

Questions You Might Want to Ask Me (OR NOT!)

Of course, I'm most excited to hear your interpretations of my works and to answer specific questions about my creation of them. But this list might also spark some ideas. It's a mash-up of questions I've either been asked before or have read online. I haven't prepared answers to any of them. My replies will be spontaneous and conversational.

— Phyllis Cole-Dai

1. As a child, what did you want to do when you grew up?
2. When did you first realize you wanted to be a writer?
3. How long does it take you to write a book?
4. What is your work schedule like when you're writing?
5. What would you say is your most interesting writing quirk?
6. What do you like to do when you're not writing?
7. What was one of the most surprising things you've learned in creating your books?
8. How many books have you written? Which is your favorite?
9. Do you hear from your readers much? What kinds of things do they say?
10. What's your purpose as a writer?
11. What is the first book that made you cry?
12. Does writing energize or exhaust you?
13. How do you deal with writer's block?
14. Have you ever gotten *reader's* block?
15. Did you ever consider writing under a pseudonym?
16. Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?
17. What other authors are you friends with, and how do they help you become a better writer?
18. Do you want each book to stand on its own, or are you trying to build a body of work with connections between each book?
19. If you could give your younger writing-self any advice, what would it be?
20. How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?
21. What was an early experience where you learned that language had power?
22. What's your favorite stage of writing?
23. Do you base your characters on real people?
24. How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?
25. What does literary success look like to you?
26. What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?
27. Do you view writing as a kind of spiritual practice?
28. What's the most difficult thing about writing characters who are very different from you?
29. How many hours a day do you write?

30. What period of your life do you find that you write about most often?
31. What did you edit *out* of the book under discussion?
32. What are the ethics of writing about historical figures?
33. How do you select the names of your characters?
34. If you didn't write, what would you do for work?
35. Do you read your book reviews? How do you deal with bad or good ones?
36. Do you hide any secrets in your books that only a few people will find?
37. What was your hardest scene in this book to write?
38. Do you ever Google yourself?
39. What one thing would you give up to become a better writer?
40. What is the most difficult part of your artistic process?
41. Has your family supported your career as a writer?
42. Who has helped you become a better writer?