Fees for readings and performances are based on a variety of factors, including audience size, performance space, and technical needs. Please contact me for estimates.

Examples of recent and upcoming workshops:

From the Inside Out: Your Own Story, Your Own Words

This one-day workshop concentrates on transforming personal experience into art. Participants work with their own memories and experiences to create essays, poems, or short plays that are vivid and accessible. For schools, businesses, and organizations, this workshop helps participants use the material of their own lives to make their writing, in any form, stronger and more shapely.

Make Your Own Folk Song: Songwriting with History

Writing a song about an event in history brings history to life, making it memorable and personal. In this three-hour workshop designed for teachers, participants learn to shape facts, images, and personal experiences into a song. Teachers can use and expand the workshop activities to help students learn and preserve their local history through original songs.

Women's Writing Weekend Retreat

A refreshing getaway at a West Virginia state park, this workshop includes writing exercises to help you delve into your own memories and experience, group and individual coaching, a Saturday evening wine and cheese reception/reading, and some new skills to take home.

Writing for Social Change

Can art make a difference? Think of how Judy Chicago, Pete Seeger, James Baldwin, and Tony Kushner have challenged and changed established assumptions about the world. This workshop, conducted with Julie Pratt and Arla Ralston, guides participants as they conceive and create a work of activist art.

Giving Voice: Words and Music that Change the World

A weeklong songwriting workshop at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico, conducted with singer/songwriter Julie Adams, that also explores the varied sources of songs — with special emphasis on songs that are meant for people to sing together, including protest songs, hymns, and spirituals.

Ask me to design a workshop for your audience!

Call me at **304-342-1213** or visit my website, www.motherwitdesign.com, where you will also find samples of my writing and biographical information.

"My daughter said her favorite part of Young Writers Day was your workshop. Thank you for making our trip worthwhile."

Lisa Ambrose, parent
Morgan County, WV

"I do believe this is the most positive response we've had to any visiting artist in seven years."

Dr. Anita Skeen, Director
Residential Option in Arts
and Letters
Michigan State University

"Colleen won't teach you to be more creative; more joyously, she will guide you to discover that you are creative."

Vic Sands, participant in
writing workshop

"Thank you for your workshop! I was greatly inspired by your teachings and exercises, and plan to continue with this story."

Ryland Swain, participant in
writing workshop