



Pam Calvert [She/Her] is an award winning author as well as critique editor. She's known for her best selling math adventure line as well as her book series PRINCESS PEEPERS. Her newest book, FLASH THE LITTLE FIRE ENGINE, is now being translated into Russian as well as Korean. She loves to mentor aspiring picture book writers, most of whom have gone on to acquire their own agents afterwards. You can check out her tips on writing picture books on her YouTube channel: Picture Book University.

Pam is accepting applications for: fiction, nonfiction, STEM (no rhyme)

Pam is accepting applications from: unagented/unpublished creators AND agented creators who are not yet published.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'd love to be an interior decorator.

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

Jane Austen. I'd grill her about all her suitors!

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

What Are you So Grumpy About? By Tom Lichentheld, The Little Blue Truck by Alice Schertle, Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse by Kevin Henkes, Nugget and Fang by Tammi Sauer, The Bad Seed by Jory John

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

Having my books translated into different languages. It's such a rush to know that children all over the world read my stories.

5. What about mentoring excites you most?

When they get that agent and/or book deal! That's so exciting to me.

6. What are your strengths as a mentor?

I'm good at taking someone who has a lot of creativity and fine tuning them in getting structure down.

7. What is your feedback/critique style like?

I point out flaws/weaknesses of a story and suggest changes. I'll also go over story structure, style elements, things to elevate the plot, etc. If you like my videos on YouTube (Picture Book University), you'll get that kind of feedback.

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

I want someone who is creative and willing to take my suggestions and run with them.

9. Who are you not the best mentor for?

Rhyming stories. I do have clients who write rhyme and can analyze rhyme but most people don't do it well and I feel they hem themselves in by writing a rhyming story.

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

I like to discuss all stories/story ideas. From there, we pick around 4-5 to work on. By the end of my mentorship, the mentee should have at least three polished, strong manuscripts they can be proud of to shop to agents/editors. I also guide them through the agent process (even after the mentorship is over). I answer ANY questions and encourage them with how to develop their social media presence.

11. What is your style of communication like?

My communication style isn't structured. I answer when I have time, giving my mentee top priority. We usually talk around 2-3 times a week. Normally, I'm editing their manuscripts and answering questions via email. That's easiest for me since I have a busy life! ;)

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

Someone who is creative is number one with me. I love when I find someone who's craft isn't perfect....yet! And I can use that to help them discover the talent they possess. It's incredible when that happens! I'd like to find someone who creatively uses STEM topics in a fiction story. But I'm open to anything. Humor is my weakness but I do love sweet stories as well.

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

Pick your very best manuscripts to send along. And be prepared to send more if asked. Make your characters unique and use fun, interesting language. After all, you're trying to shine out of hundreds and even thousands of others to agents/editors.

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?

Be passionate about what you're doing. Read everything. Learn and grow! And if you're not chosen this time, please try again. I didn't choose Sylvia Chen the first year she submitted to me even though she did catch my eye. The next year, she subbed again and I chose her! She now has an agent and I can't wait to see WHEN she sells her books. That could be you if you don't give up!