



Speed-Dating for Children's and YA Authors and Publishers

Tips for Authors

Adapted from "Tips for Authors" by the Association of English-language Publishers of Quebec (AELAQ)

If you're planning to sign up for **Speed-Dating for Children's and YA Authors and Publishers**, here's what to expect and how to make the most of it.

What to Bring:

- A filled-out contact card from the Welcome Table
- A well-rehearsed pitch
- A writing sample or table of contents if you have one (okay if you don't)

How the Event Will Work:

Places are limited to 22 participants, who must register in advance on [QWF's website](#).

After you've registered, you will be assigned to one of two blocks—Block A and Block B—a few days before the event. Each block will have one hour for speed-dating:

- **Block A:** 2:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.
- **Block B:** 3:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

Please arrive at least 15 minutes before your block is scheduled to begin. There will be some chairs and light refreshments at the back of the room, so you may come and socialize for the whole two hours if you wish.

The two publishers will be seated at the front of the room. The first two participants will each take a spot with one publisher. When the bell dings, you will have four minutes to connect. The publisher will take a moment to introduce themselves and their publishing house, then you'll have a chance to pitch your project and ask any questions. If the publisher wishes to follow up with you, they'll ask for your info (cards mentioned above). When the bell dings, move to the next seat.

You may have a project that is not a fit with a given publisher, but we encourage you to talk with both of them anyway. People move around in this business. You might end up writing something else next time. Or maybe one publisher has a colleague who will love your kind of work. Writing and publishing are long games and they work through networks. Invest your four minutes in the unknown future.

Preparing Your Pitch:

Your book doesn't have to be finished, but if a publisher is interested, they might ask you for any of the following:

- A table of contents
- A short description
- A writing sample, possibly the first chapter
- A couple of comparative titles ("comps"): Is your middle-school mystery Louise Penny meets R.L. Stine? Is your nature journal for people who enjoyed *Braiding Sweetgrass* and *Finding the Mother Tree*?

Above all, think about how to craft your elevator pitch (a description short enough to be given on an elevator between floors). Practice it so it flows smoothly and with conviction. Time it so it doesn't take more than a minute to a minute and a half. Then you'll be relaxed and convincing. You'll be glad you did.