

Askew's Libraries Q and A

The questions are:

- Can you tell us a bit about the Rudy series?

Rudy is a werewolf-boy who lives in the urban-gothic town of Cobble Cross. His favourite thing in the world is hanging out at the local skate park with his two best friends, Femi the mummy and Edie the ghost girl. The stories, however, take Rudy and his friends on adventures deep into dark spooky forests, or all the way up steep craggy mountains in the midst of thunderstorms and flashing lightning. And along the way, Rudy learns valuable lessons that young readers can relate to and learn from.

- What was your inspiration for writing Rudy?

A couple of years ago, my son was about the right reading age for the Rudy books and he never wanted to read anything. He could do it, he was just a reluctant reader. So I wanted more than anything to write a book that got him reading. Something that made him want to take a break from Minecraft, YouTube and all the other stuff he's into, and read a book. And with Rudy I think I managed it.

- If you had to choose, who is your favourite character in the Rudy series, and why?

That's a tough question. I like them all and couldn't write for them if I didn't. I love Rudy. He has so much to learn, there could be many more books to write in the series. That said, Femi is always fun because he's so silly and the scrapes he gets into are great for a laugh. All that aside, Edie is might be my favourite because she has such a strong personality. Everything she says comes out with all her great attitude so any situation comes to life when she's around.

- What were your favourite books as a child?

This is an easy list to write, although I'm not sure they're space for them all. *The Wizard of Oz* was the first 'proper' book I read all the way through to myself. I felt very proud of that! I also loved *The Iron Man*. Our head teacher read it to the school when I was little and I loved the rich, descriptive language that reveals the story in such detail you can feel it. There was also *The Twits*, *George's Marvellous Medicine*, a stack of *Choose Your Own Adventure* books as well as *The Lost World* and *Treasure Island* – lots of adventure and mischief! They're always great ingredients for a story.

- Do you remember visiting libraries as a child, and do you have any particular memories of them?

I loved visiting my local library as a child, and I enjoy going there now with my own children. I like everything about it. The colourfulness of the children's section, the peace and quiet, and the simple joy of picking up books and reading a few pages to see if I'll read the rest. They're easy places to enjoy yourself, find surprises and hours of entertainment. And now they also provide an endless supply of inspiration for my own books.

This article was written in 2022

*Paul Westmoreland is the author of the Rudy series for children aged 6-8,
published Oxford University Press*

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