

Anitra Rowe Schulte [she/her/hers]

Anitra will be accepting applications for: Fiction prose. While Anitra is interested in, and open to, mentoring all creators, she would be especially pleased to mentor a neurodiverse or disabled creator.



Bio: Anitra Rowe Schulte joined her first writing club in kindergarten and continues to love putting her heart on the page. A former newspaper reporter, Anitra loves telling stories that connect people. Her debut picture book, *Dancing with Daddy*, illustrated by Ziyue Chen (Two Lions) published in 2021, and her second picture book *Willow and Bunny*, illustrated by Christopher Denise (Two Lions) publishes in Fall 2022. Anitra teams with Chicago non-profit Leading with Literacy to coordinate an annual Holiday Book Drive. She lives west of Chicago with her husband, three daughters, and fluffy cat Pancake. Follow Anitra on Twitter at [@anitraschulte](https://twitter.com/anitraschulte), Instagram at [@anitraroweschulte](https://www.instagram.com/anitraroweschulte), and at www.anitraroweschulte.com.

1. You have two minutes to give a speech on anything! What would your topic be?

Picture books! But if pressed to choose something different, hospitality design. I've done a lot of writing for this field and love discussing beautiful transporive interiors.

2. If you could live in any film, tv, or book universe, what would it be?

The Grand Budapest Hotel or Moonrise Kingdom (Hello fellow Wes Anderson fans!) Being enveloped in lovely, strange, detailed worlds is something that unites and ignites my work and passions.

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

All the Way to Havana, A Big Mooncake for Little Star, Doctor DeSoto, Plant a Kiss, The Important Book

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

I started making picture books when I was very young, so being a children's author is my oldest, wildest, biggest dream. Fulfilling it has delivered more joy than I ever could have expected.

5. What about mentoring excites you most?

I love connecting with writers and sharing resources and ideas that I think will improve their work. Story editing is particularly exciting for me. In my former career (public relations), I managed teams of upcoming professionals. Mentoring colleagues and helping them develop their skills and build upon their strengths is so rewarding!

6. What are your strengths as a mentor?

I'm easy going, positive and very goal oriented. I definitely want to help my mentee make the most of the time we have together. I can't wait to collaborate on a plan that helps my mentee move the needle in a big way!

7. What is your feedback/critique style like?

I provide notes across all the basic storytelling elements and am sure to emphasize what is working well and what holds great promise. I also identify areas where the manuscript could be strengthened or whittled down to ensure that the heart comes through. In addition to overarching notes, I also provide line-level notes. Honing in on the hook, and thinking of the story from a sales lens, is expertise I also share.

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

I would be well paired with a mentee who writes from the heart, is ready to dig in right away, and is looking for detailed feedback on their work. When a writer's manuscripts come from a real and personal place, the importance and emotion is palpable. I love working with writers to tell THEIR story.

9. Who are you not the best mentor for?

I do not have experience in rhyme or non-fiction.

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

I look forward to helping a mentee across all areas, including industry insights, story critiques, developing new ideas, story comps (I read a lot of PBs each week and love coming up with comps!), refining hooks and queries, and developing platform (I really love the intersection of books and community). In short, I would answer any writing life question my mentee might have, to the very best of my ability. There's nothing more that I love chatting about than craft and career.

11. What is your style of communication like?

Monthly video chats and weekly email check-ins. I'm happy to provide feedback on any writing materials shared (from queries and manuscripts, to website copy).

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

Regarding work, I'd really like to connect with authors of stories that possess a strong voice and point of view, as well as beautiful language. In a mentee, I'd love to partner with someone who has drive and enthusiasm. If I can feel the format of your work, before I hear the voice, I'm probably not the right fit.

13. What kind of mentorship experience do you envision for you and your mentee?

A relationship that's reciprocal and fruitful. I am certain I will learn from you as you learn from me, and I'd love for the experience to be the beginning of an ongoing friendship.

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

Personality and clarity are a win in my book! Try to keep your answers tight and focused, so I see you, and don't get lost.

15. 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?

Making personal connections between mentors and yourself is great. If you have something in common, let your potential mentor know! Also, share your WHY prominently. Why do you love picture books? Why do you write the stories you write? Knowing this will help your mentor help you.