

Baxter Owen Graham

Questions and Answers

What books did you like when you were little?: Well, I'd have to say that I found "Dr. Seuss books", an easy read for a small child, and I really enjoyed his rhyming stories. Consequently, I was raised up believing that "Green Eggs and Ham" really exists. I also liked many of the weekly reader books; Wembley and the Soggy Map, Traveling Matts Adventures In Outer Space. Others were, many of the Mercer Mayer Little Critter Books, The Runaway Bunny, And the Little Miss Books by Rodger Hargreaves, and The Berenstain Bears, and of course the Velveteen Rabbit.

What books have you read? What books have changed your life?: Well I've read some fun books like Goosebumps, Holes, and Skipping Christmas. The more meaningful books I've read are, Frankenstein, Lord Of the Flies, Inkheart, Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, Hound of the Baskervilles, Hatchet and a lot of the Brian Book Series like, The Tent, by Gary Paulson; and many of the writings of Edgar Allen Poe have been influential. And a story that really changed my life is the book "Of Mice and Men;" this story reveals that I can always be happy with the smallest pleasures of life like friendship, and a simple roof over my head; yet, I may lose or gain these pleasures throughout life.

Who is your favorite author?: I enjoy the work and style of William Golding's book, the Lord of the Flies. I feel his writing style is magnificent; I believe his profundities explain the moral truths of his characters better than other authors; he uniquely describes how they think, what they like, and what makes them tick. I find William Golding more a storyteller, one who makes the reader want turn the page almost simultaneously, unlike some other writers who tell a story with terribly misunderstood characters and plots.

Do you have any hobbies?: Though sometimes I can be lazy, I am into track and field.

When did you start writing?: I believe I started writing when I was taught how, but I think creative writing really didn't come into play till I was five.

How does an aspiring writer get published?: I am not really the person to ask because I self published my book. But to get published through a publishing house you would have to send a manuscript to one or more publishers, then they decide if they would like to make a book out of it. Once they have published your book you will have to plan and market the book, this may mean that you better have a flexible schedule.

What are you working on now? Can you give us a synopsis's of your upcoming novel?:

Well, I am working on a Fantasy novel that is based on a kid who believes that he is a dragon. This kid is named Druid; he lives in a cave with six dragons who he believes is his birth family. Druid assumes that his whole life has been a dragon's life, but he soon realizes he is human, and the next heir to the throne of Farthom.

I created this fictional land from a gothic medieval setting, with a French culture, a bit like Edgar Allen Poe's Toledo where in that town the people were against any witchcraft and sorcery.

I'd like to be a writer. How can I get started?

Keep your works in a computer file or a folder, after an insane amount of editing you should keep sending them to a publisher or magazine until one decides to publish your work.

Do you want to be a writer when you grow up?

I love to write and I am very much leaning towards writing as a profession, but being an author is very intense. If I ever wanted to do it for a living I may eventually go insane from how many words I would have to write each day. If I choose another profession, I hope to continue writing as a hobby.

Are you famous, rich, etc...?

Sorry, that's top secret.

About Old King Stinky Toes:

Where did the idea of Old King Stinky Toes come from?

Well in fact my dad gave me a story prompt and I baked the cake.

How long did it take to write Old King Stinky Toes?

Well the original story took about five or ten minutes, but the refining and correcting took three/four months.

Is there a moral to your story?.

Well the moral of the story is that you shouldn't make fun of people because of the stuff on the outside, but you should only judge people for what's in their heart and how they treat others.

Who did the illustrations?

My fourth grade teacher was a great colored pencil drawer, and this was a very noticeable thing because he had most of his drawings posted all around his classroom. Now when I first approached James with the idea of illustrating a children's book he said that his teaching would get in the way; now, when James quit from teaching, he finally agreed. So this book is really one big family relationship.

Why did you self publish?

Mostly for the reasons of creative control, meaning that if we had gone through a large publishing company we wouldn't have been able to choose James Martin as our illustrator. We knew this because we were looking into sending my story to one of these publishers, but saw that it may take months before they even look at your story manuscript.

How/Why did you put the story into a Book?

Well I was in the hot tub with my dad and he out of the blue asks me "Tell me a story about a king with stinky toes, this prompt reminded me of my dad's own stinky toes, so the story started and ended within about five minutes. Then I would constantly repeat this story to my dad till he decided, after the millionth time, he had had enough. My father wrote the story in his laptop hoping the repetitiveness would stop. So the story was left in that computer untouched for four years till my dad found it. He was going to throw the laptop away. We both thought that having a story, that I wrote, when I was seven would be a great family heirloom, but now it is a business!

Who is the main character in my story? : The King!

Where is the setting?: Medieval- Fantasyland

Who are the Antagonists? Dragon and Kings Toes

What advise would you give young kids?

Save your Stories: *At your age it is important to save your works. Don't let them become "Fridge Ornaments," put them on a computer disk or save them in a folder, and someday you may turn them into a book or short story.*

Learn Grammar: *Periods, commas, adverbs etc... really make a difference in you stories. I'm not great at this, but I'm getting better.*

Editing is the hard part: *But.... Don't worry too much about grammar on your first draft; just get your ideas out. After you get your ideas out of your head you can go back and switch things around and put in the commas.*

Writing itself is like a journey: *I'm still learning! Writing is a skill, the more I write, the more I read, the more I live life - the better I'll be as a writer.*

What tips do you have for aspiring writers?

First of all, keep all your writings so that you can someday use them. Even if you do not publish your works they can still be enjoyed by your family. I found my story from a simple prompt, and both my dad and I decided that it would be a great thing to share. If it it's a great thing, share it!