

The New Jersey SCBWI is happy to announce a Picture Book Writing Intensive Workshop led by author Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen. The idea behind this intensive is to introduce and discuss effective techniques for developing publishable picture book manuscripts, and then to apply those techniques to the participants' manuscripts in concrete ways. Emphasis will be on discussion rather than lecture, and the participants' previously submitted WIPs will be frequently used to demonstrate workshop topics (both as examples of successful approaches and of unsuccessful attempts – the bashful need not apply!). This intensive is aimed at intermediate and advanced picture book writers who understand the basic form of the book.

Space is limited, so please register early. When your registration is confirmed, please send an electronic copy of one picture book manuscript to [workshop@sudipta.com](mailto:workshop@sudipta.com) with the subject line PB INTENSIVE. Please note that portions of your manuscript may be selected to use as a learning exercise during the workshop. If you would prefer that your manuscript not be used during the class, please write PB INTENSIVE DO NOT USE in the subject line.

Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen never thought she'd grow up to be a writer. She'd thought of being a doctor (but she's afraid of blood), a model (but she likes to eat), the president (but she had a dissolute youth)... so much for childhood dreams. Sudipta is the author of thirteen picture books and sixteen nonfiction books for children including *The Hog Prince*, illustrated by Jason Wolff (Dutton, 2009), *Ballots for Belva*, illustrated by Courtney Martin (Abrams, 2008) and *The Mine-o-saur*, illustrated by David Clark (Putnam, 2007). Sudipta often visits schools to share her stories, and teaches writing to children and adults. She lives in New Jersey with her husband, three children, and an imaginary pony named Penny. Find her on the web at [www.sudipta.com](http://www.sudipta.com).

## Course Overview

### 🌀 Introduction

- Topic and theme selection
  - Topic vs. theme
  - Choosing popular topics
  - Choosing timeless themes
  - Marrying the popular to the timeless
- Understanding the manuscript's potential marketability
  - Identifying marketing hooks
  - Balancing marketing and artistry
  - Identifying difficult sales
- Conducting market research
  - What is too similar?
  - Creating something fresh from an older idea

### 🌀 Character

- Deciding on the best character for your story
  - When is an animal appropriate, and when is it out of place?
  - When is multicultural an asset, and when is it overkill?
  - Other selection criteria
  - Leaving room for the illustrator's perspective

- Creating endearing characters
  - Blending flair with flaws
  - Avoiding common pitfalls
- ☼ Beginning
  - What makes a strong narrative beginning?
    - Grounding the story and the world
    - Getting the reader's attention
  - Whose story is it?
    - POV
    - Voice
    - Defining the main character in the mind of the author
    - Establishing an enticing quest
- ☼ Middle
  - Structural integrity
    - Repetition
    - Ebb and flow of tension
    - Using the page turn as a narrative device
  - Action
    - What "counts" as picture book action?
    - Internal vs. external turmoil
  - Creating emotional attachment to the MC
  - Wrapping up the action before the book ending
- ☼ End
  - Writing the twist
  - Leaving a question unanswered without leaving the reader unsatisfied
  - Finding ways to make the book re-readable
- ☼ Extras
  - Humor
    - The big guffaw
    - The constant smile
    - Kid-appropriate humor
  - Heart
  - Understanding your readership
    - Addressing the needs of the child
    - Addressing the needs of the adult reader (and buyer)
  - Self-editing
- ☼ Marketing tips
  - Writing a picture book query letter
  - Understanding the market
  - Investing in your career
    - Networking
    - Agents

Optional Picture Book Critiques – This space is limited.

End of Day Picture Book Inspiration

Conducted by Leeza Hernandez (See Below)

Are you stuck in a picture book rut and can't find your way out? Do you need some new, fresh ideas? Chances are you are sitting on oodles of new stories, right there wiggle-wagging themselves in front of you as plain as day and you don't even know it.

Give your creative juices a boost with this series of small, fast-paced inspiration exercises. No time to think! This 90-minute session is geared to help unlock creative blocks and spontaneously spark the makings of new ideas.

Illustrator/author Leeza Hernandez will share some techniques — from musical interludes to stepping back in time — which she hopes will help release you from your productivity shackles. This workshop includes a teensy-weensy bit of homework!

A little bit about Leeza: Leeza currently has two illustrated books: *Fiction-Non-Fiction* (Picture Window Books) and *How to Eat Your Math Homework* (Charlesbridge) due for release in 2010 and 2011 respectively. Her debut picture book: *Dog Gone!* (G.P Putnam's Sons) is due for release spring 2012.