

Low-Residency MFA in Writing for Children & Young Adults faculty information:

Ron Koertge

(pronounced KUR-chee)

website: part of www.candlewick.com

Biography:

Born 1940. B.A. University of Illinois. M.A. University of Arizona.
Professor of English/Creative Writing at Pasadena City College 1965-2001.

I've published about a dozen novels-for-young readers, including novels-in-verse. Half a dozen books of poems for adults. Lots of ALA awards for YA fiction. P.E.N. prize for *Stoner and Spaz*. N.E.A. fellowship for poetry. Also a Cal Arts grant for poetry. Included twice in *Best American Poetry*. In dozens of anthologies for poetry and/or short fiction-for-teens. That list, like the beat, goes on.

I Am Happy to Work with Students in the Following Genres/Areas:

Lately I've been writing fiction for what might be called the deep end of YA, but any kind of YA is fine with me. For sure, novels-in-verse since I know my way around that territory. I like to work with picture book writers if they want to concentrate on language, and I have mentored a couple of students who wanted to write only poetry. I know middle-grade novels, but have never written one. Historical fiction is not my cup of (green) tea. I don't read fantasy/sci-fi but did work with one student and we got along fine. We did, however, have a very specific contract and understanding. I'm the surgeon of Saint Paul; if you have a flabby manuscript, I'm the cutter.

Other Things to Know About Me as an Advisor:

I'm a little old-fashioned in that I like to work from hard copy. Send me the pages with a SASE. I'm big on writing-in-the-margins, X-ing out and drawing arrows. And my letters tend to elaborate on the marginalia. I'm not much on theory. I'm a practical, hands-on kind of guy: move the story along, keep me interested. Former students tell me I'm a hard grader, and I believe them.

Books of Mine I Recommend That You Read:

it depends what you're interested in. For poetry-novels, try *Brimstone Journals* or *Shakespeare Bats Cleanup*. For edgy fiction, it'd be *Stoner and Spaz*, *Margaux with an X*, *Strays*, and *Deadville*. Early novels like *The Arizona Kid* or *Where the Kissing Never Stops* are good examples of how I used to write. For poetry, the books would be *Fever*, *Geography of the Forehead*, and/or *Making Love to Roget's Wife*.