

Annual Report

2021



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



THE FIRST TIME I THOUGHT THE FESTIVAL MIGHT BE AFFECTED BY COVID-19 WAS WHEN AUTHOR ANTONY JOHN BROUGHT UP THE POSSIBILITY IN AN EMAIL ON FEBRUARY 27, 2020.

Writing to me and our Festival driver, Angie Curtright, he said “Can't wait to see you both in just a few short weeks. I REALLY hope the Coronavirus doesn't play havoc with the festival!” Of all the presenters we were planning to host, it was not surprising that it was Antony who first clued us in to our eventual cancellation. Antony's wife is Chief of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Although the coronavirus was on my radar, I thought the timing of our event might be such that we would just be able to slip in before there was more widespread infection and eventual shut-down.

A year later, it was evident that we made the right decision. But how to proceed in 2021 was less than clear. We eventually settled on a month-long virtual event with a limited number of authors. It wasn't what we had hoped for, but it did lead to greater UCM student involvement and a collaboration with Digital Media Production students which has continued on.

A. Maya Kucij, Director

OVERVIEW

The first virtual Children's Literature Festival was held during the month of March 2021. A total of 10 authors presented via Zoom. Maya Kucij, the director of the Festival, was in the UCM broadcast studio with a team of undergraduate students from the Digital Media Production (DGP) team. They used Zoom as one of the feeds to YouTube Live. Each presentation started with a brief (30 second) welcome and thank you to the Missouri Arts Council and then a brief scripted introduction (written by Laurie Mullan, a UCM middle school ELA major), and read by one of the DGP students. On camera was a student moderator who either read the presenting author questions received in advance from Missouri students, or showed questions submitted from students in advance via recorded video. The majority of the presentations were made available to watch for a specified length of time, post-event.

CLF
MARCH
2021



With public support
from the Missouri
Arts Council,
a state agency.



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3 VEERA HIRANANDANI 12-1 PM	4 GORDON KORMAN 1-2 PM	5 ANTONY JOHN 1-2 PM	6
7	8	9	10 MARY DOWNING HAHN 12-1 PM	11 APRIL HENRY 1-2 PM	12 KELLY YANG 1-2 PM	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
UCM SPRING BREAK						
21	22	23	24 BETH VRABEL 12-1 PM	25 JEWELL PARKER RHODES 1-2 PM	26 ROLAND SMITH 1-2 PM	27
28	29	30	31 TORREY MALDONADO 12-1 PM			

Links to livestream: clf.ucmo.edu.

[Submit a question to an author.](#)

This is the calendar that was available to download on the CLF website.

FESTIVAL GOALS

1

To provide the experience of meeting a published author or illustrator in person*

To promote reading and validate the research and creativity behind the process of bookmaking

2

3

To make a significant and visible contribution to a culture of literacy in the state of Missouri

To work towards fair representation of all groups within our Festival program and to be truly inclusive by seeking active participation by all individuals

4

****adjusted in 2021!***

NEW IN 2021

VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING SURVEY

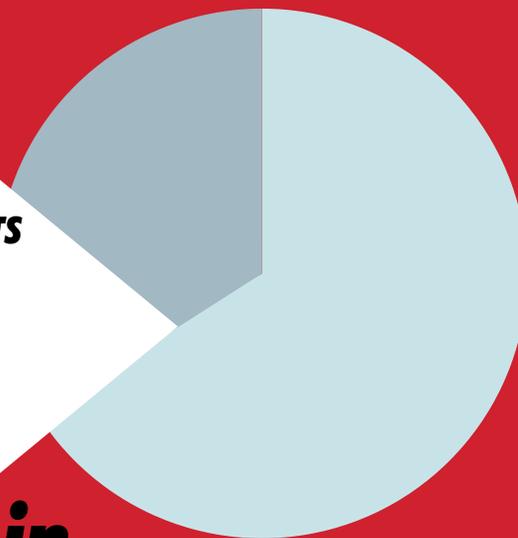
Everything was new in 2021: the date(s), the length, the format, everything! This included a survey that was sent out at the end of September 2020. The goal was to solicit information to help us plan for a version of the festival that would work for educators and their students. Respondents were queried about 2 main areas of interest: student-oriented programming and professional development.

211
responses

the majority of which were school librarians (57.8%) and teachers (23.2%)

Somewhat Likely
34%

LIKELIHOOD TO HAVE THEIR STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN FREE, VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING WITH AUTHORS OR ILLUSTRATORS.



Very Likely
66%

interested in ...

opportunities to connect with authors and illustrators throughout the year on a more flexible basis

53%

virtual festival-like experience with the opportunity to see multiple authors and illustrators over several days

42%

both

4%

in-person only

.5%

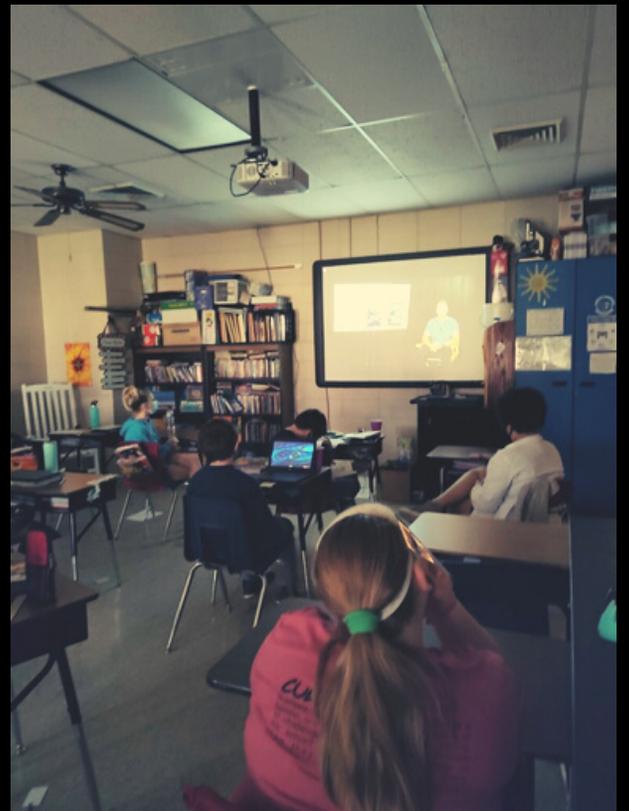
0% 20% 40% 60%

OUR VIEWERS

Counting is trickier when viewers are online and more than one person can view on a device, especially if the live stream is being shown in a classroom, as was the case with many of our viewers.

2961

*total views of sessions
(live & recorded)*



Clinton Intermediate School

March 10, 2021 · 🌐

Our Cardinals are enjoying the UCM Children's Literature Festival. Today it is Author Mary Downing Hahn! Tomorrow is April Henry & Friday Kelly Yang. [#CISReadySetReturn](#) [#UCMChildrensLiteratureFestival](#)

QUESTIONS FROM STUDENTS

In an effort to make our virtual festival more interactive, we asked teachers and librarians to have their students to submit questions in advance. We showed these videos to the authors live via Zoom and they answered the questions at the end of their presentations.

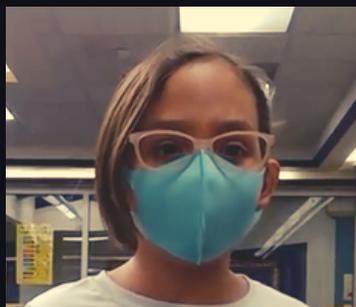
67 questions submitted

SUBMITTING A VIDEO QUESTION FOR ONE OF OUR AUTHORS?

Tips & Tricks

- Make sure to orient your video recorder horizontally!
- The question can be quick but make sure that the total video length is at least 7-10 seconds. Have student pause, introduce themselves, say where they are from, and leave another pause before ending.

Thank you!



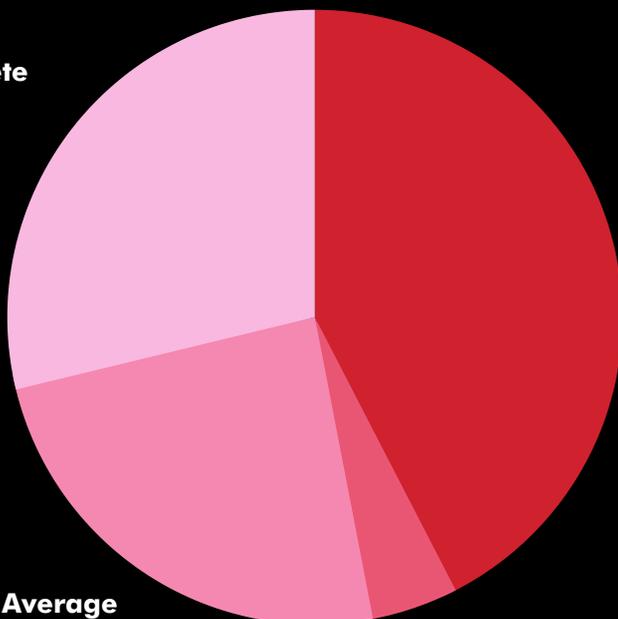
VIEWER SURVEYS

Surveys were distributed via the CLF newsletter in early April after the final presentation on March 31st. We asked questions about how educators determined which students participated, how they became aware of the festival, their satisfaction with presenter diversity, presenter engagement, relevance of presentations to student grade levels/ages and how they viewed the festival content (live v. recorded). We had 66 respondents.

47% of survey takers said their satisfaction with presenter diversity was far above average (42.4%) or average (4.5%). Unfortunately, almost 29% did not complete this portion of the survey.



Did Not Complete
28.8%



Far Above Average
42.4%

HOW SATISFIED WERE YOU WITH PRESENTER DIVERSITY?

Somewhat Above Average
24.2%

Average
4.5%

SURVEY RESULTS

41 respondents answered a question (with a text response) about how the educator determined which students from their school attended the virtual presentations. We were thrilled to find that the largest number (8) was "all students", which was helped by the virtual nature of the programming. The next largest response was membership in a book club (7), followed by the requirement to read a certain number of Missouri Association of School Librarians (MASL) reading award nominees (5). Other responses included what worked best with class schedule (5) or grade level (2) or whether the students had read a certain amount (4).

"In the past, we had pretty strict requirements. With Covid this past year, we had the students read at least one book by one of the presenting authors. Several of my students got hooked and read more and even requested some new books for the library."

"Since it was virtual this year, all students were allowed to watch the presentations. In the past, students have had to read a certain number of books by festival authors."

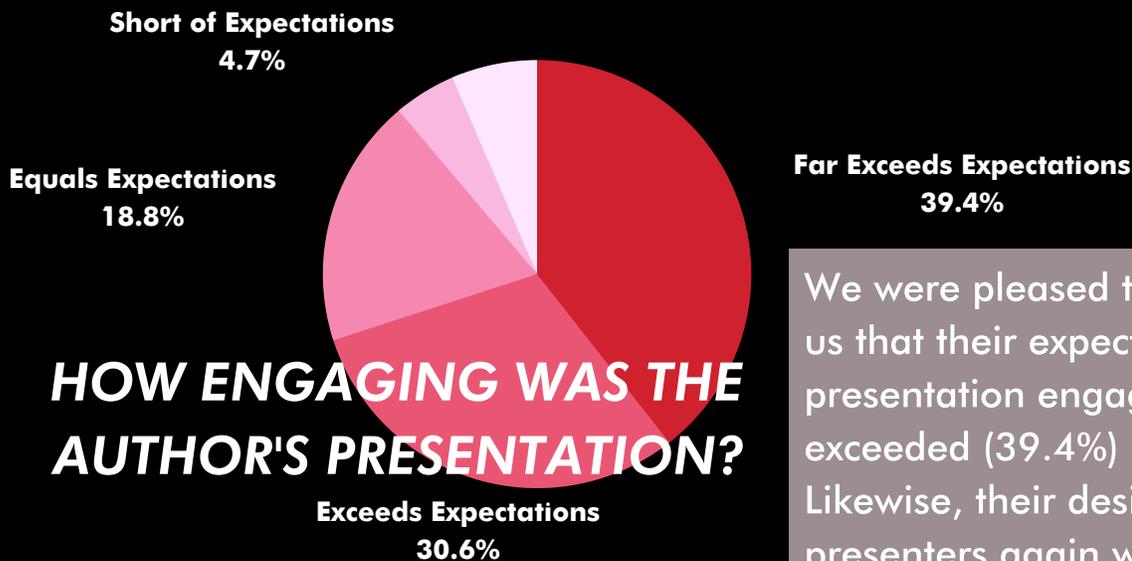
"We opened it to all students since it was virtual and free."

"I chose to have all of my students participate this year."

"I am a middle school teacher and sponsor a literary society book club. Since the presentations were online, I was able to show my creative writing students the videos (most of those students I would not have taken in person) and also my literary club (whom I would have taken in person)."

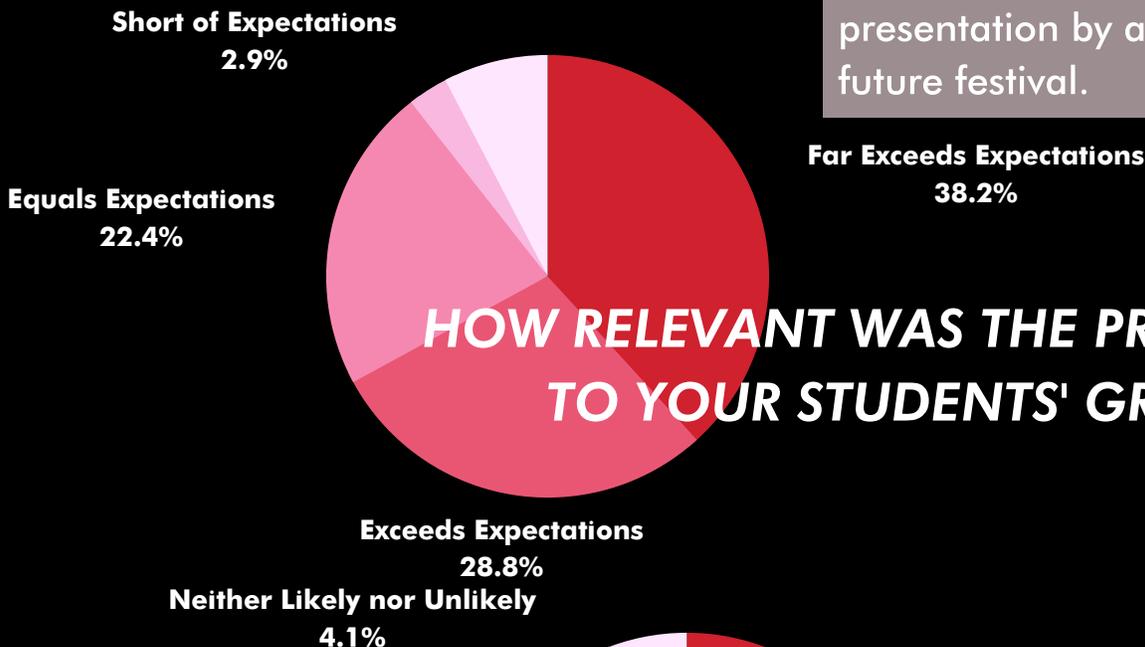
SURVEY RESULTS CONT.

HOW ENGAGING WAS THE AUTHOR'S PRESENTATION?



We were pleased that respondents told us that their expectations about presentation engagement were far exceeded (39.4%) or exceeded (30.6%). Likewise, their desire to see the presenters again were high, with almost 72% extremely likely to attend a presentation by an author again at a future festival.

HOW RELEVANT WAS THE PRESENTATION TO YOUR STUDENTS' GRADES/AGES?

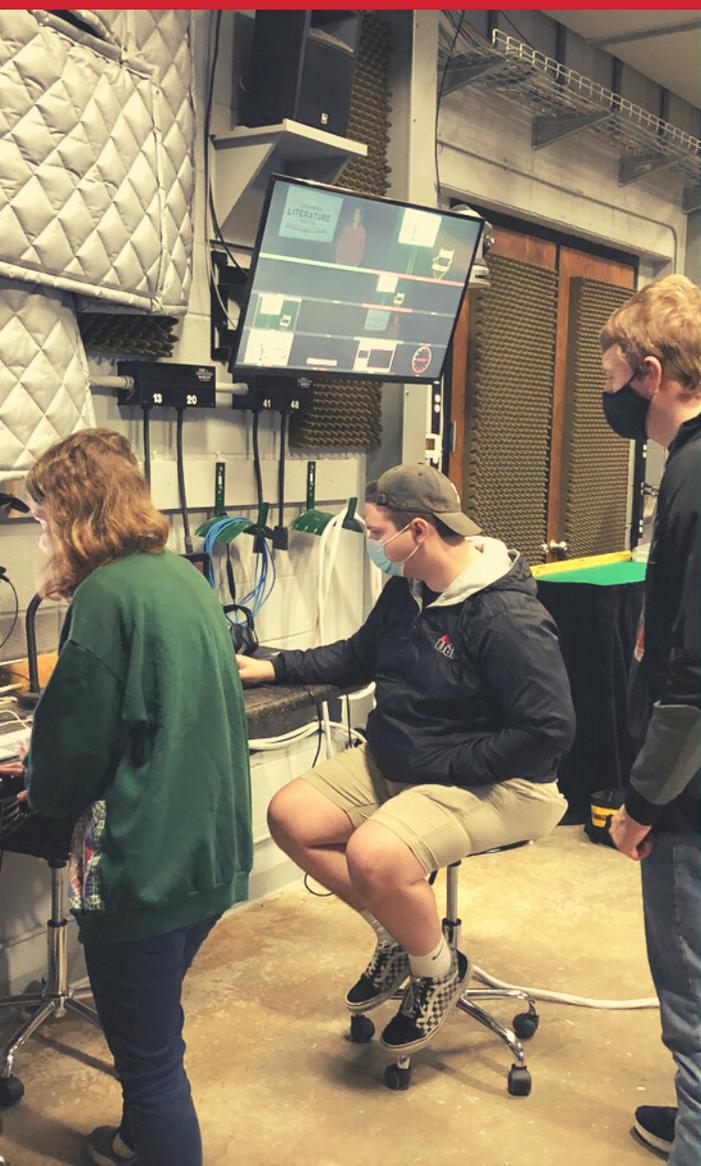


HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO ATTEND A PRESENTATION BY THIS AUTHOR AGAIN AT A FUTURE FESTIVAL?

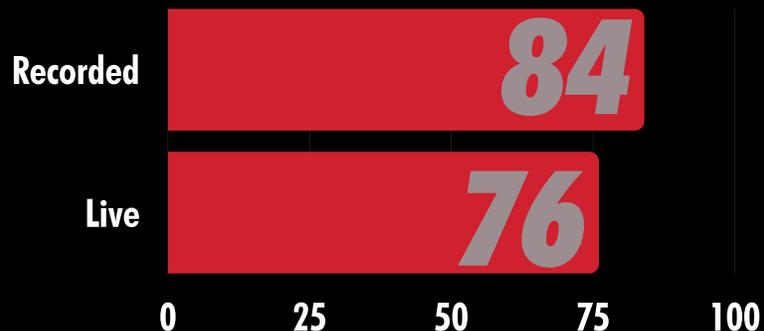


SURVEY RESULTS CONT.

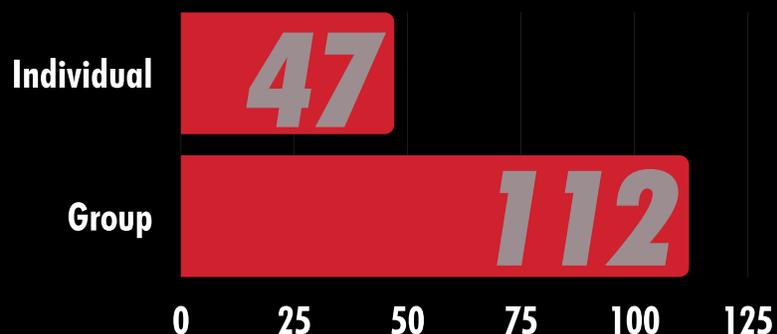
One of the advantages of virtual presentations is the ability to record and watch them at a later time. You can from the charts below that teachers and librarians appreciated being able to watch the recording at their convenience. We were able to have the recorded presentations available to view post-event anywhere from one week to a month, depending on the arrangement with the presenter. It is understandable that most presenters do not wish to have their presentations up indefinitely online as this would affect their appeal of their in-person visits, which can be an important source of both reader outreach and income.



DID YOU WATCH THE PRESENTATION LIVE AT THE SCHEDULED TIME OR A RECORDING OF THE PRESENTATION?



DID YOU WATCH THE PRESENTATION BY YOURSELF OR WITH A GROUP?



EDUCATOR COMMENTS

"My students were drawn in immediately with Mrs. Henry's first story. After listening to Mrs. Henry, I have many students reading her books. I talk about April Henry all the time in my classes and really push her books, but after "seeing" her her books are even more popular. I think my students also realize that writing takes time, and rewriting..."

"The students were motivated to seek out and read the titles by this author after hearing more about them from the author themselves."

"The students enjoyed seeing one of their favorite authors. Again, the impact was to put a face with a favorite author. They enjoyed learning about where he gets his ideas for his books."

"Loved his story about how he became an author. I had one kid who has been writing daily since. She believes she'll be a middle school author too. :)"

"Korman books were checked out right and left from the library!"

"Great multi-cultural presentation with the importance of family and oral histories stressed ... the message of "you can do it" as a developing writer by just putting one word in front of the other."

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

for future CLF virtual content

1

Have participants register in advance to help with gathering feedback & send links only to those who have signed up.

2

Have clear instructions (& include a downloadable pdf) on submitting video questions. Many videos submitted were under 10 seconds which made it hard to edit. Send special thank yous to the educators and students who submitted questions.

3

Make closed captioning available for all recorded presentations.

4

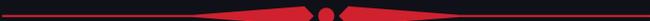
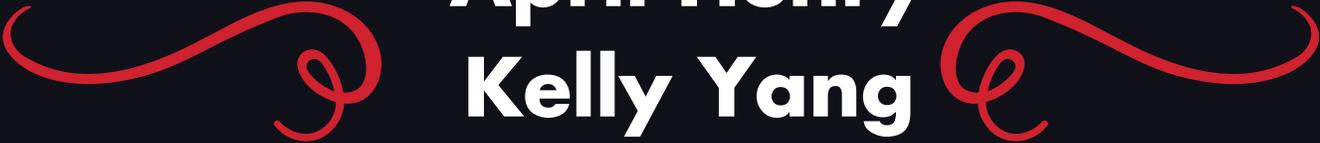
Coordinate questions with presenter content. Since we didn't know what each presenter would cover in advance, many of the questions had already been answered by the presenter when they were shown.



THANK YOU
2021
PRESENTERS



Veera Hiranandani
Gordon Korman
Antony John
Mary Downing Hahn
April Henry
Kelly Yang
Jewell Parker Rhodes
Roland Smith
Torrey Maldonado



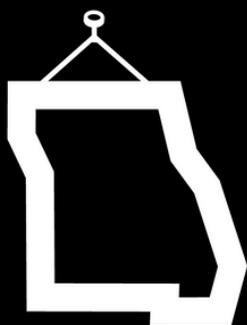
THANK YOU



Digital Media Production:

Darin Plummer, Broadcast Systems Engineer

Students: Alisha Straws, Brennen Van Breusegen,
Cody Bruckerhoff, Jake Frede, James Schnorenberg,
Noah Lampson, Tristan Barelli, and Zara Rethman



**Missouri
Arts Council**

The State of the Arts

University Librarian Janette Klein

Kim Anthes

Patty Cary

Wendy Geiger

Laurie Mullan

Kathy Schnakenberg

