



Join us for a glimpse into the writing life of some of our favorite authors who share our passion for writing for children.

For those of you that have not yet had the pleasure of meeting ~

Brenda Ferber, either in person, or through her award winning book *Julia's Kitchen*, you are in for a treat. You can visit Brenda at her website www.brendaferber.com and if you are a writer, you just have to check out her

page on writing, where you can blow your mind by taking a long, slow look at the pictures of the post it notes! Note to self...how does she do that?!

Thank you, Brenda, for giving *The Write Marbles* and our visitors a little glimpse into your writing life.

Brenda, what is your ideal writing environment and routine?

One of the nicest things about being a writer is having a flexible schedule, so although I have some general guidelines, I don't have a set-in-stone routine. I write when my kids are at school. I work in a home office, on my laptop computer. I like to have a two to three hour chunk of uninterrupted time whenever possible, so I get my exercise/errands/e-mail out of the way so I can settle in to the writing. I usually start by re-reading whatever I wrote the day before, revising a little bit, and then I move on.

Are you a member of a critique group? If so, how does your group work? How many people? Routine? Does your group have a name?

I am in the best critique group in the world! (I don't mean to make you jealous, but it's the truth.) We meet every other week, and we submit up to ten pages prior to meeting. That gives us time to read and mark up each other's submissions. There are five people in our group. The intimate size allows us to all submit manuscripts each time if we want. We meet at Barnes & Noble, and we spend the first twenty minutes or so chatting about our careers and concerns. Then we take turns reading each other's manuscripts aloud. We find it's very helpful to hear someone else read your manuscript. All the problems seem to jump out at you. We talk about our general impressions, and then we go page by page and give our critique. We try to frame our comments as questions, and we try to stay positive even though we are very, very tough. We have extremely high standards! When your manuscript is being critiqued, you are not supposed to defend or explain anything. It's a time to listen and take notes, and if necessary, ask questions. Our group has had a couple of different names over the years, but nothing has stuck. We keep revising!

Do you have a personal commitment to write a certain amount or for a length of time per day/week? If so, we would love you to share!

When I'm writing a first draft, I try to always have ten pages to submit to critique every other week. Having that goal in mind helps keep me on task. I try not to have any more specific goals than that, because it's so disappointing when you can't meet them. Instead, I focus on taking baby steps toward the big goal: finishing the next book while caring for my family and me.

Do you have a favorite motto or quote that motivates you?

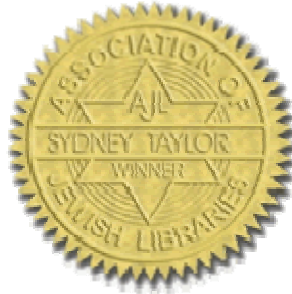
My favorite quote is from Walt Disney. It goes like this:

Think about the person you'd like to become.
Believe in yourself based on the thinking you have done.
Dream big dreams based on your belief in yourself.
Dare to make your dreams come true.
Think. Believe. Dream. Dare. Become the person you know you can be.

Brenda's Books



Published by Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2006
Jacket illustration © 2006 by Pep Montserrat.



Congratulations Brenda!

Coming Soon!

JEMMA HARTMAN, CAMPER EXTRAORDINAIRE, (FSG 2009)
THE YUCKIEST, DROOLIEST, STINKIEST, BEST VALENTINE'S DAY EVER
(HARCOURT)