

Jennifer De Leon

SPEAKER • EDUCATOR • AUTHOR



Services

AUTHOR PRESENTATIONS

I love connecting with students of all ages. Whether in a small group or a school-wide assembly, I share my story—as the daughter of Guatemalan immigrants, as a first-generation college graduate, and as a published author who aspires to write the books I needed as a young person. In my interactive, high-energy presentations I use slides and videos and I discuss topics such as identity and belonging, owning one's own voice, and thriving (not just surviving) in and out of the classroom—and it is my honor and privilege to do so through storytelling. Presentations may also include a reading, student panel, and a Q & A session.

WRITING WORKSHOPS

With twenty years of experience in Education, ranging from elementary school to graduate programs, I love teaching writing as much as I love writing. My approach is student-centered and enthusiastic, always working to light fires instead of filling pails (William Butler Yeats). My goal is to inspire participants while providing them with the tools necessary to hone their craft and develop their voice. Creative Writing builds inclusivity, celebrates diversity, and can help us all transform, imagine, and seek artistic freedom.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In what ways can storytelling help to bridge divides and foster a genuine sense of community in your school? By sharing stories with one another, we break down walls, challenge biases and preconceived notions, and make new connections based on our shared humanity. Our differences are valuable, only if they are shared. Presentations for families and communities include slides and videos, a brief reading, and opportunities for interactive discussion. A book signing is included.

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Jenn connected with our students and with DCD adults beautifully; she brought in her personal experiencing navigating two worlds and "two Jenn's" which helped for both students and adults to understand the nature of code-switching. Jenn's story taught all of us that there is a difference between surviving and thriving as people of color in predominantly white spaces—and we want to aim for the latter!

— Ivy Alphonse-Crean, Dedham Country Day School

About

Jennifer De Leon is the award-winning author of the YA novels, *Borderless*, featured on the TODAY show, and *Don't Ask Me Where I'm From*. She is also the author of *White Space: Essays on Culture, Race, & Writing*. She is an active speaker, presenter, and educator who loves to connect with readers of all ages. Jenn lives outside the Boston area with her husband and two sons.

Connect with Jenn

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www.jenniferdeleonauthor.com

Books by Jenn



Sample Topics

THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

45-60 minutes

↪ Most Popular!

In this honest and inspirational talk, Jennifer De Leon—editor, author, and professor of Creative Writing—will share some of the ways in which “story” can provide crucial insight into the complex intersection of race, class, and educational issues, dispelling myths and showcasing the diversity of our shared community’s experiences. She will reference her award-winning books—the anthology, *Wise Latinas: Writers on Higher Education*, the Young Adult novels, *Don’t Ask Me Where I’m From* and *Borderless*, and the essay collection, *White Space: Essays on Culture, Race, & Writing*—and engage the audience in a candid, productive question and answer session.

WHITE SPACE: IN LIFE AND ON THE PAGE

45-60 minutes

As a freshman in college, Jenn was not prepared for the academic, social, cultural, and institutional differences she would confront at her private liberal arts college in New England that she says resembled a country club. In this heartfelt, honest talk, she describes moments of conflict, roadblocks really, that she experienced as an undergraduate who dreamed of being a writer—roadblocks that she ultimately turned into stepping-stones. An inspirational keynote geared toward first-gen and students of color, but really for anyone who has ever faced adversity in any way, it concludes with a reading from her award-winning essay collection, *White Space: Essays on Culture, Race, & Writing* and an audience Q & A.

WRITING WORKSHOP: THE PERSONAL ESSAY

60-150 minutes

Through a series of fun directed writing exercises, we will explore the terrain of creative non-fiction: mining for material, constructing characters and settings, shaping vivid dialogue, understanding point of view, exploring the many forms of non-fiction today, and finding your voice. We will discuss the process of writing and the strengths and weaknesses of the work we produce in the session. We will read and discuss excerpts of some published non-fiction pieces with an eye toward craft, then write exercises inspired by the texts. A supportive and generative experience for both new and practicing writers.



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Jenn is such a great storyteller and students were captivated by her openness and unapologetically naming the systems that impacted her educational trajectory.

— Bianca H., Pitzer College

FAQ

Q: Are you able to sign copies of your books after the event?

A: Happily! I love to follow in-person events with book signings. I do recommend ordering books from your local independent bookstore (or online) in advance, as warehouses can still be slow in distributing books.

Q: If the event is virtual, how do you handle book signings?

A: Great question! If you order books through my local bookstore, The Silver Unicorn, please specify in the checkout comments that you would like the book signed, and to whom. Thank you for your support! Otherwise, I can mail you signed bookplates.

Q: Do you allow recordings of virtual and/or in-person presentations?

A: I do, but only for internal sharing/use. Thank you in advance for respecting my work and time.

Q: Our school/campus/company has a unique theme/topic/etc. Are you able to tailor a specific talk?

A: Yes! Let's discuss.

Q: What is your honorarium rate?

A: I work with a range of budgets. Contact me to discuss your presentation needs.

Q: I'd like to recommend you as a speaker elsewhere. How can I do so?

A: Thank you so much! Truly. The best way is to email me via my website: www.jenniferdeleonauthor.com or email me directly at: jenn@storybridgewrites.com

Book Now

DESIGN A VISIT TO YOUR SCHOOL

Contact Jenn and select from one of her presentation options, or discuss a custom visit to meet the needs of your students or organization. Same-day visits may include:

- an assembly presentation
- a visit to a class
- lunch with an affinity group
- an evening event with parents, faculty, and staff



Contact Jenn Today!

Email Jenn at
jenn@storybridgewrites.com
or fill out the contact form at
www.jenniferdeleonauthor.com/contact

Find her online at [@jdeleonwriter](https://www.instagram.com/jdeleonwriter)