



Joanna Ho [She/Her/Hers] is the New York Times bestselling author of *Eyes that Kiss in the Corners*. Her upcoming picture books include *Playing at the Border: A Story of Yo-Yo Ma* (Fall 2021), *Eyes that Speak to the Stars* (2022) and *One Day* (2023); her debut YA novel, *The Silence that Binds Us* will be released in 2022. She is a writer and educator with a passion for anti-bias, anti-racism and equity work. She holds a BA in psychology from the University of Pennsylvania, and a master's from the Principal Leadership Institute at Berkeley. She is currently the vice principal of a high school in the Bay Area, where she survives on homemade chocolate chip cookies, outdoor adventures, and dance parties with her kids.

Joanna is accepting applications for: lyrical picture books – fiction or non-fiction – with social justice themes. Especially seeking to work with an author from historically marginalized group(s).

Joanna is accepting applications from: unagented/unpublished creators AND agented creators who are not yet published

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

I have worn many hats in education from classroom teacher, school designer of a restorative alternative to prison program, professional development/learning experience creator, and am currently the vice principal of a small, high school. I really wish I could have been a professional hip hop dancer or a travel blogger – I would love to get paid to eat and travel the world.

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

My mom's dad. I never got to meet him because he passed when my mom was a teenager but I've heard so many stories and wish I could be in his presence for a moment.

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

How to Read a Book by Kwame Alexander and Melissa Sweet, *The Day you Begin* by Jacqueline Woodson and Rafael Lopez, *We Are Water Protectors* by Carole Lindstrom and Michaela Goade, *Drum Dream Girl* by Margarita Engle and Rafael Lopez, *All Because You Matter* by Tami Charles and Bryan Collier

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

Just writing the stories at all! There are so many reasons not to pursue a dream, but I'm proud that I started to write when I had no idea what I was doing and stuck with it.

5. What about mentoring excites you most?

I'm excited to build a new relationship and hopefully support a writer's skill/craft development so their valuable stories can be shared more widely with the world!

6. What are your strengths as a mentor?

Strong relationship builder, communicative

7. What is your feedback/critique style like?

Warm and direct

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

Someone who is reflective and open to feedback, who sees it as a gift and opportunity to grow. I'd love to work with someone who is critically conscious of social issues and desirous to make change through story but also understands that stories are only one step. More technically, I'd love to work with someone who is communicative and responsive and able to use basic tech like Word, Docs, Zoom etc.

9. Who are you not the best mentor for?

People who are defensive when they receive feedback; people who write humorous, quirky picture books – I wish I was funny, but I'm just not.

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

Critiquing manuscripts through feedback and revision cycles, developing story ideas/brainstorming new ideas. I see myself as a critique partner

11. What is your style of communication like?

I am most communicative through email or text and am typically pretty responsive to both. I'd like to meet a few times virtually to discuss mentee manuscripts and feedback/revisions.

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

I'd like to work with someone who is dedicated to the craft and committed to the process of constant revision and iteration. Someone who feels a strong purpose in pursuing this art and has a learning mindset. I want to be moved by stories!

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

Tell the story of your heart, not the story you think someone wants to hear or that you think needs to be on bookshelves.

I also accept bribes of homemade chocolate chip cookies.

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?

Congratulations for making through this whole thing and for being here! Your stories are needed. Keep pushing forward.