

Reading Newsletter

June 2021



Our June Author of the Month is Cressida Cowell. She really is someone to admire, having sold over 11 million books worldwide! Cressida Cowell is the author of *How to Train Your Dragon*, a book that has sold 7 million copies and has been translated into 37 different languages! It is also an award-winning billion-pound DreamWorks film series. Cressida has also written *The Wizards of Once* series- which is rumoured to be turned into a film as well. For our early readers, she has created the *Emily Brown* picture book series.

Cressida is an ambassador for the National Literacy Trust, a trustee for World Book Day and a founder patron of the Children's Media Foundation. She has won numerous prizes for her books, including the Blue Peter Book Award. Perhaps the most important award that Cressida has is the title of Children's Laureate. This is a celebration of excellence in writing and illustration for children, the Laureate honours individuals who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the world of children's books.

Here is what Cressida plans to do in her role as Laureate.

CRESSIDA COWELL'S
Waterstones
Children's
Laureate
Charter

Every child has the right to...

1. Read for the joy of it
2. Access NEW books in schools, libraries and bookshops
3. Have advice from a trained librarian or bookseller
4. Own their OWN book
5. See themselves reflected in a book
6. Be read aloud to
7. Have some choice in what they read
8. Be creative for at least fifteen minutes a week
9. See an author event at least ONCE
10. Have a planet to read on

Waterstones
Children's
Laureate
2019-2022

When the pandemic started, Cressida decided to write a letter to all children. She felt it was important in her role as Laureate to do this. Here is what she wrote.

Dear Readers,

The book is the ultimate survivor: it has emerged, sometimes torn but always victorious, through wars, upheaval, suppression, and yes, plagues. It has lived with the advent of television, video games and the internet. It has survived, quite simply, because we need it.

Books are our tool to make sense of the inexplicable, to articulate to ourselves what we feel but cannot always say. They're our comfort, our distraction, a way to travel when life seems dark and is closing in on us, a way to laugh when not much seems funny. They're an anchor to a reassuring past in the face of a worrying present and an uncertain future. They connect us both with strangers and, if we read aloud and enjoy them together with the ones we love the most.

When a child needs to grasp for courage, they can find it with the help of characters like Matilda, or Hiccup the Viking. I can find it with Atticus Finch. Real courage, according to Atticus, is: 'when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do.' The 'sometimes you do', is important. I'm always aiming for the 'sometimes you do.'

I have faith in the resilience of books, and the book trade, and in our children, too. Writing for children is the greatest privilege on earth, for what a gift it is, to look at the world through the cool, clear eyes of a child. Where adults can be distracted by trivialities, children seem to have a wondrous ability to know what are the essentials: heroism, wilderness, our relationship with the natural world, death, love, spirituality, adventure... and optimism.

The adults have a lot to learn from children's instinctive hopefulness, and their joyfully unrealistic ambition for the future. Because their belief in the impossible just might make it happen.

Less than a year ago, I spoke at the Globe about the urgent necessity of making sure every single child in this country has access to books. To bring books into the hands of each and every child in the UK is going to require practical magic, action, and the kind of hope and imagination and creativity which children specialise in.

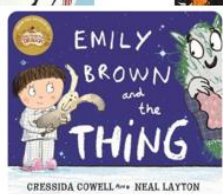
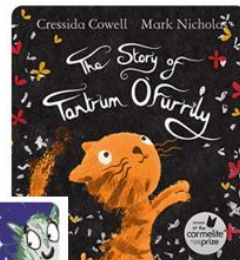
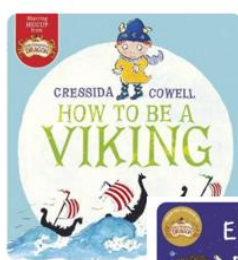
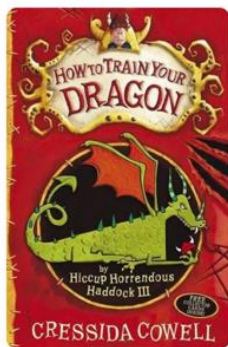
Because reading is magic, and magic is for everyone.

Love,

Cressida Connell



June Reading Assembly



If you enjoyed these, you will love these!

