

dfas

1. Verb

2. Adjective

dfas

most magical time of my life. This was the place where I heard such wonderful stories told and where a real meteor fell into our front yard! My babushka (my grandmother) and other grandparents were some of the most inspirational people in my life. When my babushka died, we moved away.

I then lived most of my life in Oakland, California. What I loved the most about Oakland was that all of my

neighbors came in as many colors, ideas, and religions as there are people on the planet. How lucky I was to

_____ Verb _____ so many people that were so different and yet so much alike! To this day I am still in touch with people I grew up with in California my best friend from my _____ Adjective _____ neighborhood is still my best friend today!

I wasn't a very good student in elementary school, and had a hard time with reading and writing. I didn't learn to read until I was almost 14 years old. Reading out loud for me was a nightmare because I would mispronounce words or reconstruct things that weren't even there. That's when one of my teachers discovered I had a learning disability called dyslexia. Once I got help, I read very well!

I came from a family of incredible storytellers, but I didn't start writing children's books until I was 41 years old.

Drawing, painting, and sculpture have always been a part of my life, though. My family always encouraged my drawing ability. Kids in school who teased me about my reading would get out of their seats and stand behind my desk as I worked and go, "Wow, you can really draw." Later, I earned a degree in Fine Art, and got a Ph.D. in Art History.

I have enjoyed a wonderful career of writing books for children. I get my ideas from the same place that you do.

. .MY IMAGINATION. All of us have a "voice" inside where all inspired thoughts come from. When I talk to children and aspiring writers, I always ask them to turn off the TV and listen to that voice inside them. I have many voices inside me. From my Russian background my stories are kind of ethnic, primitive, Eastern European that's one type of voice I write in. Another is my mid-western American farm voice. I also write in a Jewish voice my family was part Jewish and part Christian, which is an amazing thing.

I have two children, and have since moved back to that magical farm in Union City, where I plan to host various events that celebrate children's literature. You are all welcome to come.

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