

# AUTHOR PRESS KIT

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**Ben says...**

**Don't be afraid to dream!  
Embrace who you are!  
Keep on reading!  
Writers change the world!**

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ben has been in love with stories ever since he was a little boy and has written many throughout his life. “Stories just constantly pop into my mind like magic, and I feel a need to share them with other kids,” says the teenager.

Published author of the multiple book series *Nellie’s Friends*, written for grammar school readers, Ben also authored *Ollie and the Race* for early readers. His breakout novel, *In the Hole*, offers to give hope and inspiration to young adults and their families who face homelessness and economic insecurities during this challenging time in history as we collectively face a global pandemic. Ben’s greatest wish is “to bring joy through my writing to kids all over the world.”

Born in Lexington, Massachusetts, the New England native currently lives in Montvale, New Jersey with his parents, his little brother Jake, and their two dogs, Stark and Sherlock. When he isn't writing, Ben enjoys reading, playing sports, hanging out with friends—and listening to the Beatles!

# AUTHOR Q&A

## 10 Things you might not know about Ben Levin:

1. Ben was born in a walk-in closet. Not kidding.
2. Favorite movie: *Yesterday*.
3. I used to be irrationally afraid of people being upset at me.
4. My favorite food is potatoes.
5. I'm obsessed with the Beatles and even listen to Gregorian Chant versions of the Beatles. (I'm embarrassed that I love the song "Get Back," because it has one verse that I consider to be transphobic, but at least when I sing the song, I always change the lyrics.)
6. I went to a Waldorf school for elementary school.
7. One of my favorite children's series is *The Contract* by Derek Jeter, because I like its message of encouraging kids to follow their dreams.
8. I adore biographies and have read at least 500.
9. I'm working on making my bed every day. It's hard to remember, but I do it anyway because I'm going to college soon and I'm trying to be mentally healthy.
10. My writing career came from a "mistake" that my mom made. I loved making up stories when I was little, and she kept referring to one of them as a book—so I decided to turn it into a book and realized how much I love writing!

# FAQs

*Where are you from?*

I was born in Lexington, Massachusetts, and later lived in Andover, Massachusetts; Beverly, Massachusetts; and Chestnut Ridge, New York.

*Where do you live now?*

I live with my parents, little brother, and two miniature schnauzers in Montvale, New Jersey.

*How long have you been writing?*

Since I was nine.

*How did you start writing?*

My writing career came from a “mistake” that my mom made. I loved making up stories when I was little, and she kept referring to one of them as a book—so I decided to turn it into a book and realized how much I love writing!

*What is your writing process?*

I’m a plotter. I come up with stories ahead of time and then I write them down. Often when I’m writing, I’m thinking several steps ahead. Whether it’s several chapters in a single book, or several books of a series.

*What do you find to be the most difficult part of the writing process?*

I get so worked up and into my writing when I’m working on a project that I am reluctant to leave it, even when I really should. Like to be with my family or get homework done, or even to go to sleep!

*Where are your books set? Why?*

The locations typically just come to me based on what feels right, sometimes based on what I know about the place. For example, with *In the Hole*, Ohio just felt right. Trust your gut and you'll know the right place. Then confirm with fact-checking to make sure it works with the details of your story—if you want to!

*Are your characters based on real people?*

Sometimes.

*Where do the ideas for your books come from?*

Other books, movies, and life.

*Who is your favorite author?*

Derek Jeter.

*When you aren't writing, what do you like to do for fun?*

Take walks, read, and spend time with friends. And listen to Beatles music.

*Do you do school visits?*

Not yet but I plan to!

For more information, please visit my website at [www.benlevinauthor.com/events](http://www.benlevinauthor.com/events).

# *Lightning Round!*

**Favorite Dessert?** Ice Cream

**Favorite Color?** Don't have one

**Cats or Dogs?** Dogs

**If you couldn't be an author, you'd be:** An English teacher

**Favorite Food:** Organic Red Potato French Fries

**Coffee or Tea?** Neither

**Favorite Soup?** I despise soup

**If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?** I've never been one for huge adventures and vacations, but I would love to see more historic sites such as one of the Underground Railroad safe houses. Or the secret annex in Amsterdam where the Frank family lived during the Holocaust.

**If you could play any part in a play, what would it be?** I'd be Klaus in a stage production of *A Series of Unfortunate Events* by Lemony Snicket.

# Ben's Public Speaking Engagements

Designed specifically for elementary and middle school audiences, Ben's workshops are intended to inspire kids to believe in themselves and embrace who they are. Workshops are offered at schools, libraries, and other events.

Ben's mission derives from his two main philosophies, which he shares *from his heart* to inspire children and young adults to pursue their goals and feel good about themselves. During his motivational talks, Ben instructs children and adolescents to:

1. *Follow your dreams; and,*
2. *Embrace who you are!*

## Excerpts from Ben's Workshops

### 1. Message #1: Follow your dreams!

"Once in class, shortly before my first book, *Ghost Wars*, was published on Amazon, me and some friends were talking and one said, "Your dream's coming true, isn't it?" And it occurred to me that it was, and that I could be an inspiration for the idea that dreams really do come true. Later, the same friend told me that having my dream come true inspired him to want to work harder for *his* dream. I feel like I can help, because my dream came true.

"I want to help motivate others, especially other young people, to not give up on themselves or their dreams. I want to encourage them to be willing to follow them, doing whatever it takes, and to not believe that their dreams are impossible. If they work hard and believe in themselves, their dreams *are* absolutely possible!"

### 2. Message #2: Embrace who you are.



“For the longest time, I was ashamed of being autistic—and even ‘formerly autistic,’ when I thought that was the case. I felt like being autistic made me less than a human being. That feeling was harmful not only to my own self-esteem, but also to my relationships.

“I felt liberated when friends didn’t know about my autism, but at the same time, the secret stifled me. I was lying about who I am. This year, accepting that I still have autism has really helped me, and I especially want to be an example to other autistic kids who don’t believe in themselves. I want to show them that they can make a mark on the world, too—if it’s not too cocky of me to presume that I have made a mark on the world!”

## PRESENTATION OPTIONS:

- “Follow your dreams and embrace who you are!”—a PowerPoint presentation featuring video clips, book trailers, photos, inspiration boards, and nerdy high school photos, detailing my journey from introverted, isolated, insecure autistic child to *proudly autistic* Young Adult and children’s book author. A great mix of humor, interaction, and engaging visuals, followed by a Q&A session. Grades 6-12. 50 minutes.
- “My Road to Authordom”—a PowerPoint presentation depicting my journey from child storyteller to self-published author, to my first completed YA novel and professional publication. A shorter, more streamlined talk focusing only on writing and the self-publishing industry, followed by a Q&A session. Grades 6-12. 30 minutes.

## PRICING:

- NYC-TriState Area: \$75/school
- New England: \$100/school + \$0.50/mile travel reimbursement
- Everywhere Else: \$250/school, plus travel and hotel, but I offer discounts for multiple schools over one or more days

# Ben's Contact Information and Links

Email: [writerbenlevin@gmail.com](mailto:writerbenlevin@gmail.com)

Instagram: @benlevinauthor

Website: [www.benlevinauthor.com](http://www.benlevinauthor.com)

Manager: Susan Levin

Manager's Contact Information: [suzyque66@mac.com](mailto:suzyque66@mac.com) |  
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