

The 2019 #PBChat Mentorship

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Pam Calvert is the author of seven picture books, with more on the way. Her most recent title is *BRIANNA BRIGHT, BALLERINA KNIGHT* (Two Lions), about a spunky princess who's trying to find her talent. Pam is well-known for her award-winning *PRINCESS PEEPERS* books as well as her math adventure series and is happy to announce that her newest title, *FLASH: THE LITTLE FIRE ENGINE*, is forthcoming in November 2019! She offers a free picture book workshop, Picture Book University <http://www.pamcalvert.blogspot.com/p/pb-critiques.html>, on her blog as well as highly praised critique service. You can read more about it at pamcalvert.blogspot.com/p/pb-critiques.html. You can find Pam on Twitter @[pammcalvert](https://twitter.com/pammcalvert). She's also very proud to announce that one of her previous mentees, Derick Wilder, went on to sign with an agent and has sold two picture books!

Pam will be accepting applications for: prose picture book texts/nonfiction

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

PRINCESS ;)

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.

My show called, ALL IN THE MEMES, would discuss the weirdest and most famous memes. My guest list would include Grumpy cat (God rest his soul), Lol cats, and Hwang Min-woo.

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

Dog training. I have a 5 month old puppy. Nuff said.

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

Nugget and Fang by Tammi Sauer, Diary of a Worm by Doreen Cronin, Creepy Carrots by Peter Reynolds, Backhoe Joe by Lori Alexander, Lily's Purple Plastic Purse by Kevin Henkes

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

Hmm...that's hard to say. I guess when I was talking to an agent about one of my novels. She told me I didn't exude the times very well (it was historical fiction and set in the 70's). I then shot back that another famous author (who wrote a similar theme) did about the same as I did. Oh...that wasn't the right thing to say. ;) Tough on me because I was defending. Never defend when you're getting feedback. Take it and think it through.

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

Don't worry about what you're writing—whether it's good enough. JUST DO IT!

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

Both Princess Peepers and my math adventures have been translated into different languages. It's fun to see that!

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

I hope to continue to write and publish picture books. I also hope to get a novel published. I've been very close over the years.

9. What are your strengths as a mentor?

I'm good at story structure and rhythm. I'm also very good at character driven stories. I can help people take their manuscripts to the next level.

10. Who are you not the best mentor for?

I have done rhyme and can critique it but it's not my favorite.

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

They need to think in pictures and have their viewpoint from a child.

12. What is your feedback/critique style like?

I'll do line by line and then talk about how to improve the story. I'll also discuss story structure and how to make that main character more memorable. I don't give false praise.

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

I'll help in any capacity whether it's to approach agents, improve manuscripts, work on social network ideas, etc. My experience is there to help my mentee in any way.

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

I would love to be able to help my mentee over the hump to help them get that aha moment and take their work to the next level so they can sell their work and see their dream come alive.

15. What is your style of communication like?

I'm open to email at any time. If I'm busy, I'll let my mentee know when to expect to hear back from me.

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

I hope to find someone with passion and raw talent who is ready to take their work to the next level.

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

Tenacity—someone who isn't afraid of getting edited and taking criticism. One who can receive edits and revise their work effectively. It's like magic when I see that happen!

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

I love when I see someone grow as a writer and that I had a hand in it. Love that!!!

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

Why did you become an author?

I would respond—it was in my blood. I had to be one. And if I didn't succeed, I would be writing stories anyway. That's how you know you have the passion enough to do this. If you think it's easy, you might as well find something else to do.

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?

If you have a passion for this then I'll take a bet on you that you WILL succeed. Just don't give up.