

## **Challenges of Writing The Upside Down Insect With No Name- Tag**

Hazel Edwards

[hazel@hazeledwards.com](mailto:hazel@hazeledwards.com)

1. I chose an insect character (and perspective of first person narrative) to make the situation universal. The original name was BUG, a simple word to read, and one which children use despite negative connotations of 'bugging' someone.
2. Setting: The character could be detained in a hospital, a camp, in the past or in outer-space.
3. I think in abstract, not in visuals, so had to build in opportunities for quirky illustrations. Map for endpapers. BUG had to be visually different...at 6 am I got the idea of making the insect upside down as a way the artist could convey a different viewpoint for a young reader. Added a name-tag for visuals.
4. Bug is ambiguous. Links to infection, pollution, computer virus...etc. Also the ambiguity of good & bad, positive and negative effects from the one bug...matter of interpretation. But feedback from trial readers was that Insect was a better name than Bug.
5. A satire needs to have consistent parallels. The Map idea of circles with a Question Wall which needed to be hurdled like an Olympic event to the Freedom outside. Instead of No-Mans-Land inbetween,...have No Name Land. What to call the inside and outside and what were the challenges for moving out? Freedom Land sounds too much like propaganda.
6. Three is the best dramatic shape. So Insect had to do three things towards solving own problem of gaining freedom. WHY did BUG want to get outside? To go to Bug School? Or to get out of the Insectary? Or to achieve Freedom? Orphan bug or got a family?
7. What kind of problems? Big Question Wall. No I.D. No local languages. Doesn't understand the questions. Needs an interpreter or creative problem solving? How to indicate if Bug doesn't speak? Importance of illustrations. Use a Question Mark theme for the unknown.

8. Rhythm. When writing the cake-eating hippo stories, there needs to be a rhythm for reading aloud. NOT rhyme. Same here. And it needs sub text from carefully positioned asides. Plus dialogue.
9. Need to add the poetic/emotive...how Bug feels about own language. How to convey using an Interpreter? Is BUG a specific gender or no pronoun?
10. Ending: Bug needs to do something imaginative to help self get out and free. Answer questions imaginatively? Show a new skill needed outside? Leave it open to reader or illustrator?
11. Reading about insects I found the concept of an Insectary...where 'good insects' and 'good plants have a mutual dependence against the 'bad' bugs...The Insectary represents the camp.

As a Tournament of Minds problem writer (and judge) I'd created a well-used 'problem' about an Insect election where the three groups were A B and C insects who had different features and electoral promises/concerns. But the As all had ANT in their name. SycophANT. TyrANT. GiANT ANTAGonist...this seems a bit sophisticated for the potential picture book reader here...but could be hinted at.

My 4 year old train enthusiast grandson had created his own home made MYKI card to travel on the train. Adapted for design- your- own ID in story. Creative Problem-Solving as the skill to go OUTSIDE and to Freedom.

13 After meeting with asylum seeker families and others who made editorial suggestions, I simplified to make the rhythm consistent, deleted the fence and added a GATE to the wall. Visa was deleted. I.D. was changed to name tag. The use of three things were structured in order of challenges. No name tag. (makes a home made one) Upside down viewpoint (selfie of acceptable view) & how to get over the wall. (with help from outside). Repetition of certain phrases. Capitals retained for emphasis. But still the problem of a name and what the Cousin might bring as outside help. Left open to the reader's interpretation by using term KEY. May not be an actual key. Bug changed to Insect. Retaining the concept of a Question Mark bug/insect, with possibilities.

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