



# Write to Your Dreams!

A Literacy- and Arts-based Program by Author/Educator Tim O'Shei

Empower students to use their literacy and arts skills to envision, plan and pursue big goals while researching and sharing the stories of high achievers through Write for Your Dreams!

Tim O'Shei developed Write for Your Dreams! through his work as an educator (he's taught every level from elementary to graduate school), author (he's currently finishing his 65th book and regularly visits schools), journalist (as a magazine writer, he's covered entertainment, sports and business for 20-plus years) and entrepreneur (he's the founder of Live Starring You LLC, a company that provides publishing and musical opportunities for preteens and teens).

The six-step goal-setting process in Write for Your Dreams! is based on material gleaned through two decades of interviews with successful people, from presidents to sports legends to entertainment superstars. (Many of these interviews were conducted by Tim for books or magazines. Others were conducted by student journalists reporting for LiveStarringYou.com under Tim's supervision.) After noticing the several common traits among these successful, growth-minded people, Tim developed a goal-setting process that can be applied to any dream:

1. **Set a goal so real you can feel it.**
2. **Struggle for success.**
3. **Work on the tough stuff.**
4. **Build your "fan club."**
5. **Expect to stumble ... then get back up.**
6. **Create good luck.**

Through high-energy, interactive presentations and workshops that are loaded with real-life examples, videos and music, Tim will empower your students to set high-minded goals and access their communication and creativity skills to meet those challenges.

"Students will learn powerful lessons from the successful people who've given us insight into their lives, minds and hearts. Here are some examples: Hockey legend **Wayne Gretzky** taught us about the importance of **visualizing a vivid dream**, while Superman actor **Christopher Reeve** talked about the power of **focusing on a daunting goal and embracing the struggle** as you try to achieve it. "Glee" star **Heather Morris** showed us that **goals can evolve and change** — something that rising country music star **Charlie Worsham** called "**elastic dreams.**" Through the pop star Hilary Duff, we observed the value of **showing appreciation to people** who form the team that supports you. Actor **Michael J. Fox** talked about **finding inspiration in your friends** when dealing with a seemingly insurmountable obstacle. Musical parodist **Weird Al Yankovic** and singer-actress **Raven-Symoné** emphasized the importance of pursuing a goal not for glory, but rather **because you love it**. Actress **Amanda Peet** showed us that it's OK, and normal, to **feel insecure at times but still be wildly successful**. President **Gerald Ford** taught me about the power of making **thoughtful but unpopular decisions**. Through the *Write for Your Dreams!* program, students learn to apply these lessons — and many more — to their own goal-setting, research, writing and speaking."

— Tim O'Shei

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## Sample outline of program:

- ★ Step 1: **Write for Your Dreams!**, a high-energy, multimedia motivational presentation by Tim O'Shei, focusing on using writing (and, by extension, the arts) as a tool to reach your goals and dreams.
- ★ Step 2: **Dream Boards.** Students will brainstorm and create their own Dream Boards, using words, pictures/ images, quotes, lyrics, etc. to visualize and represent their dreams, support system, obstacles and challenges. Extension activity: Students, assuming the role of journalists, will interview each other about their Dream Boards. These interviews may be done off camera (as print journalists), on camera (as broadcast journalists) or both. Click here to watch a video example.
- ★ Step 3: **Six-step goal-setting process,** developed based on interviews with high performers a variety of fields (politics, sports, entertainment, business, etc.). Tim will coach students through the process, which is highly reflective and writing intensive, and use the same journalistic approach (interviewing, summarizing) to reinforce learning. (A sample of the guidebook detailing each step is available on request.) Extension activity: Students will also be assigned a project in which they conduct deep research on a well-known successful person who exhibits the characteristics of Growth Mindset. In this project, students will focus on identifying and describing that individuals growth-minded traits, and synthesizing that information with their own goals by answering the question: "What can I, and what can we all, learn from \_\_\_\_\_?" These projects can ultimately be compiled into an anthology/video package and unveiled at a book release celebration.

**Write for Your Dreams!** activities integrate literacy (reading, writing, speaking, listening) and arts skills, and are connected to Common Core standards.

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# Tim O'Shei

## Author & Journalist

Tim O'Shei is a children's author, journalist, teacher and the founder of Live Starring You LLC, a media and education organization that works with schools and studios to train young "reporters," stage high-energy and interactive author visits, and create publishing opportunities for student writers.

Tim is the author of 60-plus children's books on topics including sports, spies, princesses, survival, martial arts, creepy tales, and more. He's also a contributing writer for Scholastic Inc.'s middle-school language arts magazine, *Scope*, and a contributing features and arts writer for *The Buffalo News*. As a sports and entertainment journalist, Tim has written for publications including *The Sporting News*, *Dance Spirit*, *Runner's World*, *Rinkside*, *Courtside*, *Baseball Digest*, *Beckett Publications*, *BuffaloBills.com*, *USAHockey.com*, and many more. He spent more than a decade covering the NFL and NHL as a beat reporter, and has covered major events such as the NHL All Star Game, the Stanley Cup Finals, the NFL playoffs, NCAA bowl games and March Madness. He also covered the 2009 inauguration of President Barack Obama, and has won several state and national awards for his news, sports, feature, education and column writing.

Tim has interviewed hundreds of celebrities in entertainment, sports and politics, including Christopher Reeve, Michael J. Fox, Kiefer Sutherland, Vanessa Williams, Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, Tim Russert, Shaquille O'Neal, Derek Jeter, Wayne Gretzky and LeBron James.

Students involved in Tim's Live! Starring... You! program have conducted more than 400 interviews with professional entertainers and athletes. Some of the highlights: Justin Bieber, Miranda Cosgrove (*iCarly*), Ross Lynch (*Austin & Ally*), JoJo, Cyndi Lauper, *Glee* stars Matthew Morrison and Heather Morris, movie star Amanda Peet, actress Debra Messing, Martin Sheen, actor Frankie Muniz, DMC from the legendary hip hop group Run-DMC, members of the Beach Boys, Goo Goo Dolls, Simple Plan, Hot Chelle Rae, Peter Dinklage from *Peter, Paul and Mary*, Weird Al Yankovic, the stars of *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* and *Dancing with the Stars*, the *Imagination Movers*, *Fresh Beat Band*, members of the New York Rangers, Washington Capitals, Buffalo Sabres and Buffalo Bills, Olympic gold medalists Meryl Davis and Charlie White, Nastia Liukin, Jordyn Wieber, and many more.

Recently, Live Starring You LLC released its first CD, "Edge of the Spotlight," featuring original music by LSY reporters who worked with a Grammy-nominated music producer.

For his work with Live! Starring... You!, Tim was named in 2011 to the National Honor Roll of American Entrepreneurs by the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education. He has also been featured in both regional and national media, including a recent appearance on the Travel Channel's *Mysteries at the Museum*.

Tim has an undergraduate degree in elementary education from St. Bonaventure University and a master's degree in creative studies from Buffalo State College. He has trained in improvisational comedy at The Second City in Toronto, and often uses improv in his speaking engagements and workshops. He is a teacher at Mount St. Mary Academy and an adjunct member of the communications faculty at SUNY Buffalo State and St. Bonaventure University. Reach him via Twitter @TimOShei or through [www.timoshei.com](http://www.timoshei.com) or [www.LiveStarringYou.com](http://www.LiveStarringYou.com).

