



Who is Your Favorite Author?

By Jean Follmer



Lafayette Elementary 1st grader William Berten Photo Jean Follmer

In addition to nightly reading, Lafayette Elementary first grade teacher Joan McClure offers extra assignments to those students seeking further enrichment. A recent assignment asked the students to answer the question “Who is Your Favorite Author?” The response was easy for first grader William Berten because his current favorite author is definitely Kate McMullan. McMullan is the author of the Dragon Slayers’ Academy series along with other past favorites, including *I STINK!* and *I’M MIGHTY!* Much of her illustration is done by her husband, Jim McMullan.

William decided to send an e-mail to Mrs. McMullan to let her know how much he enjoys her books. He told her “I really like your books because they have very good adventures and stuff.” He also described one of his favorite scenes to her saying it was “really scary...when Seetha almost tossed Wiglaf into a moat full of eels...” McMullan replied “Thanks for telling me the part of the story you think was scary. I like to write scary scenes – but of course no matter how scary the scene, Wiglaf always seems to find a way out of trouble.” She also let William know she has a new book coming out in the spring. McMullan told William. “It’s about a T-rex, and it’s called *I’M BAD!* It was fun to work on a book about a dinosaur, and we’re thinking of doing another one about a Stegosaurus.” William was thrilled

with the response from McMullan. He said “I was really surprised she wrote back. I thought she would be really busy writing books.”

William’s mother, Jenny Berten, was “touched by her (McMullan’s) words of kindness and encouragement and to learn more about her future books.” She went on to stress how meaningful the response was for William. Mrs. Berten stated, “Her note certainly added an element of humanity to books we read. It turned on a light bulb for William – that authors are people too, with their very own stories as well.” Mrs. McClure was pleased with the back and forth William initiated with the author. She believes technology can be so helpful with literature and research. Her class is going to study another author, Jan Brett, early this year by reading her books and visiting her website.