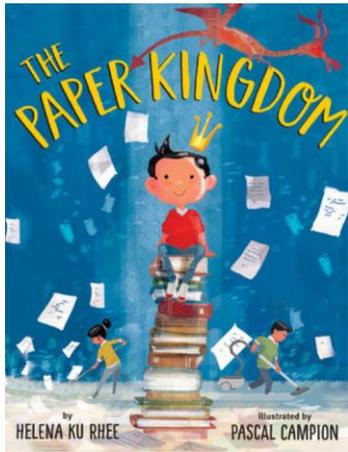


VIRTUAL PROGRAM FOR SCHOOLS & LIBRARIES



Helena Ku Rhee is a children’s book author based in Los Angeles. Her latest book, *THE PAPER KINGDOM* (Penguin Random House 2020), received starred reviews from Kirkus, Shelf Awareness and Booklist, who called the book “enchanting and powerful.” The book is on the Best Books of 2020 by NPR, Parents Magazine, Kirkus, BookPage, Amazon and the Los Angeles Public Library. Helena has also written for publications such as the Los Angeles Times, New York Times and Salon.

Presentation: From Dreamer to Author

(50-minute presentation for Kindergarten – 4th Grade; can be tailored to fit 30 minutes)

In an informative reading and discussion, Helena will share her background and the story of her latest book, *THE PAPER KINGDOM*. She will read from the book while giving insight into the book-making process, including working with the illustrator. She will also discuss how the book was inspired by her childhood, when her parents worked as night janitors in Los Angeles. On nights her parents couldn’t find anyone to watch her, Helena accompanied her parents to work, where they turned drudgery into magic. Helena will discuss how the power of imagination can turn the mundane into something amazing.

Helena will describe how her experiences gave her the grit and determination to attend Yale for college and then become a corporate attorney, all while working to realize her dream of writing children’s books. She’ll address her writing process: brainstorming ideas, developing characters, revising her story, finding a publisher and getting feedback (including specific examples of rejection and praise from agents, publishing companies and editors). Helena will discuss where she gets ideas, how to choose the best one, working with an editor on revisions, collaborating with an illustrator, and how her character’s journey mirrors her own as a writer. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions and will have a chance to discuss their dreams and ideas, too.

If time permits, Helena will also discuss her prior children’s book, *THE TURTLE SHIP* – a book about dreaming big. Based loosely on the story of Korean admiral Yi Sun-sin and the famed turtle ship, the book features paper collage illustrations and received a starred review from the School Library Journal. Helena will also give a sneak peek into her two upcoming books, *SORA’S SEASHELLS* and *ROSA’S SONG*. Her ultimate desire is to encourage students to work hard at their goals and dream big, despite obstacles!

The presentation can be modified to meet the curriculum needs and students’ interests.