

Famous children's book illustrator Derek Anderson visits Skiatook

BY LINDSEY RENUARD

News Editor

Derek Anderson, children's book author and illustrator, visited Skiatook Elementary November 12 to visit with Skiatook's 2nd graders and students from Hope Christian Academy.

Anderson gave the kids a brief history of how he became a children's book illustrator from his very first drawing in kindergarten of the Easter Bunny, through writing comic books, and eventually, illustrating children's books. He showed them some fun things he has hidden in the illustrations of his books including his dogs, his parents, and himself.

He gave an example of how when you think a painting is just right, someone will make a suggestion that works even better.

For the cover of one book he had painted dozens of dogs in the background. It took a lot of time to paint all those dog faces, then he was asked to take them out. Even though he spent all that time, he took the dogs out and realized the painting worked much better.

Anderson made points to the kids that it's ok to not get it right the first time, or even the second time. It's ok to make mistakes. It's ok if your drawing doesn't look like everyone else's drawing. Anderson said, "If you want something perfect, take a picture. If you want something unique that is yours, draw it."

"The purpose of these visits is to give children permission to create," said Anderson. "It's ok if it doesn't turn out the way you think it should. Often times what kids think they got wrong is

Photos

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what's unique about it. As artists we are all trying to find our own corner, make something different."

Anderson answered questions from the students then gave a demonstration on how he draws Hot Rod Hamster. For a video of this demonstration and more photos from the event, visit SkiatookJournal.com.

Anderson has illustrated more than 20 books for children, and written and illustrated six children's books. With author Cynthia Lord, he illustrated the popular "Hot Rod Hamster" series including "Happy Birthday, Hamster," "Hot Rod Hamster," "Hot Rod Hamster and the Awesome ATV Adventure!" "Hot Rod Hamster and the Wacky

Whatever Race!" and "Hot Rod Hamster: Monster Truck Mania" Hot Rod Hamster is always looking for adventure, big or small, and is always ready to lend a helping hand.

The award-winning "Little Quack" series, with author Lauren Thompson, is a bright collection teaching young children the basics of counting and colors as well as family and friendship. Little Quack, along with his siblings Widdle, Waddle, Piddle and Puddle, find endless adventures at their little pond.

He is the author and illustrator of "StoryCounty: Here We Come!" "Romeo and Lou Blast Off," "How the Easter Bunny Saved Christmas," "Blue Burt and



Derek Anderson demonstrates how he draws Hot Rod Hamster. LINDSEY RENUARD/Skiatook Journal

Wiggles" and "Gladys Goes Out to Lunch." Released in April 2015 "Ten Pigs: An Epic Bath Adventure" is a funny story showing how a relaxing bubble bath in solitude is perfect until, one at a time, nine other pigs decide to join the relaxation.

In 2012 he collaborated with bestselling author Jane Yolen on the acclaimed "Waking Dragons." This medieval rhyming story is filled with fantasy and humor as a young knight guides two dragons through a morning routine.

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