

## **Q & A with Julia Donaldson**

Below are the answers to some questions we asked Julia.

### **Q. When did you decide to be a writer?**

A. For my fifth birthday, my father gave me a very fat book called *The Book of a Thousand Poems*. I loved it. I read the poems, recited them, learnt them, and then started making up some of my own. Although I wanted to be a poet all those years ago, I later decided I would rather go on the stage. That didn't quite work out, so I did other jobs – teaching and publishing. But somehow I've ended up doing what I wanted to do when I was five years old. I have a theory that this happens to quite a lot of people.

### **Q. When did you start to write books?**

A. In 1993, when one of my songs, 'A Squash and a Squeeze' was made into a book. Before that I wrote songs for children's television.

### **Q. Your book *Tiddler* is coming out in paperback. What gave you the idea for that story?**

A. I've been snorkelling a few times and love the colourful underwater world of fish and coral. Also, I often used to be late for school and was quite good at making up excuses, like *Tiddler*.

### **Q. How many books have you written?**

A. I've just counted, and I make it 152! That sounds a lot but 60 of those are very short phonic reading books for schools, called *Songbirds*.

### **Q. Have you written any longer books?**

A. Yes. I've written three chapter books about naughty Princess Mirror-Belle, who comes out of a mirror, and a novel called *The Giants and the Joneses*, about three children who are captured by a girl giant.

### **Q. What are your hobbies?**

A. Walking, cycling, playing the piano, singing. I'm also interested in wild flowers and fungi.

### **Q. Do you have any pets?**

A. I have three cats. Campsie is female, and Gizmo and Goblin are her big tough sons. Their favourite hobby is going in the garden, getting their paws muddy and then walking all over whatever I have just been writing. (And they gave me the idea for yet another book, *Tabby McTat*.)