

What is your best quality?

Patience.

What is your worst quality?

Untidiness.

Where is your favourite place?

Crackpot Hall, a ruined lead mine in stunningly beautiful Upper Swaledale (Yorkshire).

Who were your favourite authors as a child and who are your favourite authors now?

As a child my favourites were Roger Lancelyn Green and Lobsang Rampa. My current favourites include Samuel Beckett, Shirley Hughes, Raymond Carver, Ted Hughes and Yukio Mishima.

What was your favourite childhood toy?

A play tent. I used to camp in the garden in it, with my best pal, Tex.

Which famous person, dead or alive, do you identify with?

Just now for some reason it's Caedmon (7th Century poet).

How do you relax?

Walking, reading, crashing out in front of the telly, planting trees and cutting the grass in our big garden, paddling in the icy North Sea with my partner and our seven-year old daughter, travelling.

Where and when do you write?

In my office, a converted attic at the top of our house. When I'm at home, I write every weekday. Just now I spend a fair amount of time writing on trains.

What do you wish we'd asked you about...!

How my dazzling midfield skills could solve Newcastle United's inability to win the FA Cup.

For all David Almond's titles please visit www.davidalmond.com





DAVID ALMOND

Questions & Answers

What was your favourite subject at school?

Cookery.

What are your ambitions?

To keep writing and to keep on improving as a writer. To see the great high wire walker, Philippe Petit, in action. To travel in space.

What do you like most about being a writer?

It's great to work with the imagination and to see stories come to life. And it's wonderful to make a living now from doing something that I love.

Why do you write specifically for children?

It just happened. After years of writing for adults, I found myself writing a children's book, *Skellig*. It was very exciting to be suddenly writing for readers who have such flexible minds and who can consider all kinds of possibilities. I felt that I'd come home as a writer.

Where do you live?

In Northumberland, just beyond the Roman Wall, about 25 miles from Newcastle.

How do you like to spend your spare time?

I walk, listen to music, read, travel, and spend time with my family.

What is your favourite food?

Fresh sardines, pasta, garlic, chilli.

What is your greatest extravagance?

Staying in very nice hotels (when I'm not camping!).

