



Tammi Sauer [She/Her] is the author of 30 picture books with more on the way. In addition to winning awards and earning starred reviews, Tammi's books have gone on to do great things. *Chicken Dance*, *Your Alien*, and *Nugget & Fang* were made into musicals that toured the nation. *Wordy Birdy* was named a Kids' Indie Next List book, the 2021 Book Choice for Read Across Oklahoma, and a Bank Street College Best Book of the Year. And *Your Alien*, an NPR Best Book of the Year, was released in Italian, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, and French which makes her feel extra fancy.

Tammi is accepting applications for: a writer of fiction. When it comes to picture books, I am a huge fan of heart and humor. I am open to rhyming manuscripts (two of my books are rhymers, and I have two more on the way).

Tammi is accepting applications from: unagented/unpublished creators AND agented creators who are not yet published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 think it would be fun to be sixteen again and work at Hideaway Pizza.

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

Without question, I would choose my mom. She was my favorite person. Shh. Don't tell the others. And gosh. Now I'm crying....

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

Okay, I could have listed 505 favorites, but these are the first five that came to mind:

- *I Have a Balloon* written by Ariel Bernstein, illustrated by Scott Magoon
- *Children Make Terrible Pets* written and illustrated by Peter Brown
- *Wolfie the Bunny* written by Ame Dyckman, illustrated by Zachariah OHhora
- *The Watermelon Seed* written and illustrated by Greg Pizzoli
- *Leonardo the Terrible Monster* written and illustrated by Mo Willems

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

Three of my books have been made into musicals that have toured the nation, many have been published in multiple languages, and one made its way into over a million boxes of Cheerios, but the thing I am most proud of has nothing to do with any of that. I most proud of the fact that my books have made a connection with kids. I receive *the best* letters. One of my favorites came from a little girl in Kansas. The last line of her letter to me was this: "You make me light up like Christmas lights." Oh, my heart!

5. What about mentoring excites you most?

I love when something GREAT happens for a mentee. Maybe she comes up with that elusive perfect line. Maybe he gets an agent. Maybe they get that first sale. Maybe she gets a starred review.

6. What are your strengths as a mentor?

I write books that are funny, have heart, and make good read-alouds. I'm also good at telling as much as possible in as little as possible. I think I can help a mentee to improve in these areas.

7. What is your feedback/critique style like?

I am honest. I don't just tell people what they want to hear. But guess what?! I'm also kind and encouraging. Promise!

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

The most important thing I am looking for in a mentee is someone who is eager to put in the work to make a good thing great.

9. Who are you not the best mentor for?

I am not the best mentor for people who write lyrical or nonfiction manuscripts.

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

I will help my mentee by offering feedback on manuscripts, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and answering my mentee's Deep Dark Questions about the business.

11. What is your style of communication like?

I prefer email. I will usually reply that day or the following one.

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

I am looking for something fresh and irresistible. And if you can make me laugh? Well, you get bonus points!

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

Send Your Very Best Manuscript not the one that needs the most work. I especially love helping people who are close to getting that YES.

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?

I think one of the very best ways to get good at writing picture books is to read--*and analyze!*--tons of picture books.

Also, this is my favorite quote about what it takes to write a picture book:

"My main considerations for any picture book are humor, emotion, just the right details, read-aloud-ability, pacing, page turns, and of course, plot. Something has to happen to your characters that young readers will care about and relate to. Oh, and you have to accomplish all that in as few words as possible, while creating plenty of illustration possibilities. No easy task."

--Lynn E. Hazen