



**Dev Petty [She/Her]** Dev Petty is the author of I DON'T WANT TO BE A FROG (Doubleday) -along with a few other FROG books, CLAYMATES (LBYSR), the upcoming MOTH & BUTTERFLY: Ta-Da! (Nancy Paulsen Books, June '21), HOW OLD IS MR. TORTOISE (Abrams '22) and many more to come. She likes books that make you laugh a lot and think a little, sometimes the reverse.

Before becoming an author, Dev was a senior visual effects artist on The Matrix films and many others. Dev lives in her native San Francisco Bay Area with her husband, daughters, dogs, cat, and a snake named "Boots"

**Dev is accepting applications for:** Picture book fiction authors.

**Dev is accepting applications from:** unagented/unpublished creators only

**1. What's one non-publishing-related career that you wish you could have?**

I'd love to be one of those scientists, like an entomologist or something, who's spends their time in a wild jungle looking for one specific bug and eventually finds it. Those people seem really happy.

**2. If you could have dinner with one person, dead or alive, who would it be and why?**

My grandma Ida. Without question. She was the most charming, intelligent, brave person. I'd savor every moment of that dinner, even when she would certainly slap my hand red when I reached for the check.

**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 premis 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/Zoom 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. I also really appreciate when people take risks. 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).

**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?**

Picture books can be rejected for a dozen reasons- you don't want it being boring to be one of them. Be bold, take risks, go out swinging. it being boring to be one of them. Be bold, take risks, go out swinging.