

# The Petit Proust Questionnaire

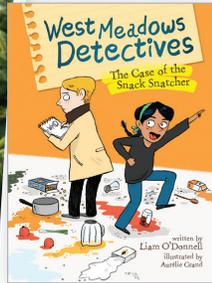
from Owlkids Books

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## Meet author Liam O'Donnell

**LIAM O'DONNELL** is an award-winning author, educator, and literacy advocate who has penned over 35 graphic novels and books specifically for reluctant readers, including the Max Finder Mystery series. When he isn't writing, Liam is a Grade 1 teacher in Toronto, Ontario, with an interest in using video games and other alternative sources of literacy to engage readers. Visit his website at <http://liamodonnell.com> and find him on Twitter as @liamodonnell.



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In the first book in the West Meadows Detectives series, we meet Myron, a young detective whose unique perspective from the autism spectrum makes him an excellent sleuth. Together with his classmates in resource room 15, he cracks a case at his new school.

### When you were a kid, what was your favorite thing to do?

Exploring the woods up the road from my home. My friends and I would leave on a Saturday morning and just walk, climb trees, and get very muddy. We also had an abandoned gravel pit nearby that was totally unsafe but also totally fun to play in. Those woods and the gravel pit are gone now. They've been replaced by new homes with new kids probably looking for more cool places to explore.

### What did you most dislike doing when you were a child?

Going to church every Sunday. It really cut into my gravel pit exploring time.

### As a child, where did you dream of living?

In the woods far away from everyone else. I'm still working on that one.

### What did you think you were good at when you were a kid?

Soccer was the only sport I was good at. I couldn't ice skate and still can't. I could skateboard, though. I guess that's why I've written books about soccer and skateboarding but not hockey.

### When you were a kid in school, what did you look for in a friend?

Usually someone who didn't have the exact same Star Wars action figures as me. It's no fun playing when everyone just has Luke.

### What did you want to be when you grew up?

In elementary school, I wanted to be a veterinarian, but as a teenager I knew I wanted to work in TV or film or theater. I actually did work on movie sets after university. That's where I started taking writing seriously.



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## What was your favorite book as a child?

*The Monster Manual.* I was a classic reluctant reader until I discovered Dungeons & Dragons when I was 12 years old. If I wanted to play the game, I had to know the rules, and that meant reading those thick rule books! That game whet my appetite for fantasy books, so I read the classics like *The Hobbit* and all the Narnia books.

## What is your favorite pastime now?

I like tinkering with technology, managing my Minecraft servers, and growing a few vegetables in my tiny garden on my tiny deck. And reading, reading, reading!

## What do you find an absolute chore?

Cleaning up after myself.

## If you could live anywhere, where would you go?

Over the hill and down the long road where the tall trees grow.

## What is the one talent you wish you had?

Drawing! I wish the things I drew actually looked like things instead of always turning out like a ham sandwich squashed by a garbage truck.

## What makes a good friend?

Someone who likes to laugh, listen, and stand up for themselves.

## If you weren't an author or illustrator, what job would you have?

An elementary school teacher! Wait. I am an elementary school teacher. Achievement unlocked on that one.

## What children's books have caught your attention lately?

I'm never up to date on the latest anything, so I'm just discovering the Mr. Gum books by Andy Stanton and really enjoying them.

## If you had to have a motto, what would it be?

Socks first, THEN shoes.

