

# WORLD BOOK DAY

7 MARCH 2019

# AMAZING AUTHORS

To celebrate World Book Day, we quizzed six writers about their new books and got NG KiDs readers to review them!

## PHILIP REEVE & SARAH MCINTYRE

You wrote *The Legend of Kevin* together. What's the best thing about working with another person on a book?

**Sarah:** Doing research! To come up with ideas for Kevin we went to where Philip lives on Dartmoor and cuddled lots of cute wild ponies! **Philip:** When we write together we end up having ideas that neither of us would have had on our own, which is really fun.

Where did you get the idea for a roly-poly flying pony?

**P:** Years ago, I painted a fat flying pony on a tiny piece of driftwood I'd found on Brighton beach.

**S:** He had it displayed on the wall of his kitchen, and when I saw it, I thought it would make a great book character!



What do you hope readers take from your new story?

**S:** Biscuits! I really do wish our book had a biscuit dispenser like the Tardis so you could actually take biscuits out of it. But you have our authorial permission to insist your family supply you with custard creams while you read this book!

**P:** Also, Kevin! Sarah's drawings of him are really cute, so I hope a lot of people will get inspired to draw – and maybe write stories of their own.

## The Legend of Kevin

A normal boy called Max lives in a tower block. One day a flying pony, called Kevin, blows in on a magical storm and crashes into Max's balcony – just as the town has flooded.

Together they go on an adventure to save the town, meeting some unusual characters along the way, including naughty sea-monkeys and mermaids. My favourite character was Kevin because he loves biscuits as much as I do (custard creams... yum!). The detailed illustrations are very funny and the hardback has silver-edged pages, which look really cool on my bookcase! I hope there will be more books in this hilarious series.



Ciaran, 7

## ROSS WELFORD

Why did you decide to write about futuristic technology in your new novel?

Simple – I needed a way to visit the future! We all have ideas of what a 'time machine' might look like, so I wanted something completely different. Dr. Pretorius's 'Future Dome' is more like a super hi-tech Virtual Reality game, which I thought was fun. And it is... until things start to go wrong!

Are your characters inspired by real people?

Norman Two-kids, the grumpy shopkeeper, is based on a park-keeper when I was a kid. Writers can wait a long time to get their revenge!

What do you want readers to learn as they read your book?

I think very few people are genuinely unkind, but sometimes it takes a little effort to uncover their goodness, as Georgie discovers.



## The Dog Who Saved the World

This is probably the cutest and most heartwarming story I have ever read (and I have read a lot of books). Most of it is set in a top-secret lab, or in a VR (Virtual Reality) world made by Dr. Pretorius. It follows a girl called

Georgie, her dog Mr. Mashie and her best friend on their quest to save the world from a disease that she accidentally spread. It is funny and exciting, and I couldn't put it down, not even during playtime!



Rose, 10

## MARGUERITE ABOUT

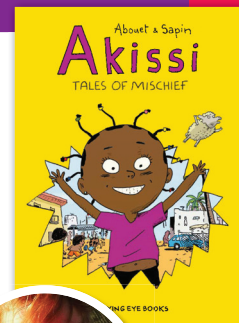
Where do you get the ideas for your characters?

Akissi is me! She was inspired by my childhood spent in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Her friends are my childhood friends, the whole neighbourhood was my home and the world surrounding me a giant playground. The reader lands right in the middle of the streets of Abidjan and the day-to-day life of this intrepid girl.



## Akissi: Tales of Mischief

A little girl called Akissi is always up to mischief in this graphic novel. It has lots of stories in it instead of one. There were lots of funny parts that made me giggle – I wished it hadn't finished! One of my favourite characters is Uncle because he's always popping up and being angry at the children for no reason! This book is very good and easy to read – I genuinely liked all of it.



Saiorse, 7

## CRESSIDA COWELL

In the first *The Wizards of Once* book, two sworn enemies have to work together. Why did you want to write about this?

I wanted to encourage empathy in my readers. The two children have to see things from another point of view in order to defeat a common evil. Empathy is what we need in these present times.

Your stories are so magical. But are any of them influenced by real-life? My *The Wizards of Once* books are inspired by holidays spent in the Sussex South Downs, where my grandparents lived. These old

landscapes have been inhabited by human beings for so long that you wouldn't be surprised to meet a Roman legionary striding across the hillside! One of the major themes in my books is the importance of children interacting with nature in a 'wild' way. Who are the characters based on? I put a lot of myself into Wish, who is determined, creative and imaginative. I do have a few Xar-like characteristics as well – I'm optimistic and I can act before I think!



## The Wizards of Once: Twice Magic

This fascinating story is about a boy wizard called Xar, who has no magic powers, and a girl warrior called Wish, who does. Xar tries to get powers, but the only magic he gets is illegal witch magic! Then Xar and Wish go on a journey to make a spell to get rid of the witches. This book shows how parents sometimes don't listen to their children, even when they know what's right! I liked Caliburn, the posh talking crow who has lived many lives and tries to keep Xar and Wish under control. I enjoyed it so much I read it in a day.



Thomas, 12

## ONJALI Q. RAÚF

Is the main character Ahmet based on any kids you know? Ahmet was inspired by baby Raehan, who I met when he was just a few weeks old in the Calais refugee camps. Unfortunately, I lost trace of Raehan after the official campsites were demolished, but I always wonder where he is and if he's ok. Ahmet was my imagining of what might happen if Raehan came to the UK as a child of nine, without his beautiful family.

What do you hope people will learn from your book? That the word 'refugee' is just another word for 'human being', albeit one who has probably gone through things that thankfully, most of us will never have to go through. And that these human beings deserve our compassion, friendship and trust.



## The Boy at the Back of the Class

The author writes from the perspective of a nine-year old narrator who goes to school in London with three best friends. One day a new boy joins their class. Ahmet is a refugee who has just arrived from Syria. As the four friends get to know Ahmet they learn about his long, terrible journey to England and that his mum and dad are missing. They come up with a plan to find Ahmet's parents. This exciting, adventurous book helped me learn more about the life of a refugee.



Roch, 9

## NEIL PATRICK HARRIS

The *Magic Misfits* series is about a gang of talented magicians. What's your fave trick?

My favourite illusion is called the DeKolts chair, which makes someone vanish immediately while sitting in a chair. If you've ever seen *Phantom of the Opera*, you've witnessed the DeKolts chair!



## The Magic Misfits

This book is about six children with magic skills called The Magic Misfits. When a circus group full of pickpockets comes to their hometown and hatches an evil plan to steal a valuable diamond,

The Magic Misfits' talents are put to the test to try and stop them. I really enjoyed this book – it was quite funny with smart and cunning characters.



Alexandra, 11

We asked some authors why they think reading is so great! Here's what they had to say...

Books are fantastic at awakening empathy! Cressida Cowell

When you read a book you really feel how it could be to walk in that character's shoes. And if you read lots of books, you get to walk in a lot of shoes... Lisa Thompson

Reading lets you visit unknown lands and discover a world that is so close and yet so far. Marguerite About

The writer creates an entire adventure entirely in your head, and you don't even have to go anywhere! Best of all, if you join a library, it's completely free. Ross Welford