



# FAQs

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## WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR IDEAS?

Stories can come from everywhere... go for a walk, read a book, watch some TV, play a game, and if you're watching carefully and listening out, an idea might strike. It could be a word, or an object, or a thought. It might not make sense on its own, but once it's in your notebook, it can bump into other fragments and spark a story. I keep a notebook with me wherever I go, and if I forget it, I've got the notes app on my phone. It's really important to have something on you though, because ideas are like quicksilver: they slip and slide through your fingers, and if you're not careful, you'll forget them.

## WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK?

That's a good question! I think I'll have to say the first Harry Potter book, just because that's the one that got me reading. If it wasn't for that, I'd never have moved on to other books. A close second would be *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman. It's beautifully written and very atmospheric!

## HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO WRITE *STONEBIRD*?

The first draft didn't take very long at all. In fact, I probably wrote it in about three months. Because so much of it is based on real life, it kind of wrote itself. It took maybe six months after that to edit it, going back through to make it as good as I could, and bringing out all the story elements to their full potential. So around a year, all in all, from first word to last.

## WHY WRITE ABOUT DEMENTIA IN A CHILDREN'S BOOK?

Dementia is a very real, devastating issue that more and more people are having to deal with. Over 850,000 people suffer from it in the UK alone, and it results in 60,000 deaths per year. These are slow, haunting deaths, as the person you love is taken from you memory by memory. And it's not just the sufferer who gets affected by it. It devastates families too; parents and children of all ages. I don't feel that it's discussed enough, and my hope is that *Stonebird* raises awareness about it and helps people come to terms with and deal with it.

