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Punctuation is your Friend: Junior Editors Write for Peers

Cathy Dausman



Summer "school" is not usually about reading and writing, but those attending the Junior Editors class gladly made an exception. The bi-weekly class for middle school students was led by Alameda High School Creative Writing teacher Lisa Piazza, and held after hours at Lafayette's Storyteller Bookshop June 21 through August 2. Piazza has taught the class for 15 years, and also teaches a version for younger students, ages 7 to 10. Students read soon-to-be-published books and learned to write book reviews, which fellow students then evaluated. During their final session, students met with Chronicle Books editor Melissa Manlove. Manlove explained that it may take two years to publish a book, and as editor "you have to fall in love with [a book]" because your job is to read it many times over. Revision, she says, "is a huge part of writing," as is listening and communicating well. As for the students, their peer-edited reviews may be submitted for in-house publication and celebrated during the fall Press Release Party.

Chronicle Books editor Melissa Manlove explains her work to Junior Editors at Storyteller Bookshop in Lafayette. Photo Cathy Dausman

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[back](#)

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