

# THE REBEL READING SOCIETY

Author Spotlight



## Joseph Elliott

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

I've always dreamed of being an author, but I never thought it was possible, so I kept my writing a secret for over a decade. It wasn't until I got my first book deal that I finally told my family and friends that I'd written a novel that was going to be published as part of a trilogy. They were like 'Whaaaaat?!'



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

I've always been a big reader, mainly in bed before going to sleep - something that I still do every night now; it never fails to help me wind down and switch off after a busy day.

**What was your favourite book as a child and why?**

I was (and still am) a huge reader of fantasy, and particularly loved anything with animals or magical creatures. Some of my favourite series were *The Animals of Farthing Wood* by Colin Dann, *The Deptford Mice trilogy* by Robin Jarvis and *The Old Kingdom* by Garth Nix.

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

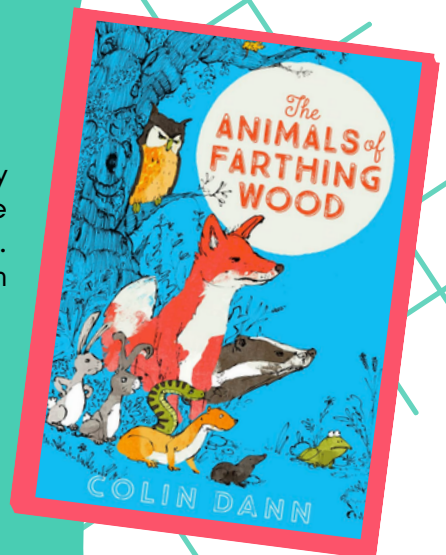
It's such an incredible feeling! Whenever I go into bookshops, I always have a sneaky look for my books, and it still gives me such a buzz to see them. I then slyly move them into more prominent positions on the shelves, but shhhh! don't tell the booksellers.

**What is the best part about being an author?**

I love that I can do my job anywhere in the world. I've written my books on bus journeys across Cambodia, in a deserted cabin on the Isle of Skye, and on the beaches of Costa Rica, to name just a few. Travelling is a huge passion of mine, so I'm really lucky that I can travel and write at the same time.

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

The edit process can be really tricky, as it can often feel like you're ripping up the whole book and then stitching it back together again, but it's such a crucial part in the creation of a book. All of my books have gone through at least five or six rounds of edits, and they're all so much stronger as a result of it.



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

Reading has been proven to make children more intelligent, more creative, more imaginative, more empathetic... but above all else, children should read simply for the JOY of it. For the joy of discovering new worlds and making new friends and getting whisked away on incredible adventures. There really is nothing like it.

## What is the inspiration for your books and writing?

My inspiration comes from all sorts of places. The Shadow Skye trilogy is inspired by my time touring the Scottish Highlands in my early days as an actor. One of the main characters, Agatha, has Down syndrome, who was inspired by some of the children I used to teach. The Nora books are about a sassy, mischievous great-grandmother who has a secret past as a monster hunter. She was inspired by my sassy, mischievous grandmother, Janice. (As far as I'm aware, she doesn't have a secret past as a monster hunter, but you never know with Janice...)

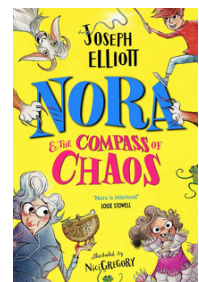


## Who gives you feedback on your drafts and how do you act on the feedback?

My husband, Richard, is always the first person to read my drafts, and he's amazing at giving really good constructive feedback, as well as lots of compliments - they're important too!



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

Somewhere sunny, on a beach, under a palm tree, with a fresh coconut by my side, while the sea gently laps in the background. BLISS!

Join us!



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