



Lucy Tandon Copp

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

When I was little, I used to write stories on bits of paper and make books by sticky-taping them together. Later, when I was a teen, I wrote lots of angsty diaries! As well as pouring my heart out, I loved the creativity of filling each page with keepsakes and randomness. But it was when I went to uni that I decided I really wanted to pursue writing as a career.

I studied Classics, then went on to do a journalism diploma. After that I started my first job as a reporter on a local newspaper, then spent the next ten years working for some amazing consumer and trade publications and websites in London. It was a slightly bonkers, fast-paced time of my life full of new experiences and the most brilliant people.

But it was after having my second child that I really thought about becoming an author. While I was on maternity leave, I spotted an opportunity to enter the Penguin WriteNow competition and decided to give it a go. I'd been reading lots of picture books to my then toddler and baby, and together we were spending loads of time in our local library. It fast became our new favourite hang-out! When I found out I had been selected for the programme, I was so happy. Looking back, the stars aligned at just the right time.



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 used to go to the library and I was often given books as gifts for special occasions. I remember books being a source of joy and pleasure for me as a child. I genuinely enjoyed the idea of choosing a new book to read and discovering what it was all about (and still do!).



What was your favourite book as a child and why?

Matilda by Roald Dahl. There was a time when I used to repeatedly take the same copy out from the library. I still remember it being a hardback and having that lovely bookish smell! I really related to Matilda as a character, admired her independence, and I loved that she ended up being adopted by Miss Honey at the end.



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

It feels incredible, if slightly surreal! I still can't believe that I actually have books in bookshops all across the country and now also in ASDA stores!

What is the best part about being an author?

There are SO many! Doing something I genuinely love, constantly learning, making amazing connections within the creative community and helping children to discover the joy of reading, to name just a few! I could definitely go on...

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

Everyone talks about imposter syndrome, and I can confirm, it is real! A lot of being an author relies on believing in yourself and your ideas when no one else knows about them. It can be easy to talk yourself out of things or convince yourself any wins you get are down to luck. But I'm learning not to let those thoughts stop me from doing what I love and instead, to focus on writing whatever excites me. So far, it's been working out!

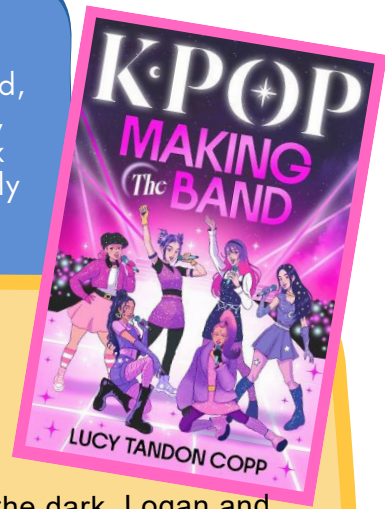


Why do you think it is important for children to read?

Because reading is SO much fun! Depending on what you read, it can also be magical, transformative, eye-opening, escapist, reassuring, comforting and hugely confidence-building. I think reading is also an amazing way to grow empathy from an early age and encourage conversation.

What is the inspiration for your books and writing?

My Malaysian-Chinese and English mixed heritage inspires a lot of my writing, but I always like to find a point of universality to thread through my stories in order to make them accessible to everyone. For example, in *Logan's Lantern*, the core themes of the story are friendship, empathy and overcoming a fear of the dark. Logan and Little Dragon's story takes place against the glowy backdrop of the lantern festival at Lunar New Year, giving it that beautiful cultural element too.



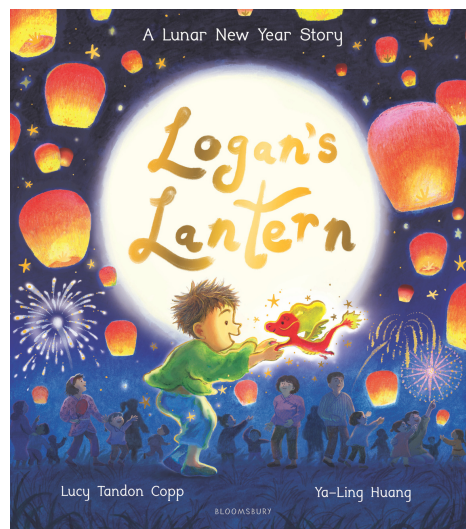
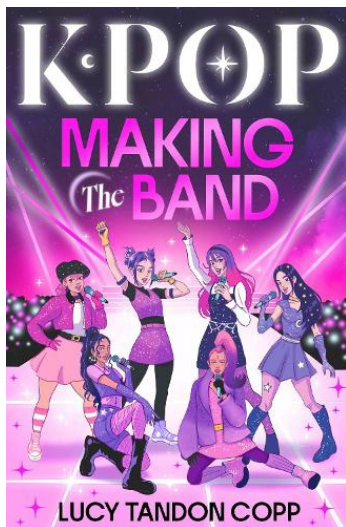
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Who gives you feedback on your drafts and how do you act on the feedback?

In the first instance, I will share all of my new work with my agent, Lydia Silver from The Soho Agency. Lydia is amazing at giving editorial feedback. Then if the book is acquired by a publisher, I'll be paired up with an editor who helps to refine and develop the manuscript further. I really enjoy receiving feedback and, as a former journalist, I'm very used to it! I know that the editing stage is often when the magic really happens - when an idea goes from good to great!



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?

I'd love to say somewhere far-flung and idyllic, but I'm quite a creature of comfort! So, in reality, probably in my PJs in bed with a hot drink and the rain pitter-pattering on my window. That feels pretty perfect to me.

