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Available for visits to schools, libraries and bookstores. Small groups preferred. Presentations include writing tips, my history as a writer, followed by slides and readings from either LEO POLITI, ARTIST OF THE ANGELS or ON THE HOME FRONT, GROWING UP IN WARTIME ENGLAND. Fees negotiable.

AUTHOR BIO

Originally from England, I am the author of 14 published books, 13 of which are nonfiction. I have also written numerous articles for children's magazines. Most of my writing is inspired by the over 150 countries I have visited. "The Flores Family Cafe" is my first picture book.

ON THE HOME FRONT, GROWING UP IN WARTIME ENGLAND

Written in first person, the story is told from the child's point of view. It describes my experiences as a child growing up in a country at war. Written originally as a college paper I first wrote down everything I could remember and then did research to back up my memories. I discovered everything I had written was correct. We lived in the countryside so didn't live under the threat of the constant bombing experienced by Britain's cities, but many things changed for us all, most of them during the first year of the war. I was four at the time but everything is still as vivid as if it happened yesterday. Like my tenth book on Leo Politi, it is appropriate for both adults and children. The book won awards from both the National Social Studies Council and from the National Council of Teachers of English. My talk is illustrated with black and white overheads. Suitable for grades 4 through 8.

LEO POLITI ARTIST OF THE ANGELS

Although Politi's first books date back to 1946, his twenty children's books, mainly about places and festivals in Los Angeles, are timeless. Olvera Street especially provided Leo with endless inspiration. The first author to feature minority children as his main characters, he made Latinos and Chinese children in particular feel important and accepted for the first time. In writing my biography I interviewed numerous people. Some were children when they first met Leo. The interview process was like untangling a giant spider's web.

Children motivated Leo in his painting, writing, and drawing. Leo was a kind man, a gentle man, an unassuming man. I often wonder if he fully understood the depth of his talent. Leo knew that beauty could be fleeting, found even in the most unexpected places. He wanted to share with children things he thought they might not see for themselves – a flower, a culture, a moment. The Getty Museum is currently reissuing his wonderful books for a new generation of children, teachers, and librarians. Other titles can be obtained on line. I illustrate my talk with color slides. I have my own projector and screen. Grades K through 5.