

Sarah Matthias on Sarah Matthias

Is there a reason that you chose to write books or poems for children rather than adults?

I have four children and I began writing for them. I might try to write for adults in the future but at the moment all my ideas are for children's books. I really like children and I find the idea of exciting them to read with my writing very fulfilling. I also like the fact that with children's fiction you get to visit schools - I really love doing school events and RIF events.

What would you say to a reluctant male reader of any age?

Just read anything you like, whether it is the newspaper or fiction or factual accounts or picture books. Just read and try to discover what you like. There's no right and wrong about what you should read. Reading is for pleasure! My son who is fifteen read almost nothing until one day somebody gave him *To Kill a Mocking Bird* by Harper Lee. He did not move from his chair until he finished it and has read constantly ever since. He then read *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, *1984* and *Down and Out in Paris and London* by George Orwell. It was so odd how he suddenly found a love for reading from being sucked into a book and finding what a pleasure it is to read!

What do you read with your children (if appropriate)?

I love a good story well told so I like things like Ann Pilling and Roald Dahl and Cornelia Funke. I like reading things that inspire my children's imaginations so something in the historical fantasy genre like Joan Aiken always goes down well.

Why do you think reading is fundamental?

If you want to know how to spell and to write and to communicate I believe you need to read. Reading is the bedrock on which everything else is built. If you want to know how to communicate you need to read good writing and find out how other people do it.