



Edgar-nominated author **Bruce Hale** has written and/or illustrated over 60 books for young readers, including the popular *Chet Gecko Mysteries* series, *The Monstertown Mysteries*, and *Clark the Shark*. His *Murder, My Tweet* won a Little D Award for Humor Writing. An actor and Fulbright Scholar (in Storytelling), Bruce is in demand as a speaker, having presented at conferences, universities, and schools from New York to New Delhi. His acting resume includes regional commercials, community theater, and an independent film, *The Ride*. Currently, he lives in Santa Barbara, where he hikes, daydreams, and performs with Mezcal Martini, a latin-jazz band.

Bruce will be accepting applications from: fiction picture book authors. Humorous stories are particularly appreciated.

1. If you could be in any movie or tv series, what would it be and what character would you play?

Jeeves and Wooster. I'd be Jeeves.

2. If you could have any supernatural power, what would it be and why?

The ability to fly, because it's awesomely cool.

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

Where the Wild Things Are, Tuesday, I Want My Hat Back, Your Alien, Click Clack Moo

4. What writing and/or publishing-related accomplishment are you most proud of?

I'm proud of my Chet Gecko mystery series and of all the reluctant readers it's enticed into reading.

5. What about mentoring excites you most?

I love being able to help people tell their story more effectively and (hopefully) get it published.

6. What are your strengths as a mentor?

Patience, a positive attitude, a sense of humor, and 20 years' experience.

7. What is your feedback/critique style like?

Honest, but with compassion.

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

The ability to not take criticism personally, but to learn and grow from it.

A good sense of humor.

Persistence, and the willingness to keep working on a story until it reaches its potential.

9. Who are you not the best mentor for?

I'm not the best mentor for nonfiction or serious stories, as I haven't written any.

10. How will you help your mentee and their stories develop?

I will work with my mentee in finding the essence of their story and honing it into something that editors would be interested in. Most of my work will be focused on critiquing manuscripts, although I can also work on dummies if they have one, and provide suggestions for improving query letters.

11. What is your style of communication like?

I tend to be straightforward, although I'm not brutal in my honesty. I always keep in mind that I was once in the mentee's shoes.

12. What are you looking for in the applications you receive?

I'll look mostly at the quality of the work, although I look favorably on those who have gotten involved with SCBWI, taken workshops, or done other things to seriously improve their work.

13. Any tips/advice for applicants to make their applications and/or manuscripts shine?

Put in the time to edit your story over and over and proofread with a fine-tooth comb. The further along the story is, the more I'll be able to help take it to the next level.

14. 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?

Trust your creative intuition. Everyone has a story to tell; hang in there until you find the best way to tell yours.