

Media Kit for Jessie Campagna

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Book Synopsis for *Marker and Lid*

One Marker.

One Lid.

All of the feelings finally “click”.

Sometimes you're a marker.

Sometimes you're a lid.

But no matter who you are,
you have very important gifts.

Marker and Lid is a children's book under 600 words. This delightful story empowers each of us to feel strength and joy in our own special gifts. Together, Marker and Lid journey through highs and lows and finally understand how important it is to be oneself.

Short Bio

Jessie Campagna is fulfilling her lifetime dream of writing, illustrating and publishing her own books. Twenty-three years of teaching have cultivated within her a devotion to childhood, and she loves to empower children. *Marker and Lid* is her first book. She welcomes the opportunity for in-person and virtual school or library visits to share her passion of bringing out the light within every person. For more information, visit JessieCampagna.com.

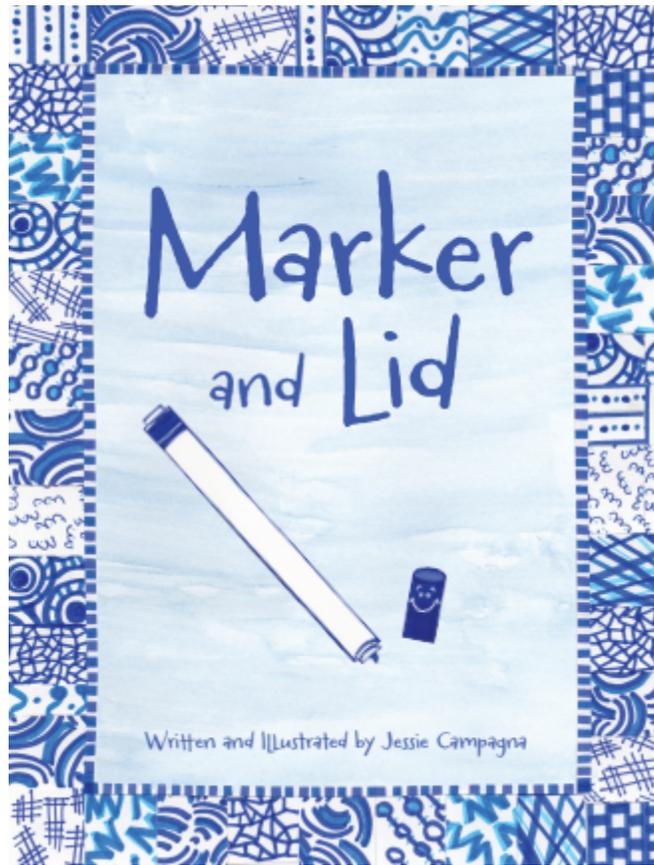
Long Bio

Jessie Campagna is fulfilling her lifetime dream of writing, illustrating, and publishing her own books. Twenty-three years of teaching have cultivated within her a devotion to the wonder of childhood. Jessie owns a preschool in Colorado where she lives with her wonderful husband and incredible teenage daughters near the mountains. She gathers bouquets from her backyard wildflower garden while fluffy chickens peck the grass near her bare feet. At any given time, a bumbleberry pie or veggie cake is likely in the oven. Jessie grew up in Fort Collins, CO, and she enjoys remaking ordinary things into treasures. *Marker and Lid* is her first book. Jessie welcomes the opportunity for in-person and virtual school or library visits to share her passion of bringing out the light within every person. For more information, visit JessieCampagna.com.

Headshots



Book Cover



Jessie's Social Channels & Online

jessiecampagna.com

markerandlid.com

Jessie Campagna on Facebook

<https://www.instagram.com/jessiecampagna/>

Q&A

Q: How did you come up with the idea for *Marker and Lid*?

A: I have been a teacher for such a long time that I can make up a quick story about any little thing. One day I saw a lonely lid in the corner of my classroom, without a marker to keep safe, and it spun into a story in my mind within a few days. I just kept thinking about that lonely lid.

Q: Can you tell us a bit about your background and what inspired you to start writing and illustrating a children's book?

A: I have been a teacher for 23 years. I love early childhood education and have found so much joy in teaching as my career. I even opened a little preschool in 2010, called LMNO Preschool. The transition from teacher to author has been really amazing. I have wanted to be an author/illustrator my whole adult life, so it was simmering inside of me all this time. I believe my experiences teaching children and stories for all these years brought me here. In the fall of 2023, I enrolled in a Children's Book writing class. That was so incredible because it gave me the breakdown I needed. Page after page of notes and hours of modules ultimately led me to jotting down book ideas. Honestly, some of them were not great. And some of them are still there as future stories to tell.

I felt concerned about picking the right story with the right message for my debut book. It took me some time to settle on starting with *Marker and Lid*.

Q: What was the most challenging part of creating your debut book?

A: Before I settled on *Marker and Lid*, I felt ideas bubbling and simmering in my head. I wrote them out, even doodled illustrations. But none of them were what I wanted to put out into the world as my first book. That part seemed stressful, full of pressure I put on myself. If I look back through the years, I have wanted this so badly, and it really took a lot of trial and error to get here. I think I was given that time so that I could really understand that this message is not about me at all. It is about everyone else. It feels freeing and powerful and lovely to have a message that is not about me. That is when I knew I was in the right spot and I could really sail forward. I feel like that is when the challenges started to melt away.

Q: Can you describe your typical day when working on a book? How do you balance writing and illustrating?

A: I tend to be task oriented and I appreciate crossing stuff off of my list. In writing and working with My Word Publishing, there has been a running list, but no stress or deadlines attached. It keeps me motivated to work on a little bit or a lot each day. The process seems to go in phases: ideas, then writing, then manuscript revision, then storyboard for illustrations. Next revisions of the storyboard and then the actual art work begins. The thing is, this list of tasks overlaps with learning social media, understanding marketing, and working on website content. I am extremely grateful for every meeting on my calendar that had anything to do with this process. I learned so much from dozens of people along the way. I had to borrow belief from so many people who saw something in me I could not see. I had a big goal I set for myself, and I had this silent challenge to make that happen. I think that has been a good takeaway from this process for me. Set goals and work towards them every single day, even in the tiniest way. The right people are out there with big brains and big hearts. Just keep going. Progress is progress.

Q: How do you ensure that your illustrations complement and enhance the story?

A: This was a process. I wanted the color blue to be enough through the illustrations. The whole book is about being *enough* as we are. So blue needed to translate into lots of pages, and keep visual interest for the reader and listener. That brought me to my next challenge, I have never seen myself as a dynamic artist. I love to create art and I love to try new things, but this had a whole next-level sincerity I needed to convey. So during the process, the manuscript naturally parted at what could be pages, and the *feeling* of that page needed an illustration. Some of them I could just imagine right away. For some I searched through art and ideas from other artists and then made ideas into my own. For some, I honestly thought, “what am I capable of making here?” Self doubt creeps in, and I had a lot of art I didn’t use because I just didn’t think it would be good enough to be in a book. Ironic, since that surrounds one of the themes of *Marker and Lid*. I used lots of shades of blue and lots of sources for blue. Watercolor, oil pastel, pencil, pen and marker are all within the pages because I didn’t want it to seem one dimensional. I wanted the lens of the story to reflect Marker’s blue work and also Marker and Lid’s “enoughness” as a single color.

Q: What themes or messages do you hope children take away from your book?

A: Each of us is special in our own way and we are all made for something different. There is no need to compare and feel less than another, because your personal gifts are so valuable to this world. You are enough. Celebrate being different and find the joy in who you are. The more we embrace the power of who we are as individuals, the more we can tap into that beautiful space that we are meant to impact. We can appreciate each other by learning and growing and serving one another if we lean into our differences instead of trying to be the same.

As we grow up, the comparison game is lost within us over and over. We can always find someone more talented, more wise, more fit, more... anything. I think this robs us of what we are made for and what productive thought feels like. I really want to shout out the message that we are all enough, just as we are. We are all special just as we are. Let's embrace it, practice it, say it, show it, and feel proud, rather than feeling like we aren't enough. Every person on this earth has something I don't have, it's just a fact. The days I feel peace are days when I realize I have something they don't have, and that is why we all need each other.

Q: Can you share any insights into the journey of getting your book published?

A: There are so many choices for publishing. I was convinced it would be best to go a more traditional route, but when I really looked into how to do it, I realized that is not my path. I am so happy I worked with My Word Publishing. They offer a hybrid approach where I am surrounded by incredible people who guide me every step of the way. I paid upfront for this team of experts, ensuring I did not need to hunt for each bit of help along the way. I knew that would have been discouraging, as it has been in the past. For me, hybrid publishing was a great option. I am published independently and I keep the rights to the story and art. Yippee!

Q: How do you handle feedback or criticism of your work?

A: This has been such an interesting journey. I have felt like the big-ness of this dream has really humbled me. Simply stated, I needed others to come alongside me because I had no idea what I was doing. That makes it easy to take critique and suggestions. I want *Marker and Lid* to matter. So, I needed to know what others saw and felt when they read it in different stages. Sometimes what someone said really made a huge difference in the

trajectory of the story, and sometimes it didn't. I felt very open through the process and I know I was blessed with incredible insight and assistance all along the way.

Q: Are there any children's book authors or illustrators who have influenced your work or whom you admire?

A: I am a big fan of *Curious George* by Margaret and HA Ray. The affirmation repeated within each story of the series, plus mischievous adventures and finally solutions found by that little monkey are funny and clever. I like that some of the stories are based on feelings children will experience, but with a lack-of-supervision twist that is mesmerizing to a young audience. I like the problem/solution pace to children's books as well.

Lion & Mouse by Jerry Pinkney is another favorite. It is nearly wordless, leaving room for readers to soak in the meaning for themselves. I am drawn to other books like that, too. *Float*, by Daniel Miyares is a beautiful wordless story. The illustrations are soft and wonderful in both of these delightful books.

A Tree is Nice, by Marc Simont is so simple and lovely, and could literally reach anyone at any stage of life. That is a keeper for me, it just makes me feel good inside. I am also touched by the way the illustrator alternates from colored pages to black and white drawings.

Q: What do you think are the most important qualities of a great children's book?

A: The most important quality is the relatability of the book. If a child can see a connection between the book and real feelings, that is the gold. No one has ever been a lion, but the characteristics of that lion in a children's book, the trials, triumphs of that lion, are the things children have the capacity to understand. Their natural empathy and sense of wonder serve them in this stretch of imagination. As I select books to place in my classroom library, I want concepts that leave a lasting conversation point, a thread I can pull to extend the literature into our day. It's so meaningful when that happens. And I am very inspired by artwork that was made the old fashioned way. My heart just likes the effort, creativity, vulnerability and dedication of hand-made art.

Q: How do you think the role of children's books is evolving in today's digital age?

A: This question cuts right to what I believe. Human connection, time spent off of screens, and the need for relationships always rises to the top for a child's well being, so paper books with actual pages are more important than ever. As a parent and a teacher, I see the way

reading aloud brings two or more people together. There is power in that connection. Some of my favorite times at home and in my classroom are spent reading aloud, looking at all the eager eyes in anticipation of reading it again after the last page has been turned. This is what we are wired for. People of all ages crave human interaction, thoughts to ponder aloud together, and a shared experience. This is the unending power of a children's book when read aloud.