

# **Stephanie Baudet – Talks About Writing Picture Books**

## **Many people dream of writing a picture book. Are they easy to write?**

- The stories may seem deceptively short and simple but they require a lot of skill.
- You need to choose your words very carefully.
- Publishers are selective because production costs are high.

## **Can writers illustrate their own picture books?**

- Publishers prefer to choose their own illustrators.
- A good illustrator can help sell more of your book.
- An experienced illustrator will add elements that are not in the text.

## **Should rhyme be used in picture books?**

- Rhyme is difficult to do well!
- It does not translate easily.
- Because publishers collaborate with foreign publishers to help with high production costs this can be a stumbling block.

## **How should the text be laid out?**

- Use normal layout or paginate (32 pages/24 pages of text).
- Think in pictures even if you're not providing the illustrations.
- You need something different to illustrate on each page.

## **What should the story contain?**

- A theme which young children can understand.
- Strong characters.
- A proper story with problems, obstacles and resolution.
- A little surprise or twist at end.
- Repetition.
- Something to keep the adult reader interested.

## **What are your tips to potential writers of picture books?**

- Read as many picture books as possible – especially those which have recently been published.
- Study the market.
- Choose every word with care.
- Read your work aloud to find glitches.
- Revise and polish.