

Emma R McNally – Children’s Author and Illustrator

Hello, I am a children’s author and illustrator and I am thrilled to have been asked to share my work with you. I am based in Essex and spend much of my time visiting schools and attending events to share my own love of reading and encouraging children to develop their own unique relationship with books. I share a belief held by many that a love of reading from an early age can exponentially help children in their future, whatever that future may hold. I love nothing better than to inspire a child to either read or write their own story and to see the look of delight on their face as they start to discover their own imagination and the secret world that is held within the covers of a good book.

I am often in conversation with parents of children who have a diverse range of needs, from those who are struggling to read (for whatever reason) or don’t enjoy reading through to those who are very advanced for their age, which can equally have its own challenges in terms ensuring the content of more advanced books is appropriate for their child.

I listen to parents as well as children to ensure that my books help them to overcome these challenges. For example, ‘The Adventures of Harold Huxley’ series are early reader chapter books, if pushed; I would say that the stories are aimed for children 5 – 7 years (Key Stage 1). From feedback however, we know that the stories are loved by those within this age group, who are younger with advanced reading skills, as well as older children who find reading more difficult (there are children aged 10+ who read and love the books). The feedback suggests that the reason is because the stories are engaging for all ages, the adventures are exciting, the print is clear and a coloured picture on every page certainly helps!

I also write rhyming picture books and believe that a good picture book can be so powerful in helping children with their literacy skills as well as to develop other critical skills such as; numeracy, imagination, creativity, empathy etc. To explore a book together, rather than just reading it page by page, can be so rewarding. For example, looking at the pages and counting the number of things the child can see in the pictures, acting out the stories or joining in with the actions, talking about the expressions on a characters face and asking what they may be feeling and why, asking what the child thinks may happen next, all helps with a child’s development. My last two books; ‘The Sock Monster ate my Favourite Sock’ and ‘The Cludosaurus Rex’ have been specifically designed and written for children who like to join in with actions and are great for this kind of exploratory reading.

So if you would like to know more about my work, download free activities and resources to support your children, buy a book or come and visit me at an event, please do visit my website www.haroldhuxley.co.uk to find out more. I look forward to seeing you soon.