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PHOTO BY NORMAN E. JONES

Christine Platt is a literacy advocate and historian who believes in using the power of storytelling as a tool for social change. She holds a BA in Africana studies, an MA in African American studies, and a JD in general law. Although her only daughter is now in college, Christine Platt continues to draw on their adventures together as inspiration for her children's literature. She has written more than thirty books for young readers and currently resides in Washington, DC.

CHARACTERIZATION

The details an author provides about characters help us feel like we know them. Everything from the way a character speaks to their favorite things to how they act teaches us who they are.

- What are you learning about Frankie?
- What are some of her character traits that contribute to her being a good journalist?

JOURNALISM

Christine Platt defines journalism as “the profession of writing for newspapers, magazines, or news websites. People who work in this profession are called *journalists*.”

- What are you learning about the work of journalists?
- What are you learning about the various kinds of news stories?
- Which kinds of news stories have you read or are interested in reading?

UNSUNG HERO: ALICE ALLISON DUNNIGAN

Author Christine Platt dedicates *Frankie and Friends: Breaking News* to Alice Dunnigan, “the first Black woman journalist to earn White House press credentials.” Learn about this unsung hero directly from her descendants:

<https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/alice-allison-dunnigan-video/kentucky-studies/>.

Frankie has learned a lot about journalists from her mother, who “always said that journalists had a responsibility to be honest, to only report on the FACTS” (page 45). Invite students to consider the following:

- What facts are you learning about Alice Allison Dunnigan?
- In what ways do Alice Allison Dunnigan’s accomplishments extend beyond journalism?

THINK AND WRITE LIKE A JOURNALIST

As Frankie’s mom goes off to cover a breaking news story, she says, “Be on the lookout for developing stories at home. News is happening all around us all the time” (page 11). Invite students to make note of the world around them like journalists.

- What observations can you make in your life about what brings you joy, what you are wondering about, and/or what worries you?
- How might these observations be useful to you, your family, your friends, and your community?
- How will you share these observations? (Answers might include a news show, a news article, or a podcast.)



Watch the Candlewick Black Creators series to learn more about Christine Platt.
[BlackCreatorsSeries.candlewick.com](https://www.candlewick.com/blackcreatorsseries)

Tip sheet developed by Dr. Sonja Cherry-Paul, founder of Red Clay Educators