

Session 1:

The Dog in the Wood – **Writing a Novel from Family Memoir**

Monika Schröder's first middle grade novel, *THE DOG IN THE WOOD*, is a historical fiction story set in eastern Germany at the end of World War II. The story is based on her father's memories of the arrival of the Soviet Army in his village in April 1945. In this presentation Schröder will discuss how she wrote a novel from a family memoir and discuss how the many drafts developed into a published book.

Session 2:

"Wanting is just another kind of hunger" – Inspiration and Challenges of Writing a Book set in India

SARASWATI'S WAY is a middle grade novel about a 12-year old Indian boy, Akash, with a gift for math, who runs away from his home in rural India to find a better life. He prays for the help of the Hindu goddess of knowledge, Saraswati, and Ganesh, the remover of obstacles. Akash ends up in the New Delhi train station, where he joins a gang of street kids.

In this presentation Monika Schröder will discuss what inspired her to write a book about an Indian street child, talk about her research for the novel, and the kinds of challenges such a topic posed. She will also show how reading the works of other writers informs her own craft.