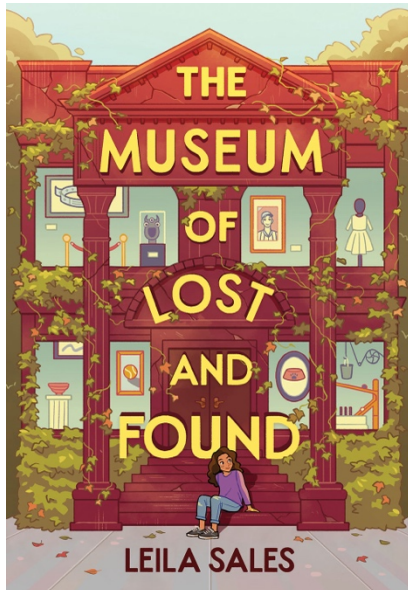


## Build Your Own Museum with Author Leila Sales

### About the author

Leila Sales is the author of eight critically acclaimed novels for children and young adults, including *This Song Will Save Your Life*, *Once Was a Time*, and, most recently, *The Museum of Lost and Found*. Her books have been optioned for stage and screen, selected for many state award lists, translated into a dozen languages, and received numerous starred reviews. Leila grew up outside of Boston, Massachusetts; graduated from the University of Chicago; worked in book publishing in New York City; and now runs a book development consultancy in Austin, Texas. Find Leila online at [leilasales.com](http://leilasales.com), and invite her to visit your school by emailing [leila@leilasales.com](mailto:leila@leilasales.com).



### About the book

Vanessa isn't sure which happened first: finding the abandoned museum or losing her best friend, Bailey. She doesn't know what to do with herself now that Bailey has left her behind—but when she stumbles upon an empty, forgotten museum, her purpose becomes clear. Vanessa starts filling the museum with her own artifacts and memories, hoping that perhaps if she can find the right way to tell the story of her broken friendship, she can figure out how to make it whole again.

As Vanessa's museum grows, it seems like the place might have the answers to other questions, too. Like why a mysterious work of art was left behind. Or how to deal with a military dad who's trying to parent from thousands of miles away. Or why Vanessa's bad habit is getting harder and harder to quit. Or even, maybe, how to set the past to rest and find a way to move forward.

Moving and charming, *The Museum of Lost and Found* is about how we grow apart from some people as we grow up—and how sometimes we can find new pieces of ourselves in the aftermath.

### About the workshop

In this workshop, designed for fourth through eighth graders, author Leila Sales works with students to build their own museums, just like the characters in her middle-grade novel *The Museum of Lost and Found*. First, Leila introduces students to the book itself, explaining how it came to be and showing them inside the writing and publishing process. Next, ideally with the support of a curator, the students explore a real museum exhibition and hone their own curatorial eyes. The students identify their personal areas of interest and design museums around them. At the end of the workshop, students can lead one another on “tours” of their museums, and then take their museum designs home with them as a keepsake.

## Learning objectives

This is a multidisciplinary workshop that combines close textual reading with a hands-on art project and encourages students to incorporate their own unique interests. Students will leave this workshop having honed skills including the following:

- **Creativity and Self-Expression:** Students explore their individual interests and express themselves through the ideation, design, and creation of their museum exhibits.
- **Hands-on Engagement with Literature:** After reading *The Museum of Lost and Found*, students apply the museum-building skills from the narrative to a tangible project of their own.
- **Empathy and Perspective:** By selecting and interpreting artifacts that reflect various identities and experiences, students cultivate empathy and understanding for different individuals and communities.
- **Critical Thinking and Research:** Students learn how to conduct research effectively by gathering information about their chosen topics. They then analyze their gathered information and artifacts to construct cohesive and engaging narratives.
- **Museum Literacy:** Crafting their own museums will inform how students approach any museums they might visit in the future, giving them the tools to understand any museum and to feel like they belong there.

Leila has previously offered this workshop at the Jewish Museum in New York City. You can read more about that experience here: <https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/childrens/childrens-authors/article/93887-at-the-museum-with-leila-sales.html>

