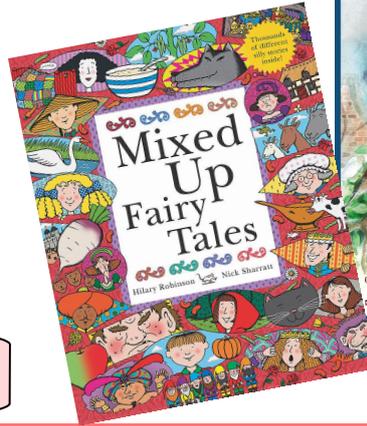


# Hilary Robinson

## AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT



### Why bother to read?

Reading gives us freedom. Freedom to consider and make informed choices. From the political manifesto to the name on the ballot paper; from the recipe card to the menu; from the airline booking form to the travel guide - reading opens up our minds to worlds beyond that which we know.

Fact or fiction, no greater adventures can be found than on book shelves, and no greater friend can there be than a book - portable, reliable, accessible and permanent.

### What was your favourite childhood book?

At the end of our school day - 1pm - our teacher Mrs Kibble would read for ten minutes - from a book that has lived with me ever since. The lives of the characters in the story could not have been more in contrast with the way we were living.

Heidi, a little orphan girl, growing up in the Swiss Alps, inspired me to believe that good would ultimately triumph over evil and that a positive outlook, despite our circumstances, would always be a sustaining quality.

### Which of your own books is your favourite?

This is such a difficult question to answer as there are so many variables!

I could consider the one that had the most emotional impact on me: *A Song For Will and The Lost Gardeners of Heligan*; the one that I had the most fun creating: *Gregory Goose Is On The Loose*; or one that is the best selling: *Where The Poppies Now Grow* - or perhaps it is more fitting to choose one that I know has helped thousands of children learn to read and structure their own written work.

*Mixed Up Fairy Tales* (illustrated by Nick Sharratt, published by Hodder Children's Books) was, in 2015, included in a list which celebrated the most popular books of the previous two decades. Chosen by children who took part in the National Literacy Trust's Young Readers Programme, it was voted the top book of 2004 by 384,000 children.

Hilary Robinson grew up in Nigeria during the Biafran war, going to school with local and overseas children and being taught by a Kiwi, Mrs Kibble which could be regarded as an education in itself. There were few books available - just those that travelled in with the expats.

Hilary would like to thank every child, teacher, librarian, parent and grown up who helped to make the popularity of her books possible. She believes that authors and illustrators are only one part of the stories - you are the other.