

# EVERY AUTHOR HAS A STORY

## AUTHOR INTERVIEW

Name:

Sarah Atherton

Do you have a pen name?

Not at the moment, but I may do in the future.

Book titles – What are the titles of the books you have written or are currently writing?

Bella's Butterflies is my debut picture book which will be published on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

The title of this interview is 'Every writer has a story'. Tell us a bit about you and your story leading up to becoming an author.

I've always enjoyed writing – as a teenager I wrote bedtime stories for my younger brother. I've been writing picture books since 2015 and I became a lot more focused on this during my treatment for breast cancer from 2018 onwards. Having a life-changing diagnosis like this has made me more determined than ever to enjoy my craft and try to make a success of it.

Who or what are your main influencers and why?

In the picture book world, I love the work of Mo Willems, Jory John and Michelle Robinson. They are all masters of writing humorous stories for children and I truly believe that's the way to get children interested in reading.

What inspired your books?

Bella's Butterflies is inspired by my daily interactions with children who suffer from anxiety. I am a special educational needs coordinator in a primary school and anxiety is something I see very frequently. When I was at school, I always got very worried about taking tests and that has helped me to look at it from a child's perspective.

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Tell us about your latest published book:

Bella's Butterflies is the story of a little girl who worries about taking a maths test at school. Her teacher tells her she has butterflies in her tummy, which Bella thinks is very strange! She and her friends try to release the butterflies, but in the end, Bella finds her own solution to the problem.

Tell us about your work in progress:

I am currently writing a picture book story about the very real problem of deforestation – from the animals' point of view.

Which part of the writing process do you enjoy, and which parts do you dread?

I love coming up with new ideas. My brain is constantly ticking over and I have a supply of notebooks all over the house.

I dread writing endings!

What is your greatest strength/weakness when it comes to writing?

My strength is generating new ideas. My weakness is producing endings that I'm happy with.

Do you have a favourite author, and do you write the same genre?

My favourite author of all time is Roald Dahl. I have started to write a middle grade novel but most of my work is a different genre.

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How do you measure your success as an author?

I am successful if I am enjoying my writing.

Writing is very time consuming; how do you fit it into your daily routine?

I am fortunate in that I work part time. I don't really have a set time for writing though, it just fits in whenever I have a burst of inspiration.

What advice would you give to someone thinking of writing a novel?

Read, read and read some more. You need to find out what works and why before sitting down to create your own novel.

Finally: Your chance to advertise your work.

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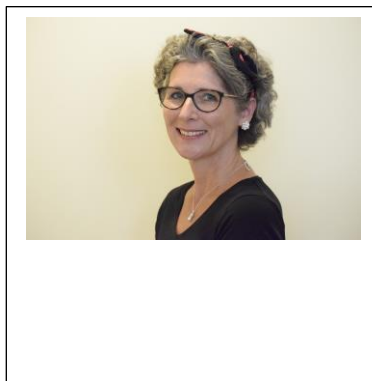
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