



Lauren Child

TeachingBooks Original Movie Transcript

Lauren Child, interviewed in New York, New York on _____ while on tour from England.

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I like to draw everything small in pencil — just a normal pencil. And then I blow everything up usually quite big, because then you've got a really lovely black line, and I really like the graininess of the line.

All my books are collage. When I was illustrating *I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato*, I drew Lola...she's just a few centimeters big.

[Spoken while putting together a Lola collage]

I color her just using any old paint, and then cut everything out. I decided not to bother drawing the table. I would just buy some wood paper, and I just put her like that. I took a photograph of a bowl of peas. I just decided I was going to have some wallpaper. A little bit of a chair, and then just put the chair behind her. Everything is just one flat thing on top of another. There isn't any perspective in my work.

I had this idea about fussy eating, because food is such a big issue for children. And then I decided there would be no adults. I just wanted children's voices.

On Fairy Tales

I'm very fond of fairy tales. There's a lot more to them than you first think. When you're a child, I think you read them and then you realize there is a very sinister side to them.

Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Book isn't a fairy tale, but it is a new fairy story about this little boy who falls into a book of fairy stories. He falls into this book, which he has defaced, and he manages to cut a hole in the page so he can escape. He arrives on the ceiling of the wicked stepmother, and the reason that he's on the ceiling is because he tore a page out of the book, and then stuck it in upside down. I always feel that with this book, it doesn't matter what any child does to it, it will probably just add to it — because it's sort of meant to feel like it's really being manhandled.

I chose *The Princess and the Pea* because I like the idea of twisting a fairy story. I think it was a natural progression to do a book that was photographs of illustration because I use photographs so much within my illustrations. So maybe the next thing to do would be to build real sets, and

then the end result would be to photograph rather than put photographs within illustration. Although you're writing over a story, you're also being able to add in your own twist. That's when it's really fun.

On Clarice Bean

Clarice Bean, That's Me, was my first ever go at really writing and achieving a picture book. It's really about having a child introduce their family. You might love everybody in your family, but sometimes you wish they would go away for a few hours. The second one [*Clarice Bean, Guess Who's Babysitting?*] is definitely much more plot-driven. I wanted to bring in another character so I brought in her Uncle Ted.

Then in *What Planet Are You From, Clarice Bean?* I wanted to write about something that was actually quite important. So many children are concerned about the environment. Making a story about something where her family actually prevented a tree from being chopped down is just a simple way to show that there are little things you can do to make a difference.

To give the characters different typefaces is a shorthand way of showing the reader what kind of voice they character has got or how old they are. Particularly with Clarice, it's all about her voice. She is speaking out of a book at the reader about whatever is going on in her mind. Clarice — I feel like she is a real person, and part of that is because she develops.

On Charlie and Lola

With Charlie and Lola, it's a completely different thing because they're children trapped in time. They will never get older; they will always be four and seven. It's interesting adapting Charlie and Lola for television because it's such a simple idea. I just knew that so long as you had children do the voices (real children), then you'd keep the sense of what they're saying.

Never too old for pictures

Children say to me, "I really like your *Clarice Bean* picture books, but I'm a bit too old for them now." And I think, "Why are you?" You know, if you like looking at pictures — it's not babyish to look at pictures. I think children should value that visual awareness. It's so important to us to notice things.

Books by Lauren Child

- ADVENTURES OF PIPPI LONGSTOCKING, THE (written by Astrid Lindgren), Oxford University Press, date TBA
- CLARICE BEAN, DON'T LOOK NOW, Candlewick Press, 2007
- I ABSOLUTELY MUST DO COLOURING IN NOW, Grosset & Dunlap, 2006
- MY HAIRCUT: STICKER STORIES, Grosset and Dunlap, 2006
- MY SCHOOL PLAY: STICKER STORIES, Grosset and Dunlap, 2006
- MY WOBBLY TOOTH MUST NOT EVER NEVER FALL OUT, Grosset & Dunlap, 2006
- PRINCESS AND THE PEA, THE (photographs by Polly Borland), Hyperion Books for Children, 2006
- SNOW IS MY FAVORITE AND MY BEST, Dial Books for Young Readers / a division of Penguin Young Readers Group, 2006
- WE HONESTLY CAN LOOK AFTER YOUR DOG, Grosset & Dunlap, 2006

- WHOOPS! BUT IT WASN'T ME, Grosset & Dunlap, 2006
- BUT EXCUSE ME THAT IS MY BOOK, Dial Books for Young Readers / a division of Penguin Young Readers Group, 2005
- CLARICE BEAN SPELLS TROUBLE, Candlewick Press, 2005
- HUBERT HORATIO BARTLE BOBTON-TRENT, Hyperion Books for Children, 2005
- I'VE WON, NO I'VE WON, NO I'VE WON, Dial Books for Young Readers / a division of Penguin Young Readers Group, 2005
- COYOTE'S IN THE HOUSE, A (written by Elmore Leonard), Puffin, 2004
- I AM TOO ABSOLUTELY SMALL FOR SCHOOL, Candlewick Press, 2004
- UTTERLY ME, CLARICE BEAN, Candlewick Press, 2003
- DAN'S ANGEL: A DETECTIVE'S GUIDE TO THE LANGUAGE OF PAINTINGS (written by Alexander Sturgis), Frances Lincoln Publishers, 2002
- THAT PESKY RAT, Candlewick Press, 2002
- WHAT PLANET ARE YOU FROM, CLARICE BEAN?, Candlewick Press, 2002
- WHO'S AFRAID OF THE BIG BAD BOOK, Hyperion Books for Children, 2002
- BEWARE OF THE STORYBOOK WOLVES, Arthur A. Levine Books / an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2001
- CLARICE BEAN, GUESS WHO'S BABYSITTING?, Candlewick Press, 2001
- DEFINITELY DAISY: DREAM ON DAISY (Jenny Oldfield), Hodder Children's Books, 2001
- DEFINITELY DAISY: I'D LIKE A LITTLE WORD, LEONIE (Jenny Oldfield), Hodder Children's Books, 2001
- DEFINITELY DAISY: JUST YOU WAIT, WINONA (Jenny Oldfield), Hodder Children's Books, 2001
- DEFINITELY DAISY: NOT NOW, NATHAN! (Jenny Oldfield), Hodder Children's Books, 2001
- DEFINITELY DAISY: WHAT'S THE MATTER, MAYA? (Jenny Oldfield), Hodder Children's Books, 2001
- DEFINITELY DAISY: YOU MUST BE JOKING, JIMMY (Jenny Oldfield), Hodder Children's Books, 2001
- DEFINITELY DAISY: YOU'RE A DISGRACE (Jenny Oldfield), Hodder Children's Books, 2001
- I AM NOT SLEEPY AND I WILL NOT GO TO BED, Candlewick Press, 2001
- MY DREAM BED, Arthur A. Levine Books / an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2001
- I WILL NEVER NOT EVER EAT A TOMATO, Candlewick Press, 2000
- CLARICE BEAN, THAT'S ME!, Candlewick Press, 1999
- I WANT A PET!, Tricycle Press, 1999
- THE COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS OF PHOEBE FLOOD (written by John Whitworth), Hodder Children's Books, 1997
- STAND UP FOR YOURSELF! (written by Helen Benedict), Hodder Children's Books, 1996
- ADDY THE BADDY (written by Margaret Joy), Viking, 1993

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