



Dev Petty writes the words for picture books.

She's the author of *I DON'T WANT TO BE A FROG* (and three other FROG books), *CLAYMATES*, *THE BEAR MUST GO ON*, and has more books coming in the next two years. Dev also helps published and aspiring picture book writers doing manuscript critiques and freelance editing.

She used to be a painter in movies- like in the Matrix films and others...But now she's only artistic enough to be dangerous.

Dev loves writing picture books because they're like little paper movies. She happens to like stories that make you laugh a little and think a little. She thinks she's a pretty lucky customer to have this job.

Dev lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with her husband, daughters, dogs, and a snake named "Boots". She's great at word jumbles, sandwich making, and finishing thi-

Dev will be accepting applications for: Picture book authors.

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

Trinity in the Matrix, because she's a boss.

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

Invisibility. Because I get nervous around people but I'm super curious. Besides, if could learn to fly then I'd be invisible AND flying.

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

The Lost Thing, Sean Tan; Amos & Boris, William Steig; Extra Yarn, Mac Barnett; Ferdinand; Munro Leaf; I Want my Hat Back; Jon Klassen

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

CLAYMATES was probably my most experimental, weird, totally-couldn't-be-published, ME thing I ever wrote and I'm so happy it's out there in the world. It was a big risk and it paid off.

5. What about mentoring excites you most?

I do a lot of paid critiques and also critique for a lot of friends. I've been a mentor before and really enjoyed the process. I got a really warm welcome from some amazing people when I began and I welcome any chance to pay that forward.

6. What are your strengths as a mentor?

Helping to find theme and threads of a story, economy of words, humor, endings with punch.

7. What is your feedback/critique style like?

I try, as much as possible to give clear advice about potential wording changes while also giving narrative feedback that might also inform future projects. I'm honest, but kind. I try to give people more than one suggestion for how to solve a problem and the space to find their own voice while still improving the story.

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

A willingness to take risks but also someone who has done the footwork to learn about the business, general conventions etc. I would like someone who really wants to be a writer, as their job, and not just to publish a book. Humor, thick skin, someone who says "What if...?" a lot.

9. Who are you not the best mentor for?

I am probably a better critiquer of at least somewhat humorous stories than I am of quiet or reflective/sad books (though I sometimes write those too). I am not great with rhyming texts though I enjoy many of them, I'm just not as great at critiquing them.

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

I am always happy to help line edit and arrange/rearrange words but I think helping writers find their theme, the point, the premise is probably where I excel. I'm also happy to answer questions about the industry and the realities of it. Understanding how long it takes to build a good PB writing career is important in terms of how much a writer has to write and learn and how they can relate to the industry at large.

11. What is your style of communication like?

I'm not sure if this means method or style. Style? Chatty, honest, I probably repeat myself to get my point across and I probably swear too much. Method? I'm better chatting via text/chat/email than the phone, at least about editing/stories. For advice about the business, phone is fine.

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

I would certainly welcome writers who have a number of stories they've already written and feel they've found or are close to finding their voice/style. There's so much great info out there, so I'd welcome people who've already read a lot about picture book writing and put it into practice.

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

Humor is always good, eagerness, excitement about this, and a commitment to writing as a craft and business. If you've been in a crit group, for sure let me know. I'm less concerned with paid conferences and the like. For me, you have to read a TON of Pbs, and write a ton of pbs to really get this. (I'm still working on this myself).