

**Program:** *Which Came First the Chicken or the Egg: Three Children's Authors and Illustrators Will Hatch The Question*

**Presenters:** Nancy Wallace, Sanna Stanley and Katie Davis

**Sponsor:** Children's Section

**Reporter:** Judy Rabin, Head of Children's Services, Woodbridge Town Library

They make it look so easy! A cute picture, a few words on each page, how hard can it be? Where to start? That's a good question...one for three professionals, like Nancy Wallace, Sanna Stanley and Katie Davis. Children's librarians who already know and love their books were treated to a behind the scenes look at the writing and illustrating process at this year's CLA conference.

What triggers inspiration? Nancy Wallace can launch a project with single word. Leaves, shells, kindness, seeds...have all turned into successful informational picture books. Research is a key part of her process, too, and for a visual thinker like Nancy, that research is often done on location, sometimes at the beach or in an apple orchard. She draws countless thumbnail sketches that combine drawings and text. When author and editor agree on final content, Nancy's favorite part of the process begins. Using only paper, scissors, and glue, Nancy's characteristic bunnies take on names and personalities. Original art is then photographed, and the books are published.

Although she lives in Madison now, Sanna Stanley grew up on the other side of the world, in the Congo. Some of her books depict village life from a child's point of view. Bits and pieces of her childhood memories creep their way into her illustrations. In *Monkey For Sale*, the Chine Colle etching process applies line art to a metal plate which is bitten in "acid." *Monkey Sunday* came from her experience at an open-air church when a monkey was in the rafters - eating a banana! Like Nancy, Sanna's art goes through numerous thumbnail sketch revisions, and, because of the printmaking process, she has to draw intricate details backwards!

Once upon a time there was a girl named Katie. She loved to draw and she loved to write about the important things in her life, like the tooth fairy, bedtime, snakes in her closet and monsters in the bushes. Now that she's a grown up kid, Katie Davis is still doing what she loves best. Although she may not be living the "dream life of an author-illustrator," as depicted in her video vignette, Katie has a sixth sense of what kids find funny and a wonderful talent for melding words and pictures into best-selling books.

Librarians love the opportunity to interact with their favorite authors. We choose their books for our read aloud programs, and we promote them to parents and teachers. These are the tools of our trade. Nancy Wallace, Sanna Stanley, and Katie Davis rely on collage, etching, and drawing to create award winning children's books, and we're glad they do! Many thanks to our CLA Children's Section Co-Chairs for bringing this program to the conference.