

Teen Librarian

Monthly Newsletter

www.teenlibrarian.co.uk

Welcome to the April edition of Teen Librarian Monthly, it has been a busy month since the March edition was released with Library activists staging sit-ins in Lambeth <http://defendthe10-lambeth.org.uk>, the decimation of Libraries across the UK featuring heavily on the BBC: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-35707956> and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-35724957>. There was also anger as Barnet councillors voted in favour of massive cuts to their library service <http://bit.ly/23B4xwa>.

The passion to save libraries and anger that is still being stoked in communities across the country as local and central government proceed with the whittling away of library services is impressive. I think that when the decision was made to hack away at libraries politicians had no idea how many people feel strongly about the service or would mount so many battles to save them.

As always I hope that Teen Librarian and this newsletter provides ideas and information that will support Library staff run events for young people in Libraries during these troubled times, if you (yes - **you**) have been running a successful event or events in your library please do let me know so that it can be publicised and shared with colleagues around the country!

This month we have a veritable cornucopia of articles from around the country to inspire and emulate! From the new national reading scheme to support young people's mental health from the Reading Agency and a new Reading Group at Pett's Wood Library, started and run by amazing librarian Jenny Hawke to a course on making Shakespeare accessible run by the bloke of Steel himself Paul Register. Staying with Shakespeare in the run up to the 400th anniversary of his death I have made some of my Shakespeare posters available for download.

Lucas Maxwell returns with news on Poem in your Pocket Day coming up next week and Helen Swinyard has kindly provided a piece on her experiences at the American Library Association Midwinter conference.

Any new librarians interested in attending the CILIP Conference in June may be interested in applying for the Aspire Award for a fully-sponsored place.

Lastly this month's Eight Questions With... interview is with Sarah Alexander, author of the new YA novel *The Art of Not Breathing*.

Special Request:

On the 15th May 2016 (next month) Teen Librarian and Teen Librarian Monthly hit their 10th anniversary.

I know that there is at least one librarian that has been a subscriber from the beginning that still receives TLM, but I am asking everyone that has found TLM interesting or has made use of any of the ideas contained therein over the years to please let me know if you would be interested in submitting a short piece (at most a paragraph or two) on what you found most useful. If you are interested in a write-up can I ask that you send it to me by the 10th May please; I am also interested in hearing from anyone interested in providing occasional articles for TLM for the next 10 years.

New national reading scheme to support young people's mental health

Reading Well for young people is part of the hugely successful Reading Well Books on Prescription scheme and will provide 13-18 year-olds with high-quality information, support and advice on a wide-range of mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders and self-harm, and difficult life pressures, like bullying and exams.

<https://readingagency.org.uk/news/media/new-national-reading-scheme-to-support-young-peoples-mental-health.html>

'Fully Booked' at Petts Wood Library

Jenny Hawke

Two years ago at Petts Wood Library in Bromley we started a Teenage Reading Group which has been flourishing ever since. However, more recently it has become clear that there is a gap between Chatterbooks (7-11) and the Teenage Reading Group (14+). Therefore in February of this year we decided to start another group for 11-13 year olds, to act as a bridge between primary and secondary school. We do not want to be too prescriptive, and the age categories are fluid and may change, depending on the members of the group. We promoted this through Facebook and Twitter and also via word of mouth. A few of the members came from Chatterbooks and others just heard about it from friends etc.

When we started the Teenage Reading Group two years ago we were lucky enough to have authors Lydia Syson and Sam Hepburn to launch the group and the new teenage area. We were very keen to have another author to launch this new group. Sophia Bennett took up the gauntlet and was fantastic. Sophia told us all about her books and life as a writer. She showed us how she has used post it notes to work out her new book 'Love Song' due to be published in April of this year by Chicken House.

At this first session 11 people came along which was a great start and they chose a name for themselves: 'Fully Booked'. We also used YLG Amy McKay's idea of scratchcards at the end of the session which caused lots of excitement. I've received lots of wishes of support and good luck from Twitter and Facebook especially #ukteenchat, and from various librarians, book bloggers and authors. Our second session is going to be on Refugees and I would like to thank Matt Imrie for his very useful list of titles. We have asked the group for ideas on what books they would like to discuss and will definitely set ourselves up as a shadowing group for some of the Carnegie and Kate Greenaway titles, about which we are all very excited.

Making Shakespeare Accessible (And Fun!) For Your Students... 400 Years After His Death

"A course! A course! My kingdom for a course!"

A training course for librarians, teachers and other school staff in secondary schools and colleges, celebrating the legacy of William Shakespeare on the 400th anniversary of his death

Speakers: Paul Register, Robert Deas and Nik Perring

Wednesday 27th April 2016, 10:00am to 3:00pm

James Reckitt Reading Room, Hull Central Library, Albion Street, Hull HU1 3TF

The Course

Target audience: librarians, teachers and other staff in secondary schools and colleges

Aim: to provide different approaches in increasing the accessibility of Shakespeare's works to students from ages 11-18

Course content: A full-day presentation and analysis of the wide variety of different ways of presenting the works of William Shakespeare.

Paul will showcase an assortment of graphic novels, books and other resources for use in school libraries and in classroom situations, all of which are aimed at making Shakespeare appealing to teenagers.

Robert will discuss the artistic processes behind adapting a 400-year-old dramatic text into a manga version of *Macbeth* set in a futuristic, post-nuclear world populated by sword-wielding mutants. Robert will also be signing copies of *Manga Shakespeare: Macbeth*.

Nik will reveal some of the 1700 new words that Shakespeare added to the English language and show you how to create exciting new stories and poems with them - and how you can use this process with students to make Shakespeare more accessible.

A buffet lunch will be provided and there will also be a bookstall where you will be able to buy many of the resources discussed in the course.

Outline of the Day

9:30am Tea and Coffee

10:00am Paul Register

10:45am Break

11:00am Robert Deas

12:00pm Lunch

1:00pm Nik Perring

2:00pm Book-buying and Networking

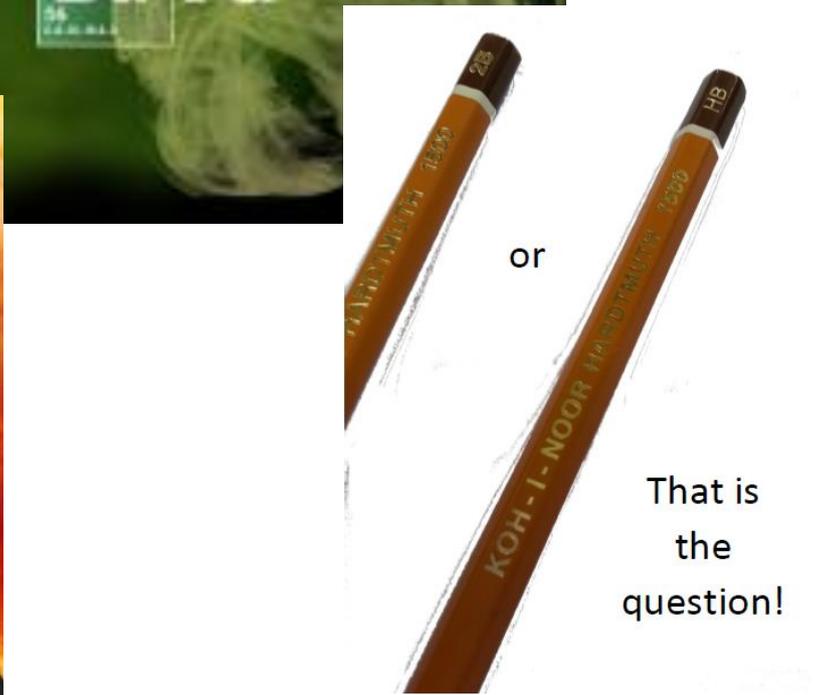
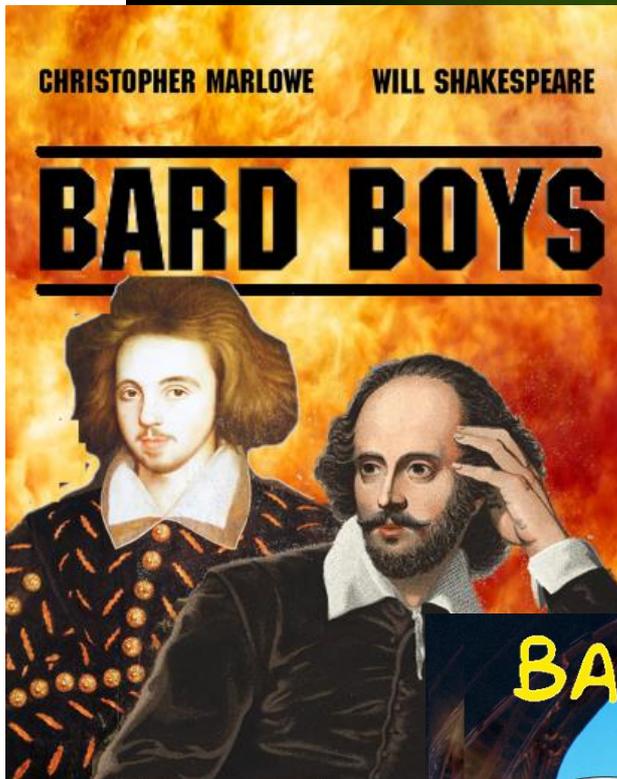
3:00pm Close

"Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more!"

For full details please visit: <http://www.blokeofsteel.co.uk/shakespeare.html>

Shakespearean Posters

I have spent the last little while in the run up to the 400th anniversary of the death of Shakespeare creating posters for my library.



They can be downloaded here: <http://teenlibrarian.co.uk/2016/03/23/7234/>

Poem in Your Pocket Day

Lucas Maxwell

For the first time, the Library will be celebrating Poem in Your Pocket Day on Thurs 21 April.

You can find out more about this event at its web site [here](#).

We've got a lot of activities in store. On the day, we'll be talking live via Skype with poets Rachel Long & Antosh Wojcik from a poetry festival in Gdansk, Poland. A large group of Year 9s will talk to Rachel & Antosh, listen to their poems and create some of their own.

I'll be live-tweeting this event as well using #pocketpoem & #glenthornepoems if anyone wants to join in on the fun.

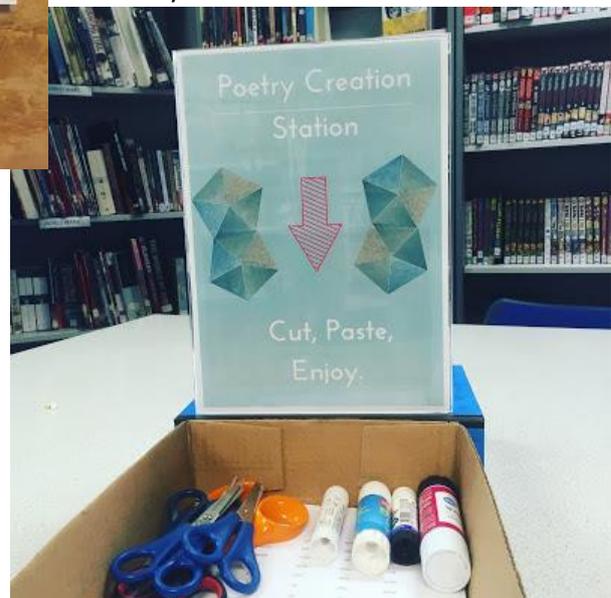
We're also going to have a poetry open mic at lunch hour on the 21st. This will be an open mic with a twist because students will have to memorise short poems leading up to the event.



I've made a bunch of poems available on library due-date cards that both students and staff can take to get ready. My goal is to get as many staff members involved as possible! We will see which students and staff can memorise their poem the best.

Also leading up to that day, students will have the opportunity to create their own poems using the Poetry Creation Station we've set up.

I look forward to a great day of poetry and creativity all around!



<https://www.poets.org/national-poetry-month/poem-your-pocket-day>



Why did I take part in ALA Midwinter?

In the first instance, because an American librarian suggested it. I thought it would be exciting to see what is happening in the US in libraries, and try to get lots of good ideas to bring back to the UK.

What were the highlights?

The Youth Media Awards! It was my 35th birthday and we got up so early, to get in the queue. It was worth it for a 5th row seat, and I met some lovely librarians in the queue too! It was wonderful to be part of something with such a buzz. I loved how all the committee members were honoured, and how everyone kept to time. Everyone in my

row had their phones out eagerly announcing each award to the world as it came on the screen. I want to read all the winners and introduce such wonderful books to my students.

See all the winners here: <http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2016/01/american-library-association-announces-2016-youth-media-award-winners>.

The friendly and open nature of librarians and bloggers who I met over the weekend – in coffee queues, on an escalator, just wandering around, or on the exhibition stands. It was so nice to chat and share ideas!

Which seminars did you take part in?

I'd like to mention 2 of the seminars which I attended, which were fantastic not only for the speakers and their material, but for the contribution of the attendees too.

Teens' Social Media Attitudes and Behaviors: what the research means for library services.

Denise Agosto talking about social media. I made so many notes and have so many ideas thanks to her clear explanation & thorough understanding of her research, and her excellent facilitation of discussion between all of us who attended. There are tons of ideas I can implement in the short term – and some long-term thinking about social media and mobile device policy.

Foundations of Young Adult Success: A developmental framework

A fascinating insight into new research from the youth development world about cognitive development and how we should keep valuing the contribution of libraries to developing soft skills, values, mindsets and outlooks. The notes from this session are something which will be up on my wall to ponder over for a good while!

What did I take away to work on in the future?

A whole suitcase of ARCs to read and to give to my students!

Social media, digital citizenship, design thinking, participatory learning, reflection & fun are all my keywords for 2016! I also have some articles on autism and libraries which I need to read emailed by someone I met at the conference. It's amazing what a lunch conversation can lead to.

What do you wish had been better?

Sadly, I thought my highlight would be Nancy Pearl interviewing author Andrew Dubus III. You don't get many 'famous' librarians but Nancy Pearl is someone I was very excited to see in real life, having her action figure proudly displayed on my library desk. Pupils always ask 'who is this'? I was sorry that she couldn't be there – but when I left I went to a great seminar instead, so it all worked out.

One of my targets for the weekend was to find other librarians who are familiar with the Accelerated Reader software, which my school uses. I really wanted to discuss the use of this with other professionals (as it's an American product) – but I didn't find anyone. Do you use it or have previously used it? I would love to connect with you – please get in touch!

I am also setting up an international bookgroup with one of the lovely librarians who emailed me following our business card swap, & shared ideas about an international book award with another. But – I gave my card to a lot of people! It would be great if others could get in touch & we can discuss how our schools could work together in the future.

What did I feel were the similarities & differences between our countries?

I now have twitter and facebook connections with librarians, bloggers & even Lyft drivers who I met over the weekend – that would not quite happen on the same scale in the UK, although I admit my accent is a novelty.

The little things that annoy school & children's librarians in both countries are the same, no matter where or for whom you work. We would all like more autonomy, recognition, budget & time.

America appreciates its school librarians more in terms of professionalism than in the UK. I think it helps that in the US there are standard qualifications for positions, whereas in the UK it is very much down to an individual school as to the standard of 'librarian' they employ and what they expect their job role to be. For instance, I have a Masters in Library & Information Studies, and over 10 years working in libraries – but I could go for a job at a school in the UK and be up against someone in interview who 'likes books'. Each school also varies in whether they expect you to have teaching experience or not. It is also not statutory for UK schools to have a library or a librarian.

What would I say is important about the ALA for British librarians?

I think that librarians of any sector should seriously think about attending the ALA at least once for their own CPD. It has been so important for me to connect with other professionals on a massive scale. I believe around 10,000 librarians attended the ALA and we just don't have those numbers. I luckily work with another librarian at my school, but so many UK librarians work solo and it can be isolating. I have come away feeling invigorated and enthusiastic about my role and passionate to

share the best practice that I've come across. I really hope that wherever I work in my career, that I can attend the ALA conferences every few years to keep me going!

I would love to see a British delegation visit the ALA, a cohort of authors and librarians, to share goodwill & good practice. Anyone want to join me?

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<http://heartlands.haringey.sch.uk/>

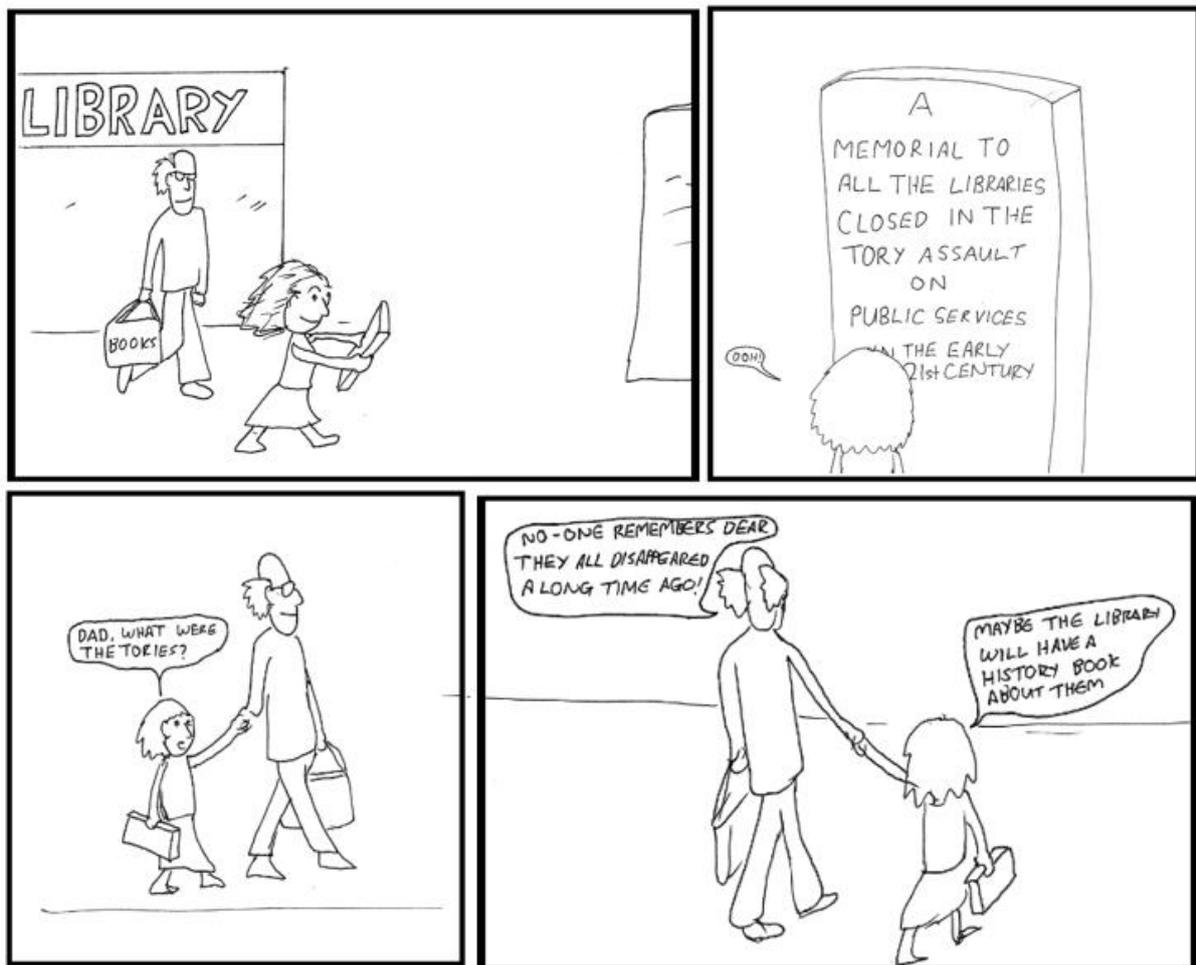
@HelenSwinyard @LibraryHHS

<https://heartlandshighschoolharingeylibrary.wordpress.com/>

<http://helenreads.wordpress.com>

This article originally appeared on the official blog for the Association of Library Service to Children in January:

<http://www.alsc.ala.org/blog/2016/01/alamw16-the-british-overview-by-helenswinyard/>



Aspire Award

The CILIP Aspire Award helps new professionals with their development by attending the annual [CILIP Conference](#).

The Conference takes place in Brighton on 12 and 13 July. The bursary will pay for the conference fee, travel from within the UK and accommodation.

Who can enter

The award is for CILIP members who have recently joined the profession. Enter if you:

- Are a member of CILIP
- Have joined the profession in the past five years
- Have registered for Chartership, intend to Charter in the next two years, or have Chartered in the past year
- Can write an article about your experiences at the Conference

How to enter

- Explain in no more than 250 words your ambition and aim in applying for the Aspire Award. It must demonstrate the benefits to you and profession of your attendance at the conference.
- Entries close at 5pm on Friday 20 May

Criteria

- Identification of an ambition or overall aim that attendance at the conference will help realise
- Evidence of existing or planned contributions to CILIP or the library and information profession
- Demonstration of your support for Bob McKee's core conviction that the role of libraries is a means to a fairer and more prosperous society

What the bursary includes

- A full delegate place at CILIP's 2016 Conference (12 and 13 July, the Dome, Brighton)
- The full delegate place includes the drinks reception on 12 July
- Reasonable travel expenses from within the UK
- 3* hotel accommodation for a maximum of two nights

More about the award

The award was created in memory of CILIP's Chief Executive Bob McKee, who died in August 2010, by CILIP and IFLA with the support of Bob's family and Liz Jolly.

The Award will support Bob's passionate interests – developing new professionals and strengthening international relationships.

Apply for the Aspire Award here:

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/membership/benefits/grants-bursaries/aspire-award>

Eight Questions With... Sarah Alexander



Can I ask you to introduce yourself to the audience please?

Thanks for having me! I'm a YA writer living in London. When I'm not writing, I work as an editor in educational publishing, and when I'm not doing either of those things I can be found wandering the globe in search of trouble and adventure. Even though I was born in London and have lived here for most of my life, I've always longed to be near the sea. The Art of Not Breathing is my debut novel and it has a watery theme.

What inspired you to write your debut novel 'The Art of Not Breathing'?

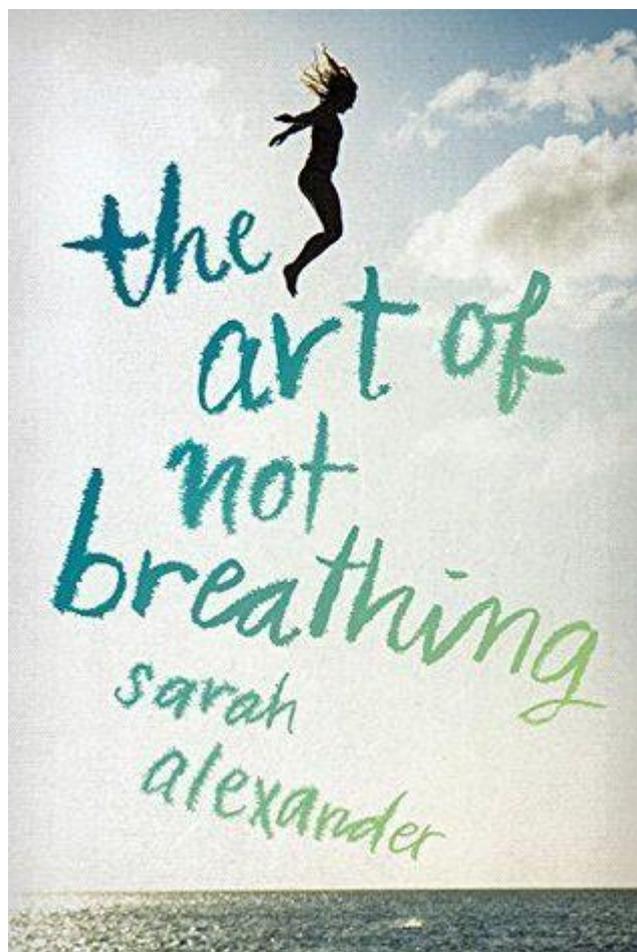
This is a hard question to answer. A combination of many things. Little seeds of ideas that I've been storing up over the years. I knew I wanted to write about loss, especially the long term aftermath of a tragedy, but in the end the actual story came from my main character, Elsie. She just popped into my head one day – I had this scene in my head: Elsie and her mum running down a hill – talking and laughing as a way of hiding their pain. The rest just evolved.

Did you set out to write specifically for teenagers or do you write for yourself and hope that your work finds an audience?

I've always written, but although my books had children and teenagers in them – the stories were told from the adult's perspective – even when I was a seven-year-old writer. A few years ago, I was in a reading slump and decided to do writing class on Young Adult fiction as a way of reconnecting with the books I loved at school. The class got me writing from the perspective of a teenager and suddenly everything clicked into place. I think I wrote this book for my teen self but if other young adults can relate it to then I'll be over the moon.

What inspires you to write?

I've no idea really – it's just something I do. I suppose it's a way of processing all the thoughts I have and a way to learn about the world. I'm not always on the lookout for something to inspire my writing but when I see something that sparks an idea I have to deal with it immediately – usually by typing a few words into my phone that I can use at a later point.



What is your favourite part in the writing process?

My favourite part of the process is drafting because there are so many possibilities! No word limits, no right order of events. I get to throw in all of my ideas and watch the story take shape. I love the excitement of coming up with a new idea and rushing home to write it all down. At this stage, there's so much potential for the story and the characters – this is where I let the characters tell me what they want to do. I'm less keen on editing but always glad when I see the difference it makes afterwards.

Do you read the works of other writers for children and young people? If yes, can you give some recommendations?

Absolutely! There are so many but here are a few recent YA favourites: BEAUTIFUL BROKEN THINGS by Sara Barnard, UNDERWATER by Marisa Reichardt, THE SQUARE ROOT OF SUMMER by Harriet Reuter Hapgood (out in May). Also, anything by Patrick Ness, Annabel Pitcher, Cat Clarke and Laura Jarratt.

What do you have planned next?

I'm writing another YA standalone. I can't say too much yet, but I'm very excited about it. There are a couple of other projects in progress too. Watch this space.

Finally, do you ever visit schools or public libraries and if you do what is the best way to get into contact with you about organising a visit?

I haven't done yet, but I'd love to. I can't wait to meet potential readers and budding writers. Schools and libraries can contact me via my website for more information on talks and workshops.

www.sarahalexanderwrites.com

Twitter: @SarahRAlexander