THE REBEL READING SOCIETY Author Spotlight

Samantha Mattocks



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

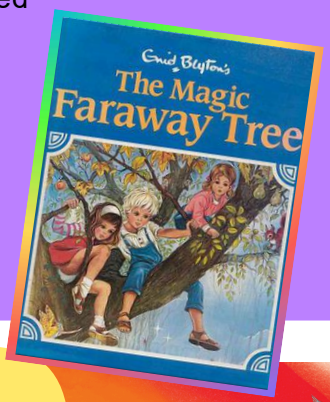
The fact that I just cannot not write! Ever since I was a little girl, I have been creating stories. My mum used to put me to bed at night and come to check up on me only to find me, sat up in bed, reeling off stories to myself. I can just about remember that they were of fairies and castles, with horses and cats aplenty, but past that, I have no idea!

I continued to write as a child – from school plays to poetry – and I'd type stories at home on an old-fashioned typewriter which I'd then tie together with lace ribbon.

I truly believe that I was born with a pen in my heart – and that has never changed!

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. I read at school but also at home. I had a small Wendy House, and I'd sit in there with my favourite teddy bears and read. I loved books with animals in, such as *Gobbolino, the Witch's Cat* and *Black Beauty.* And of course, Enid Blyton – *The Magic Faraway Tree*, *The Famous Five, Mallory Towers* etc. To have my own work compared to *The Magic Faraway Tree* is incredible.

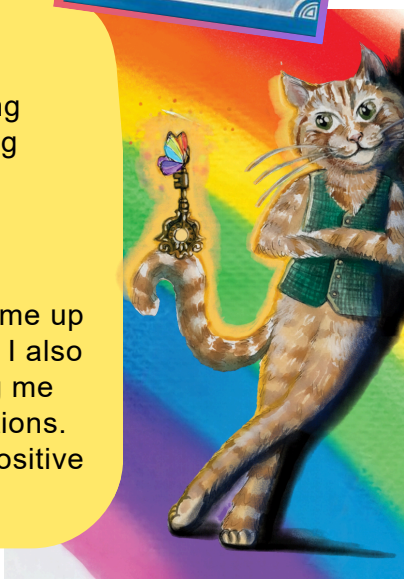


What was your favourite book as a child and why?

I think I answered that above! I grew up with a lot of animals around me, and I firmly believed then, as I do now, that each animal has their own unique personality. I guess that is why I write the books that I do.

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

Amazing! I don't think I will ever get over seeing my books in a shop. I am still trying to get my books into even more independent shops, and of course, I dream of being in Waterstones. Maybe one day...



What is the best part about being an author?

The feedback I receive from children, parents and grandparents. When children come up to me and tell me the impact *Mister Mishkins* has had on them – that is everything. I also treasure the messages and e-mails I receive from parents and grandparents telling me how my books have helped their children/grandchildren understand their own emotions. They tell me how certain chapters in Mister Mishkins have enabled them to have positive conversations about their fears, worries, and emotions. For me, that is everything.



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

The admin! There is always so much to do as you need to be a full-time promoter, marketer, cheerleader, personal assistant, and so much more. It doesn't always leave a lot of time for writing, so you need to make sure you carve out time that cannot be touched so you can work on your next project.

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

I cannot emphasise just how important reading it. Reading opens the mind, takes you to other worlds, and captures your imagination. It makes you ask questions, and it is the best way to learn – language, grammar, and context. The more you read, the better – whether it is graphic novels and comic books, novels, short stories, picture books, even the back of a cereal packet! Words are everything, and so valuable for a young mind.



What is the inspiration for your books and writing?

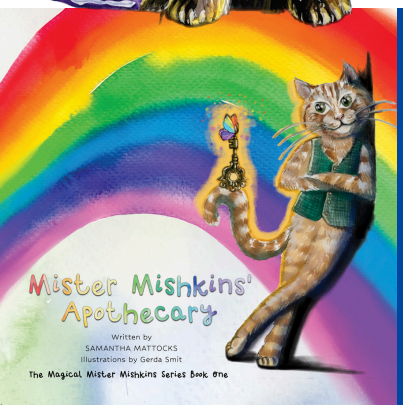
My cat, Mister Mishkins! I was talking about this the other night. Had I not got Mishkins, back in 2021, I doubt that this book series would exist. And I fully admit that I am writing the books I wish I had read as a child. I know we aren't meant to do that, but I also believe that rules should be broken!

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

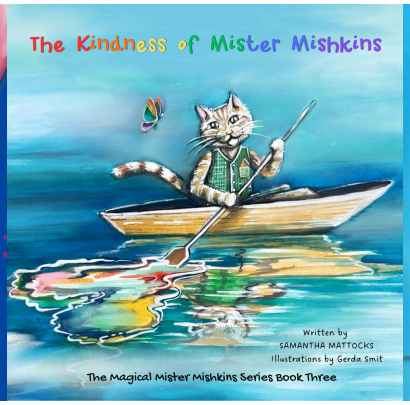
I have a small group of brilliant people who read my drafts and feedback as though they have no relationship with me at all! That means they can be very honest and sometimes direct if something is not working. When I get that kind of feedback, sometimes I might thing "hmm" – yet five minutes later, I invariably agree with them! I also use BETA readers, who are invaluable.

All that said, I know my own world so if they suggest something that doesn't fit with the world I have created, I will choose to ignore it!











SCAN ME!

SCAN ME!

SCAN ME!

SCAN ME!

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

Probably the secret glade at the bottom of my garden. It is so beautiful, with golden light falling through the trees, but I just never have the time to escape there.

Join us!

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