

THE REBEL READING SOCIETY

Author Spotlight



Rashmi Sirdeshpande

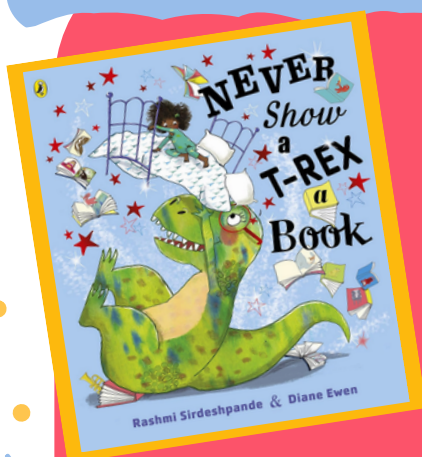
When did you decide that you wanted to become an author?

So I actually became an author by accident. I've always loved writing. Even when I was tiny, I was out there making comics, writing poems and even plays (BADLY but that's cool). But before I became a writer, I was a lawyer. Though I loved my job, I left to find something more creative and flexible. While looking for that "something" I came across a writing competition with Penguin Random House. I entered with a book about a T. rex who falls in love with books. They loved it. That book became my picture book debut *Never Show a T-Rex a Book* with Diane Ewen and the rest, as they say, is history!



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

Yes! I read comics on long trips to India. And here in the UK, I spent lots of time in libraries where I went straight to the picture books, big DK nonfiction books and puzzle books - all books with big visual elements and formats that meant I could dip in and out. Perfect for what I now know is my AuDHD (autistic + ADHD) brain.



What was your favourite book as a child and why?

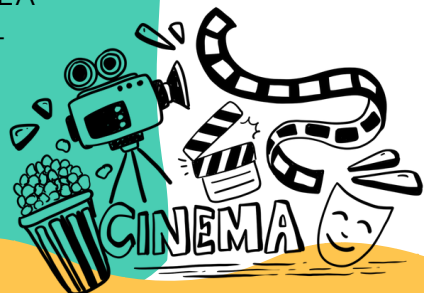
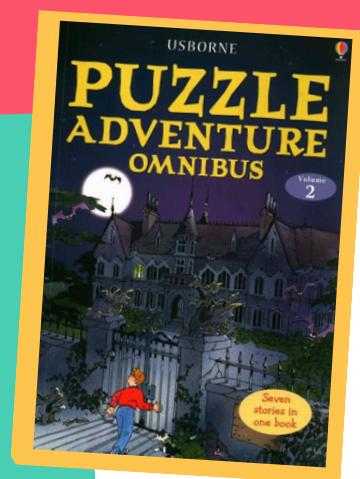
I loved so many different things, but a big favourite was the Usborne Puzzle Adventures series - so much to see and spot and do. I STILL get a big buzz when I see those covers.

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

AMAZING!! Still takes my breath away to see a book I've written in bookshops all over the UK and all around the world. I know my illustrator partners feel the same. I mean WHAT IS THIS LIFE?!

What is the best part about being an author?

Can I cheat and say three things? No1 - the shiny IDEA stage. I love that. It's buzzy and fizzy and fun. No2 - seeing how the ART brings the book to life. No3 - hearing that readers love my books. That they make them laugh or think or hope or feel something. Best feeling ever.



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

The 'SHORT VIDEO' requests (AAAAAA!). The paperwork. Why is there so much paperwork?! And the imposter syndrome – when you feel like you're not good enough and that everyone you've done so far is somehow a fluke. But hey, we don't listen to that voice! We let imposter syndrome say its piece and we just ignore it and let it leave the way it came in. We do NOT engage.



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

Because it's FUN and it feels good. And because it makes you think and question things. It makes you smart. It makes you strong. It makes you big-hearted and empathetic. It levels you up in every way. You might read to FEEL something. Or to get really good at whatever you're interested in. Or because you're curious about the world. SO MANY REASONS.

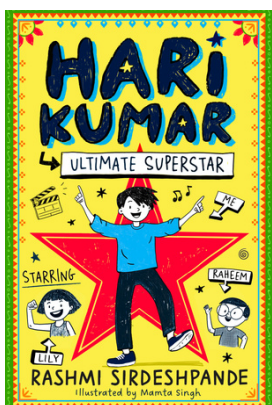


What is the inspiration for your books and writing?

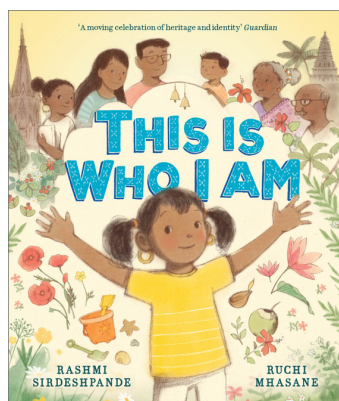
Like other writers, I get my inspiration from literally everywhere – things I read, films or shows I watch, conversations with people, things I love... all kinds of places. Sometimes I start with the reader and thinking about what might be helpful or interesting or fun for them. But sometimes inspo appears out of nowhere! I'm never out of ideas. It's the executing that's the hard bit.

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

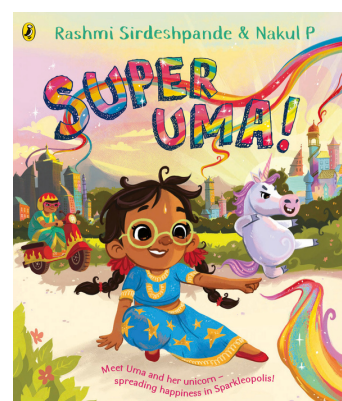
The editors at my publishers give me feedback on my drafts. I take some time to open the email because AAAAAA. Then I do a quick glance. Another quick glance. Take a deep breath. Then I read it carefully and make a note of the quick wins – the easy edits! – and the tricky, thinky edits (that's literally what I call them – Thinky Edits). I start with the easy ones because that feels good and gives me momentum. THEN, after a cry, a panic or a stomp-around, I tackle the big stuff!



More Info



More Info



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?

HONESTLY, I'm boring. I like reading all snuggled up just before bed. I'd do that anywhere in the world. But you won't catch me reading in a busy, interesting place as it's far too exciting. Or on long journeys like trains because I'll probably just conk out (me + moving vehicles = a recipe for sleep). Know your own brain, people.