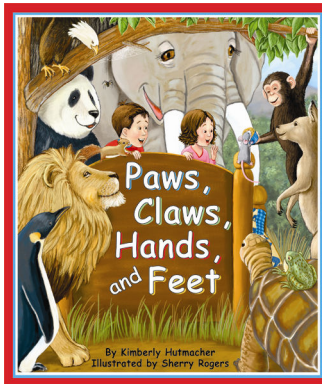


*A Conversation
with
Kim Hutmacher,
author of
Paws, Claws,
Hands, and Feet!*



What was your incentive to write this particular book?



We are a homeschooling family. A few years ago, while doing research for an animal unit study, I had a difficult time finding information on this topic for younger audiences. I found books that taught children how to identify animal appendages, but nothing that showed how animals used their appendages and how similar human appendages are to animals. I also found lots of "just the facts" type books for older children, but nothing lively and engaging for my little ones. I decided that I would write the kind of book that my children would learn from but also have fun with.

When did you become interested in writing?

I have always loved to write. Creative writing was my favorite subject in school! I believe my interest in writing started, though, with my love of reading. I have always been a bookworm. Getting lost in an engaging plot with interesting characters and varied settings has always been a favorite pastime. It seemed a natural progression for me to want to create stories of my own.

What is the most frequently asked question you encounter as an author and what is your answer?

I often get asked how I deal with writer's block. My answer is that I don't have time for writer's block! I'm a homeschooling mother of three children who need to be fed, bathed, clothed, taught, and shuttled around to their various activities. When I get my block of time on Saturday mornings and/or Sunday afternoons to write, I dive into my story like it's a hot fudge sundae. I'm grateful for those moments, and I don't waste them fretting about not knowing what to write about.

When are you most creative? (Or what sparks your creativity?)

My children spark my creativity. They are a constant source of inspiration. I'm always jotting down little things that they say and do. Many of those little anecdotes have ended up in some form or another in my work.

Do you have any advice for parents (or other group) about...?



I have learned through my experiences homeschooling, that if you or your kids have an interest in something, you can make yourself an expert on that subject. Our family loves to learn about animals and nature. We spend time on nature walks, visiting zoos and museums, and reading books and watching videos related to animals and nature.

What is most rewarding and/or challenging about writing children's books?

I almost always write in rhyme. Every word must count. My biggest challenge is finding just the right word. Conversely, my greatest reward is when I'm finally able to find that perfect word.

Your choice. Please think of an interesting question to ask yourself!

What children's writer(s) inspire you?

Since most of my work is written in verse, I'm most inspired by master rhymers. My list is long and varied, but my favorites would have to be Douglas Florian, Lisa Wheeler, Karma Wilson, Verla Kay, J. Patrick Lewis, Rebecca Kai Dotlich, Myra Cohn Livingston, and Heidi B. Roemer.

Want to continue this conversation? Schedule an interview!

Contact Sylvan Dell's publicist, Sara Dobie:

SaraDobie@SylvanDellPublishing.com

(877) 958-2600