

The 2019 #PBChat Mentorship

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Adam Wallace is a children's author based in Melbourne, Australia, whose books have reached as far as Slovenia, the White House, the New York Times Bestseller List, and Khloe Kardashian's house! Adam has written around 60 books, and plans on writing many, many more now and in the future! Speaking of, it's time for him to get to work!

Adam Wallace will be accepting applications for: Picture books, Chapter books, rhyming books, elephant books.

1. **If you had to wear the same t-shirt with one word on it for a year, what word would you choose?**

Huh?

2. **If you had your own talk show, who would your first three guests be? Bonus points for sharing the name of your show and what it would be about.**

Hmmmm, well the show would be called Here's Wally, and it would be about writing and philosophy and inspiration and happy news! First three guests would be Andy Griffiths, because he's awesome and the greatest Australian Children's Book author, then Jerry Spinelli because he wrote my favourite YA book (Stargirl), and then Bruce Lee, who is dead but I really want to talk to him because his philosophies are amazing!

3. **If you could instantly become an expert in something (non-writing-related), what would it be and why?**

Golf. No doubt. Because I love it and because I want to be better at it and because I'm not better at it!!!

4. **What are your five favorite picture books not written and/or illustrated by you?**

Stuck; Oh, the places you'll go; The Lorax; The Pinkish, Purplish, Bluish Egg; The Monster at the end of this book.

5. **What is the toughest feedback you've ever received?**

That character was really annoying.

6. **What are some of the most important lessons you've learned so far?**

You have to write what you love, not what you know! I believe energy flows from the writer to the page, and from the page to the reader, so you need to be putting all that energy into your work, and you can only do that if you love what you are writing. Also read your work out loud! Again and again!

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7. What writing-related accomplishment are you most proud of?

Getting letters from parents saying their child doesn't read but that they then read my book over and over and are now reading constantly.

8. What are your dreams and goals as an author?

To influence, entertain and inspire as many people as possible. And to make them laugh as much as possible, give them brightness and joy while they read or listen to my books. And I want to have a movie made of one of my books and have awesome merchandise haha!

9. What are your strengths as a mentor?

20 years of writing, 10 of those as a full-time author. I have written for 6 different publishers, hosted panels on writing, and also self-published, so I have the experience behind me. Also I love collaborating and discussing writing and I love the process of writing, seeing something come together. And I'm kinda nice haha!

10. Who are you not the best mentor for?

Someone who doesn't like honest feedback. Someone who is grumpy. Someone who thinks anyone can write a children's book. Someone who doesn't like animals.

11. What are the most important things you're seeking in a mentee?

Fun, openness, willingness to try something different and see what happens, and not be afraid to throw it out and start again.

12. What is your feedback/critique style like?

Hmmmm, I like to be pretty straight-talking, but also like to keep it fun and open. Especially with rhyme I will say how I think it can be improved, but also know that anything I say is totally my thoughts and can be taken on or not. I know my word isn't the be all and end all ... close, but not quite haha!

13. During the mentorship, how will you help your mentee and their stories develop?

Well, it will depend on what level the mentee is at, and I keep wanting to write Mentos, but have resisted. Definitely working on a manuscript or manuscripts, looking at structure, feel, rhythm, etc; also very happy to provide industry insight and info; publishing vs self-publishing vs partnership publishing. I'm not so strong on query letters and social media, but can still give some thoughts and direction. And whatever else happens to come up. This will be fluid. We will find things as we go along, but to start, the stories!

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14. What type of relationship do you hope to establish with your mentee?

One where we can laugh and chat and discuss things other than books, but then also when we get to it really get stuck in and do the work together.

15. What is your style of communication like?

I yell. A lot. And point my finger. Oh no, wait, that's my mum, haha! I write with a lot of stream of consciousness, and my communication style is pretty much the same. Not always sure what is going to come out haha!

16. While reading prospective mentee's manuscripts, what do you hope to experience?

I want to experience the sense of joy in the writing, that it isn't just plonked down, but that something a little extra has gone into it. I want to see that the mentee isn't talking down to kids, and that regardless of technicalities, there is a great story in there.

17. What will you look for in the applications you receive?

A love of writing and a love of kid's books and a love of kids. Everything else will flow from that.

18. What about the idea of mentoring excites you most?

Being able to give back to a community that has uplifted me from the moment I stepped into it. Children's book authors are the most wonderful people in the world, and I want someone else to experience that journey, and if I can be a part of it, even better!

19. Is there anything, author-related, you wish people would ask you about? If so, what, and how would you respond?

Nope, haha, I do school visits, I get pretty much every question under the sun. There isn't much left to ask!

20. What advice or inspiring and/or motivational words would you like to offer up to anyone applying to be your mentee or simply reading this questionnaire?

Just be yourself. Seriously. It is easy to think you should be a certain way or write a certain way to be an author, and especially a published author, but be yourself. And write every day. Every. Single. Day!