

THE REBEL READING SOCIETY

Author Spotlight



Bethany Walker

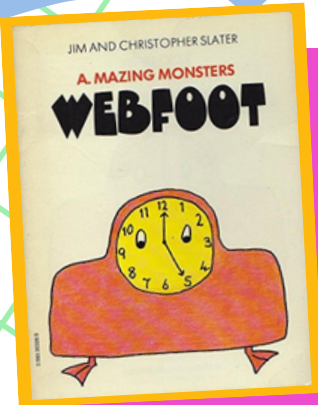
When did you decide that you wanted to become an author?

At the embarrassingly old age of 37! It had not been a thought in my head before then. I loved reading, writing and books as a child, but never thought I'd be someone who could write books! We never had author visits when I was at school, so I think it's wonderful when children can meet authors and see they are just (fairly) normal people like them.



Did you read lots as a child - if you did, where did you mainly read? If you didn't, what was the reason?

I did read lots. I read plenty during the day, because it seemingly gave me a 'cloak of invisibility' and meant my older brothers forgot to involve me in their scary games. But my favourite place to read was in bed at night - and it still is.



What was your favourite book as a child and why?



I had loads of favourite books as a child, and I'm on a mission to find as many of them as possible. (My mum had a dreadful habit of giving my old books away. I have not forgiven her!) I recently found a copy of *Webfoot*, part of the *A. Mazing Monsters* series, and that brought back so many memories. I loved *The Twelve Dancing Princesses*, illustrated by Errol Le Cain - the illustrations are amazing but the story is awful! Around the age of ten, my favourite series was the *Trebizon* series by Anne Digby, set in a boarding school. I loved the idea of being sent to boarding school (mainly due to scary older brothers).

How does it feel to see your books in shops and being sold?

It is fantastic to see my name on my books, although I do wonder why I called myself Bethany. People only ever call me Beth, except my mum when she was telling me off! Whatever I've called myself, I'm so happy when my books are in bookshops, and I think indie booksellers are quite simply THE BEST!

What is the best part about being an author?

My favourite part of being an author is going into schools and meeting readers. I wouldn't want to write books for grown-ups because I'd really miss the school visits! As I write funny books, I also really enjoy my writing days. Spending hours trying to write things that make me laugh is not a bad way of spending my time! Not sure how I'd cope with writing a sad story.





What are the 'not so fun bits' in being an author?

I'm not great at the publicity or social media side of things. I was always really shy as a child, and even becoming an author as an adult, it took me a long time to be able to call myself an author. When someone else called me an author for the first time, I thought they were calling me 'awful'!



Why do you think it is important for children to read?

It's the best time to explore what's in your own head! Reading helps us to see pictures in our brains, created by our own imaginations. It helps us experience different emotions, and it gives us the time and space to think about things and form opinions. And that's even before I get started on what amazing stories there are out there in books!

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What is the inspiration for your books and writing?

I like writing funny books and finding humour in strange situations. I particularly enjoy writing stories that are based in *almost* the real world - with a bit of a twist. I regularly go around asking myself 'What If' to find funny settings and ridiculous situations. Inspiration can come from anywhere, so it's really important to be on the lookout at all times!

Who gives you feedback on your drafts and how do you act on the feedback?

Nowadays it's mainly editors and my agent, but I do have some great writing buddies who give good feedback, and my children are also excellent sounding boards. I actually love the editing process and will happily take on suggestions. But I will also fight for something to stay in if I really believe in it.



More Info



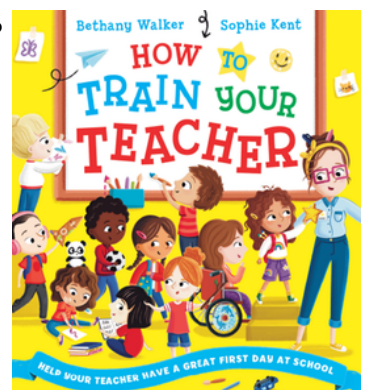
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Finally, if you could read for an hour, on your own, anywhere in the world - where would it be?

I am completely obsessed with Japan, so I would have to say there, please. Maybe under a blossom tree in spring. But, to be honest, as long as it's anywhere away from my scary older brothers, I'd be happy!