

**Why do you like writing stories?** When I was in Y3 and Y4 at my primary school I had a wonderful teacher. Her name was Miss Cox. She made me feel that writing stories was special and also that sometimes I was quite good at it. Also, I have always loved using my imagination. Writing is a very powerful thing - you can make anything you want happen when you write a story!

**Do you ever visit schools?** I visit schools all the time. I travel all over the UK and abroad. If your school wants to contact me to try and organise a visit they can contact Jan or Kate at Speaking of Books ([jan@speakingofbooks.co.uk](mailto:jan@speakingofbooks.co.uk))

**Where do you live?** I live in a small town near Bath, in Somerset. It has a lovely river running through the centre and I often walk down to the little cafe in the middle of town and sit outside and watch life go by. I am surrounded by great countryside and I often go for long walks and spot deer, foxes, and all sorts of birds. There is even a herd of alpacas nearby, in case I want to knit a jumper!

**Where do you work?** I have taken over the shed at the bottom of the garden! I have a ginormous desk and my computer and all my papers and pens and books and so on. I also have an armchair and a fridge and my hi-fi, so I am well set up. My cat, Jeeves, often joins me down there. He sleeps in the armchair while I work. It looks out over the garden, so I spend most of my time staring out of the window!

**Do you do lots of planning?** Yes. I like to know that the story idea is going to work, and thinking it all through is a good way of ironing out problems before I start writing. Having said that, my planning is pretty haphazard. It is not particularly organised and I spend almost as much time doodling as I do writing things down. The planning can often take quite a long time, especially for a 'big' story - weeks of work before I write a single word of the story.

**Does anyone help you?** My cat, Jeeves, likes to help. He likes to get my typing chair warm for me by sleeping on it for as long as possible. He also likes to guard the paper for my printer by sleeping on top of that once he's been turfed off my chair. And every so often he likes to write his own stories. If I ever visit your school, ask me about it.

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